

# Notice of Funding Opportunity

<b>Federal Agency Name:</b>	U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Grants Management Office (GMO); MC-BG 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, West Building Washington, DC 20590
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## SECTION A – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### 1. Overview and Authorizing Statutes, Regulations, and Order

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announces its Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation (CDLPI) financial assistance program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to solicit applications from State and local governments and other eligible persons and organizations that support CDLPI activities.

[The Department intends to apply principles from DOT Order 2100.7 on Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities when evaluating applications and making award selections.](#)

The program is authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 31313, as modified by Section 23001(b) of Public Law 117-58 (2021), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. FMCSA anticipates awarding approximately \$89.4 million during FY 2025. Final funding amounts are subject to the availability of funding appropriated by Congress.

### 2. Changes from December 18, 2024 NOFO

Notable changes in this NOFO compared to the version published on December 18, 2024 include:

- Removal of references to rescinded Executive Orders (EOs) and priorities from the previous administration.
- Alignment with newly issued EOs and Departmental orders, including [DOT Order 2100.7 - Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis In Department Of Transportation Policies, Programs, And Activities.](#)
- Elimination of *Other Selection Considerations* and *Additional Selection Criteria*.

### 3. CDLPI Goals and Objectives

FMCSA's mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses. In support of this mission, FMCSA partners with commercial driver's license (CDL) stakeholders including, but not limited to, State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs) commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers and employers, Tribal governments, the U.S. Armed Forces, State court officers, institutions of higher education (IHE), non-profit associations, and multi-State partnerships.

The CDLPI program objective is to provide financial assistance to States and other eligible entities to carry out and improve the national CDL program. The national CDL program focuses on the concept that each driver has only one driving record and only one licensing document, commonly referred to as "One Driver — One License — One Record." Further, the national CDL program requires States to conduct knowledge and skills testing before issuing a Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) and/or CDL; to maintain a complete and accurate driver history record (DHR) for anyone who obtains a CLP and/or CDL; and to impose driver disqualifications, as required by the regulations.

FMCSA provides financial assistance under the CDLPI financial assistance program to States to achieve compliance with statutory requirements and FMCSA regulations concerning driver's license standards and programs, namely 49 U.S.C. § 31311(a) and 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. In addition, FMCSA provides financial assistance to other entities capable of executing national projects that aid States in their compliance efforts and that will improve the success and consistency of the national CDL Program.

This NOFO provides information about the FY 2025 CDLPI program priorities and guidance for preparing and submitting a grant application. FMCSA will award grants under this announcement in two categories: the CDLPI Basic Grants and CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Grants. The Federal Financial Assistance Listing 20.232 provides additional CDLPI grant program information.

# CDLPI Award Performance Goals

Applicants should include performance goals related to the national priorities under subsection 4, that demonstrate improvement or sustained compliance with U.S.C. § 31311 and 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

## 1. Data Sources

FMCSA will utilize SDLA's CDLPI grant application's performance goals provided and compared to data available in the State Compliance Records Enterprise System (SCORE), Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) reports, driver history reports, and any other data source(s) used and reported by the applicant, comparing the results from the program with the baseline data provided in the application and available reports.

For applicants that are not States, including Tribal governments, FMCSA will utilize the eligible entity's CDLPI grant application's stated performance goals by examining any available data and other data source(s) used and reported or referenced by the applicant, comparing the results from the program with the baseline data provided in the application and the data sources provided and referenced in the application and any other FMCSA accessible reports.

## 2. Performance Goals and Indicators

FMCSA will assess to what extent a CDLPI grant meets its performance goals outlined in the application by assessing its associated performance indicators. Applicants should specify performance goals and indicators related to the project (which will vary depending on which of the national priorities discussed below in subsection 4 the project seeks to address).

In general, activities must be tied to 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. Performance goals for successful CDLPI grant award projects may include, but are not limited to:

- **Sustained Compliance with Current and New Rulemakings:** Activities that address a State's sustained compliance with specific Federal CDL regulatory requirements found in 49 CFR parts 383 and/or 384 or 49 U.S.C. § 31311; and activities that support a State's implementation of Federal CDL regulatory requirements, such as Medical Certification, Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, and Entry-Level Driver Training requirements.
- **Compliant Issuance of CDL/CLPs:** Activities that support the issuance of CLPs and CDLs, upgrade/change endorsements, or a change state of record to only qualified drivers while identifying and instituting technology, policies, and procedures to prevent fraudulent activities in CDL and CLP issuance; and utilizing partnerships with other SDLAs and entities to improve issuance processes and compliance.
- **Timely DHR Action(s):** Activities to issue disqualifications, suspensions, and downgrades in a timely manner to CLP and CDL holders and post to their DHR, which will allow unsafe drivers to be removed from service.
- **Data Quality, Accuracy, and Completeness:** Activities that address a state's accuracy and completeness of DHRs, including all conviction and disqualification data, medical

certifications, entry-level driver training verification, and knowledge and skills testing information. Activities that increase a state's timeliness in updating DHRs and sharing data across jurisdictions within the required timeframes are also included.

- **Innovative Approaches to Improving CDL Issues:** Activities that provide a novel technique or approach (program design, use of technology assets, etc.) to benefit national CDL safety and/or improve SDLA's CDL safety data quality, which may include research projects and pilot testing new approaches to improving compliance.
- **Human Trafficking Recognition, Prevention, and Reporting:** Activities that deter and reduce CMV-based human trafficking related activities, and increase human trafficking awareness and training for SDLA, judiciary, and law enforcement staff and other industry stakeholders.
- **Increased Testing Rates and Integrity:** Activities that increase a state's capacity for testing and issuing CDLs, including using new technology to ensure that CDL knowledge and skills testing integrity is maintained.
- **Cost Savings:** Activities that reduce costs for SDLAs through the increased use of automated systems.
- **Improved Fraud Prevention Methods:** Activities that identify and implement technology and procedures to prevent fraud in CDL and CLP issuance.
- **Reduction in Fraudulent CDL Activities:** Activities that increase the effectiveness of fraud prevention related to driving, medical credentials, skills testing operations, and license issuance.
- **Efficiency through Increased Training in Adjudication Process:** Activities that expand the number of training events conducted with judiciary partners such as courts, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, and SDLA liaisons.

Monitoring is an important part of reviewing a project's performance and ensuring that the grantee is meeting the objectives and goals of the project and grant award. While FMCSA conducts formal monitoring, the grantee must also conduct its own internal monitoring throughout the life of the grant and should be prepared to share its results with FMCSA through the reporting process (see Section F, Reporting). FMCSA developed the performance indicators in the table below to help grantees measure and report their CDLPI award goals and outcomes.

Grantees may report on additional performance goals and indicators related to their projects, beyond those listed below. Applications must include the relevant performance goal and indicators for their proposed CDLPI grant projects.

Performance Goal	Performance Indicators (Metrics)
<p><b><u>Sustained Compliance with Current and New Rulemakings:</u></b> Activities that support a State's implementation of current or new Federal CDL regulatory requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse-II</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of commercial privilege downgrades due to Clearinghouse violation notifications.</li> <li>○ Number of commercial privilege reinstatements due to compliance with Clearinghouse notifications</li> <li>○ Number of queries to the Clearinghouse</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of ELDT verifications conducted before skills testing.</li> <li>○ Number of connection errors</li> <li>○ Rate of connection errors</li> <li>○ Number of training providers who were reported to FMCSA (per 384.236)</li> <li>○ Number of queries of Training Provider Registry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Medical Examiner Certificate (MEC)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of Driver MEC-related fields that are updated in an accurate and timely manner (per 384.225(a)(2))</li> <li>○ Number of drivers checked/queried.</li> <li>○ Number of queries to registry</li> <li>○ Number of downgrades due to expired medical certificate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NR-II</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of drivers downgraded in a timely manner</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Compliant Issuance of CDL/CLPs:</u></b> Activities could include utilizing partnerships with other SDLAs and other entities to improve issuance processes and compliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of technical assistance events</li> <li>• Number of attendees at technical assistance events</li> <li>• Duration of technical assistance events</li> <li>• Percent improvement of knowledge increased due to outreach and training on subject (e.g., improved scores from knowledge surveys)</li> <li>• Number of "best practices" documents, standard operating procedures, workflow, and trainings produced and distributed.</li> <li>• Number of successfully scheduled and completed appointments for commercial license issuance.</li> </ul>

**Timely DHR Action(s):**

*Activities could include ensuring data is received within timeframe specified by regulation(s) and DHRs are updated in a timely fashion*

- Percent of data requests fulfilled within required timeframe.
- Number of days to transmit and post convictions and withdrawals on drivers within State and out-of-State (per § 384.207)
- Number of days to complete Change State of Record (CSOR)
- Percent of notifications completed to State of Record within 10 days of disqualifying a CDL or CDL holder (per 384.208(a))
- Percent of notifications completed within 10 days (per 384.209(c))
- Percent of CDLIS records updated within 10 days of receiving conviction and withdrawals from another State (per 384.225(c))
- Number of days to perform record checks (per 384.205, 384.206, and 384.220)
- Percent of record checks completed within 24 hours of issuance for new CDL holders or within 10 days for all others.



<p><b><u>Data Quality, Accuracy, and Completeness:</u></b>  <i>Activities that support ensuring master pointer records (MPRs) are accurate and complete per regulations and there are no missing or broken pointers. Additionally, activities that support DHRs hold all data elements including, but not limited to, MEC information is accurate and complete, disqualification end-date and reinstatement date are complimentary, etc. and</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of validation errors (per applicable CDLIS reports)</li> <li>• Number of data errors (per applicable CDLIS reports)</li> <li>• Number of missing or broken pointers (per application CDLIS reports)</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Human Trafficking Recognition, Prevention, and Reporting:</u></b>  <i>Activities that support the recognition, prevention, and reporting human trafficking to SDLA staff, judiciary, law enforcement, and other industry stakeholders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of outreach and training events</li> <li>• Number of attendees for outreach and training events</li> <li>• Frequency and duration of outreach and training events</li> <li>• Percent of knowledge increased due to outreach and training on subject (e.g., improved scores from knowledge surveys)</li> <li>• Number of unique human trafficking identifications reported by staff.</li> <li>• Number of lifetime disqualifications taken for human trafficking felony convictions (U11 ACD code)</li> <li>• Number of fraudulent documents or cases discovered by staff related to human trafficking.</li> <li>• Number of outreach materials delivered to CDL/CLP holders.</li> <li>• Click through rates and the number of impressions made.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Increased Testing Rates and Integrity:</u></b>  <b>Increased Testing Rates and CDL Issuance</b>  <i>Activities could include there being an increase of new Master Pointer Records are added to CDLIS due to efficiencies and/or expanded hours, personnel, etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new Master Pointer Records added to CDLIS.</li> <li>• Average number of skill tests administered.</li> <li>• Average wait time to schedule both knowledge and skills test.</li> <li>• Percent of drivers who pass the knowledge and skills tests on first attempt.</li> <li>• Percent of drivers who pass the knowledge and skills tests on retesting/second attempt</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Increased Testing Rates and Integrity:</u></b>  <b>Improved Testing Integrity and Increased Examiner Training</b>  <i>Activities could include using new technology to ensure CDL knowledge and skills testing integrity is</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of examiners (knowledge and skills) taking initial training</li> <li>• Number of examiners (knowledge and skills) taking refresher training and exam more often than every 4 years</li> <li>• Percent of examiners (third-party vs. State) passing each</li> </ul>

<i>maintained.</i>	<p>exam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percent of auditing events resulting in findings for testing integrity (third-party vs. State)</li> <li>• Performance of new technologies used to ensure testing integrity is maintained captured through surveys and/or other means.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Cost Savings:</u></b> <i>Increased use of automated systems</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of electronic transactions in lieu of manual transactions recorded (e.g., knowledge and/or skills testing results, MEC posting, Skills Performance Evaluations and other variances)</li> <li>• Number of systems automated to save time and resources in administering the CDL Program at the State level.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Improved Fraud Prevention Methods:</u></b> <i>Identify and implement technology and procedures to prevent fraud in CDL and CLP issuance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume of technology deployment items.</li> <li>• Identify successful new technologies used to ensure fraud is reduced.</li> <li>• Number of CDL/CLP applicants prevented from receiving a license due to fraudulent activity.</li> <li>• Number of overt skills testing monitoring events</li> <li>• Number of covert skills testing monitoring events</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Reduction in Fraudulent CDL Activities:</u></b> <i>Increased effectiveness of fraud prevention</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of identified findings/fraudulent issues (not including missing documents or other errors)</li> <li>• Number of fraud cases</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Efficiency through Increased Training in Adjudication Process:</u></b> <i>Adjudication process is executed more efficiently</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of training events conducted with judiciary partners (courts, judges, prosecutor, law enforcement, and SDLA liaisons)</li> <li>• Number of attendees at training events</li> <li>• Duration of training event</li> </ul>

### 3. National CDLPI Priority Descriptions

CDLPI financial assistance funds are awarded through a competitive grant process, and no assurance of funding is implied, nor should it be inferred.

All applications must advance a public purpose in accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 6101 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 6302-6304. FMCSA may not use grants or cooperative agreements to acquire property services for FMCSA's or a pass-through entity's direct benefit or use. FMCSA may not award grant funding to individuals for personal gain, such as obtaining specialized training for Entry Level Driver Training

(ELDT) required for CDL licensing or procuring a CMV. This also includes the establishment or implementation of ELDT programs or investigations into Training Providers compliance with 49 CFR Part 380 ELDT requirements. FMCSA will not award grant funding to a for-profit business that does not provide benefits to the SDLAs in improving the national CDL Program and compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

**FMCSA is prohibited under 49 U.S.C. § 31313(b) from providing grant funds for the purchase, rent, or lease of land or buildings.**

Unless indicated otherwise, references to the CDLPI grant program priorities include both Basic and High Priority/Emerging Issues activities/projects, with details for each type of CDLPI grant priority focus areas explained later in this section. All activities are eligible for 100 percent Federal funding, and all applicants must provide baseline performance data and projected benchmarks to be reached for each goal, objective, and activity, along with data sources and specific 49 CFR regulatory citations.

**CDLPI Basic Projects** are only applicable to State agencies. Applications should support the development, implementation, and compliance sustainment with provisions in 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

**CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Projects** may be implemented by States, local governments, Tribal governments, and other entities capable of executing national projects that aid States in their compliance efforts and improving the national CDL Program.

## **4. CDLPI Basic**

### **1.1 General**

State agencies are eligible to apply for the priorities listed below.

Proposed projects must support the development, implementation, and/or the maintenance and operations of the State's CDL program. Project plans that provide a benefit to the general driver population, in addition to current CLP and CDL holders, must include the cost allocation methodology used to determine the cost benefit to improving CDL compliance.

The CDLPI grant program is not intended to supplement ongoing operational costs of State CDL programs. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. For this reason, funding for annually recurring State administrative costs receives a lower priority than funding associated with compliance issues or innovative CDL program improvements.

### **1.2 CDLPI Basic Grants**

FMCSA will reimburse 100 percent of total project costs supporting the implementation of CDL-related regulations and/or activities that directly impact a State's compliance with the CDL program. Applicants must provide, for each priority, the 49 CFR section citation that supports the project's compliance initiative(s); baseline data; projected outputs and outcomes; and source of data that supports the need for funding and will be used to measure the outcomes.

Eligible applications under this category include but are not limited to:

1. Applications for projects to achieve or maintain compliance with FMCSA's CDL rulemakings, which includes disqualification of prohibited drivers under the Electronic Exchange; Controlled Substances and Alcohol Testing; State Driver's Licensing Agency Non-Issuance/Downgrade of Commercial Driver's License; Medical Examiner's Certification Integration Final Rule, Lifetime Disqualification for Human Trafficking; and Entry Level Driver Training.
2. Applications that support a state's correction and mitigation of its CDL regulatory compliance findings. The project plan must address the specific finding(s), include the 49 CFR citation, and identify the data source to be used to determine when compliance has been attained to close the finding.
3. Applications that support a State in improving the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of CDLIS-required data elements to maintain the highest possible quality of all CDL data, to include correcting broken and missing CDLIS pointers, submitting all convictions electronically as required by 49 CFR § 384.209 within 10 days, and correcting CDLIS transaction errors. Such applications must include the baseline data and data source to be used to measure improved compliance level/performance.
4. Applications that support an SDLA's partnership efforts that lead to enhancing SDLA compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. FMCSA will give priority to proposals for multi-jurisdictional partnerships or collaboration with other entities. The project activities may include partnerships among SDLAs, law enforcement agencies, and judicial partners such as: prosecutors, judges and/or court clerks, within the same State to increase outreach and training on CDL disqualifications and/or masking and diversion; partnerships among SDLAs that deliver cross-functional workshops that include judicial stakeholders, law enforcement agencies, and other interested stakeholders; and implementation of facial imaging partnerships across multiple jurisdictions to combat CDL/CLP fraud directly.
5. Applications to support an SDLA's operation and maintenance (O&M) projects that sustain and maintain compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. The project activities may include refresher examiner training beyond the regulatory requirements; kiosk and tablet O&M and licensing agreements; skills testing site improvements; annual software licensing and IT maintenance agreements; improving scheduling of knowledge and skills testing systems, reproducing CDL Driver Manuals and CDL Examiner Manuals; and develop accurate and complete ACD code translations to the appropriate State codes. However, O&M projects will receive lowest funding priority.

## **5. CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Cooperative Agreements and Grants**

### **2.1 General**

States, local governments, and other entities, other than individuals, capable of executing national projects that aid SDLAs in their compliance efforts and improve the national CDL program are eligible to apply for the priorities listed below.

## 2.2 CDLPI High Priority/Emerging Issues Cooperative Agreements and Grants

FMCSA will reimburse 100 percent of the total project costs supporting project activities directly connected to improving SDLA's regulatory compliance (must provide the specific regulatory references) with U.S.C. § 31311 and/or 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. Eligible applications under this category include but are not limited to:

1. Applications that support reducing CDL skills testing delays and wait times.
  - Project activities may include skills examiners training and outreach on school bus driver testing requirements, recruiting and onboarding of additional skills test examiner trainers, and offering more testing times at testing locations.
2. Applications that support activities related to recognition, prevention, and reporting of human trafficking with a focus on CMV drivers who hold CDLs; must not duplicate the purpose of other Federal funding sources (i.e., FMCSA High Priority funding or Department of Justice programs).
  - Project activities may include, collaborating with industry experts, such as TAT and other SDLAs, and survivors to create State specific outreach materials, and developing and implementing a CDL specific counter human trafficking group that would include all appropriate Stakeholders, including but not limited to, law enforcement, court clerks, prosecutors, judges, SDLA staff, and survivors of human trafficking.
3. Applications for projects to conduct a systematic review of a State's CDL program with recommended improvement actions to enable the State to support its Annual State Certification of Compliance as required by 49 CFR § 384.305. Such projects are intended to strengthen compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384 by analyzing the State's performance in one or more of the following three major review areas: Operational, Data Reconciliation, and Legal Sufficiency by either internal State auditors or through a sub-award or contract to an entity that has demonstrated its knowledge, skills and abilities to evaluate an SDLA's compliance with Federal regulations. Further details below:
  - Operational review may include evaluating the SDLA's process workflows for: licensure, convictions, and withdrawals; electronic and other processing actions; CDLIS helpdesk or equivalent and fraud detection; and processing communications between the judiciary and SDLAs.
  - Data reconciliation review may include a detailed review of the data processing capabilities to confirm that every conviction has been accounted for in the DHR and that proper disqualification has been applied.
  - Legal sufficiency review analyzes a State's legal authority to implement 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

If the SDLA is not the applicant, the project plan must demonstrate that a State or multiple States have committed to be subject to an evaluation by the applicant.

4. Applications that will benefit the national CDL Program by improving compliance through the use of proven tools or developing new tools that can be utilized by SDLAs and other partners.

- Project activities may include training sessions on CDL specific regulatory requirements, improving the timeliness, accuracy, completeness of CDL data exchanges between the judiciaries/courts and SDLAs, and facial recognition services for CDL holders.
5. Applications for enhancing court expertise. Such eligible projects will enhance the expertise of court officers in prosecuting, adjudicating, and transmitting CDL violations.
    - Project activities may include providing training on the prevention of masking CDL-related offenses and ensuring that 49 CFR 383.51 disqualifying felony convictions for CDL/CLP holders are provided to the SDLAs for proper adjudication. Project activities may include developing and implementing a CDL citation and adjudication group that would include all appropriate Stakeholders that partake in the citation and adjudication process, including but not limited to, law enforcement, court clerks, prosecutors, judges, and SDLA staff.
  6. Applications that research and/or facilitate the detection and prevention of fraud in the CDL process.
    - Project activities may include conducting a research project on fraudulent activities and how to mitigate against those activities, training and implementing technology or other innovative approaches in the following areas: issuing licenses and permits, testing, recordkeeping, data reporting, and adjudication of CDL/CLP offenses.
  7. Applications that support hosting meetings and conferences to address CDL compliance issues among the SDLAs and other stakeholders. The application must include the following elements to be considered: 1) a detailed budget; 2) a timeline for completion of the plan's components; 3) a detailed plan for execution including; a) tentative agenda that is collaborative with entities engaged in CDL compliance issues; b) onsite support during the meeting; and c) assistance with attendees' hotel and airfare to ensure reasonable and necessary expenses are adhered to; and 4) providing a post-meeting final report to include;
    - a) an overview of all presentations with session minutes to include action items to be addressed; b) a list of attendees with accounting of all expenses; and c) attendee feedback on sessions.
  8. Applications that support activities that implement or maintain an employer notification service (ENS) with potential benefit to the national CDL Program.

## SECTION B – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

### 1 Funding and Number of Awards

FMCSA anticipates making approximately 55 awards in response to this NOFO.

FMCSA anticipates awarding approximately \$89.4 million during FY 2025, which includes carry over funding from previous fiscal years. Final funding amounts are subject to the availability of funding appropriated by Congress.

**Note:** Applicants for CDLPI funding must not include more than four (4) projects per application. FMCSA will not review or consider any projects beyond the maximum four projects per application.

### 2 Type of Award

Awards under this NOFO will be issued as a grant or cooperative agreement. FMCSA will determine the appropriate award type based on the proposed project and the degree of Federal involvement.

This funding opportunity is for new FMCSA awards only. Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing awards are not eligible.

### 3 Period of Performance

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 31104(f)(6), awarded funding is available for the fiscal year of award and the 4 succeeding years, but may be awarded for a shorter period. The period of performance for CDLPI grants will be the date range designated in Block 4 of the Notice of Grant Award.

**Note:** When requesting a period of performance on the SF- 424 application form, applicants should carefully consider how long it will take to complete the grant's activities and objectives. The start date should be no later than the last day of the current fiscal year, September 30, 2025.

### 4 Degree of Federal Involvement

#### 4.1 Cooperative Agreement

In accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 6305, FMCSA will award a cooperative agreement when substantial involvement of FMCSA in carrying out the activity is anticipated. FMCSA will outline the substantial involvement at the time of award in the notice of award (e.g., the degree to which FMCSA employees are directing the performance or implementation of the award program).



In general, substantial involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Agency review and approval of one stage before work can begin on a subsequent stage of project objectives and/or activities;
- b. Agency coordination and collaboration due to interrelationship with other award projects;
- c. Collaboration or joint development and prior approval of education materials, reports, etc., as listed in the original application and part of an approved project; and
- d. FMCSA involvement in outreach and other activities relating to the publication of materials.

Under a cooperative agreement, FMCSA agrees to assign professionally qualified staff to serve as liaisons between the recipient and FMCSA when event coordination is needed; provide technical assistance to the recipient; assist with the exchange of ideas and information as necessary and permissible; and carry out other actions relating to the monitoring of performance activities under this award.

The recipient also agrees to designate a project manager or key point of contact to work with FMCSA and act as a liaison between the awardee and the Federal Government.

FMCSA will further outline the nature of Federal involvement at the time of award and include additional details, as relevant, in the award documentation.

## **4.2 Grant**

Substantial involvement is not expected between FMCSA and the grant recipient when carrying out the activity outlined in the agreement. FMCSA provides financial assistance, technical assistance, and oversight. Recipients provide the effort and expertise necessary to carry out the approved activities. Recipients are responsible for achieving the work described in their grant award, complying with the grant requirements laid out in the grant award and Terms and Conditions, the administration of the grant, and monitoring and oversight of any sub-recipients or sub-contractors.



## SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### 1 Eligible Applicants

The following section specifies the applicants eligible for award.

#### 1.1 Eligible entities

CDLPI awards are available to the following entities, who meet the additional eligibility criteria in 1.2 and 1.3 below:

- a. State Government
- b. County Government
- c. City or Township Government
- d. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education
- e. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized)
- f. Nonprofit with 501(c)(3) IRS status (other than institutions of Higher Education)
- g. Private Institutions of Higher Education
- h. For Profit Organization (Other than Small business)
- i. Small business
- j. Hispanic-serving Institution
- k. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- l. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)
- m. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions

#### 1.2 State Driver Licensing Agencies (SDLAs)

To be eligible for a CDLPI Basic category grant, SDLAs must:

- a. Assume responsibility for adopting and administering State safety laws and regulations that are compatible with the Federal CDL requirements of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384;
- b. Address outstanding findings discovered during Annual Program Reviews (APR) and Skills Testing Reviews (STR) in the self-assessment section of the application package; and
- c. Comply with or be making a good faith effort toward substantial compliance with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 31311.

#### 1.3 Other State Agencies (not SDLAs)

Applications received from other State agencies will be considered under Basic or High Priority/Emerging Issues projects. These agencies include the State courts, law enforcement and departments of transportation, and public, State, and private institutions of higher education.

## 1.4 Non-State Organizations

Applications received from non-State organizations will be considered for High Priority/Emerging Issues funding. Non-State organizations eligible to apply include non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) status, federally recognized Native American Tribal organizations, for-profit entities capable of executing national projects that aid SDLAs in their compliance efforts and improve the national CDL program, and local governmental agencies.

Applications must clearly describe the anticipated level and nature of FMCSA participation and the responsibilities of each partner to the agreement until the grant or cooperative agreement is closed.

FMCSA must approve the development and execution of training to the courts and law enforcement to ensure no duplication of efforts, since there are other entities that service or support similar objectives with the courts and law enforcement.

Applicants must consider FMCSA's involvement in its grant applications.

FMCSA must approve the development of resources, such as desk manuals, fact sheets, best practices, and webpages, that are to be used by other entities. This will ensure the content is coordinated, approved, and does not conflict with other guidance provided, or resources funded, by FMCSA.

**Individuals are not eligible to apply or receive grant funds under the CDLPI grant program.**

## 2 Cost-Sharing and Matching Requirements

FMCSA will not require a matching share for fiscal year 2025 awards.

## 3 Other

The below are specific items that must be completed for your application package to move forward to the Merit Review process. (See Eligibility Criteria outlined in Section E. 1a.) If one of these items are not fulfilled the application will not be considered eligible.

A complete application includes:

- The application was submitted by the deadline.
- The application was submitted by an eligible applicant, as described in Section C. 1.
- The application has a completed Federal Assistance (SF-424) form.
- The application has a completed Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs form (SF-424A).
- The application has a completed Assurances for Non-Construction Programs form (SF-424B).
- The application has a completed Grants.gov Certification Regarding Lobbying form.

- The application has a completed Lobbying activities (SF-LLL) form, if applicable.
- The application includes a complete Budget Narrative.
- The application includes a complete Project Narrative.
- The application's projects support the purpose of the CDLPI grant program and statutes.

## SECTION D – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 1 Address to Request Application Package

Potential applicants may obtain all forms included in this Notice at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

If you require paper copies of materials, you may request copies at:

**Email:** [FMCSA\\_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov](mailto:FMCSA_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov)

**Mail:** U. S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
Grants Management Office (MC-BG)  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, West Building  
Washington, DC 20590

### 2 Content and Form of Application Submission

The application package must contain the elements listed below to be considered for an award.

#### 2.1 Formatting

The application must follow the format and limitation stated below:

- a. Application must be prepared on 8 1/2 x 11-inch format.
- b. Margins (Top, Bottom, Right and Left) no smaller than one inch on all pages. (Header and Footer are allowed in the margins).
- c. Times New Roman 12-point font must be used for all text, including tables and graphs.
- d. Applications must be submitted in a format readable by Microsoft (MS) Word, Excel, or in text-searchable PDF formats (as applicable).
- e. The application narrative is limited to 35 (40 for SDLA applicants) total pages. FMCSA will not read or consider any materials beyond the specified page limit in the application review process. NOTE: The 35 or 40 total page limit is inclusive of the introduction, self-assessment, problem statement(s), performance objective(s), performance activity(s), performance measurement(s) plan, monitoring plan, and budget narrative. All other documents and forms described in Appendix A will not count against the application page limit.
- f. The application package must contain the elements listed below and all documentation described in Appendix A to be considered for an award. Appendix B contains examples for formatting purposes only, but those examples are not required to be used.

## 2.2 Project Plan Narrative Requirements

Application narrative packages are limited to 35 total pages. This requirement is per application, not per project. Submission of all required SF-forms, key contact, attachment forms and indirect cost agreements do not count against the page limitation.

While supplemental attachments are allowed, the application's project and budget narratives must include all required information. The narrative must indicate when a supplemental attachment needs to be referenced. **The application must include the following sections in consecutive order for each of the proposed projects:**

a. **Introduction**

Include a description of the goal(s)/purpose(s) intended to be accomplished within the application and reference the applicable program priority(ies) (See Section A) for the project. The introduction must also include a discussion of the organizational capacity of the entity: an overview of the organization's structure and a description of sufficient resources to be successful in administering the proposed projects.

**For SDLA Applicants Only: CDL Program Self-Assessment (*Program Overview*)**

Applications from SDLAs must include a CDL program self-assessment, which may be included as part of the application's brief introduction. A separate, stand-alone document is not required. The CDL Program Assessment is a summary of key elements of the applicant's program and must include the following six components:

- A list of all open findings in the SCORE system, including the finding's citation and a brief description; the reason for the finding; the proposed resolution; and the expected date by which the finding will be closed.
- A list of all open CDLPI grant awards, including the award number, award amount, and purpose; progress made to date in achieving the award's objectives; remaining unexpended funding; the expected date of completion; ***and how this application's requested funding does not duplicate their costs or activities.***
- The total number of noncommercial licenses and the total number of CLPs and CDLs issued to date and annually, listed separately by type of CLP or CDL.
- The latest statistics concerning the status of missing and broken pointers, referencing the last run CD31 Report data.
- The timeliness of transmitting and posting of convictions and withdrawals for CDL drivers, both out of State and in State, with data source and date referenced.

This requirement applies to SDLAs only. Applications that fail to include the required information will be considered incomplete and risk disqualification.

b. **Problem Statement**

Provide a qualitative description of the identified problem that the project will address. Include details on the performance data used to identify the problem and to establish the baseline (include data source and date, and explain how the applicant collects, maintains, and analyzes the data). Data should support the proposed project.

- Examples of data sources: SCORE system, CDLIS reports, enforcement, and crash statistics data in A&I online, and internal reports that can be consistently generated for measuring the outputs and outcomes.

c. **Performance Objective**

Provide a description of the applicant's anticipated quantifiable goal/objective related to the above problem statement. This can be measured in numbers, percentages, or other forms that accurately measure the **outcomes** the applicant anticipates will result from implementing the strategies and activities proposed. Goals should be **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound**.

d. **Performance Activity Plan**

Provide a description of the activities the applicant will conduct to help mitigate the problem and achieve the objective's outcome. Each activity should provide a baseline and benchmark that is measurable. The data element that must be quantifiable and will measure the movement against the established baseline.

When developing the activity plan, consider the number and frequency of activities you believe will bring progress towards the ultimate objective defined.

e. **Performance Measurement Plan**

Provide a description of how the applicant determined the baseline data that will measure progress towards achieving the performance objective(s). The measurements must be quantifiable with measurable outcomes and outputs. The measures must include specific targets/benchmarks that can be reported on in the quarterly progress report, if practicable, or as annual outcomes that will gauge the progress being made on achieving the objectives and activities identified for each project.

f. **Monitoring and Timeline/Milestone Plan**

Provide a description of the method(s) that will be used to monitor the performance goals, objectives, and activities; and report on the outputs and outcomes for each project to include timelines and milestones, as appropriate.

g. **Budget Narrative**

A budget narrative is a description, by budget category (object class), that details the costs necessary to complete the proposed project. A well-written budget narrative ensures that the applicant has properly documented proposed costs. The level of detail should be sufficient to justify the funding requested and makes a natural connection to the activities and objective of each project. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the sample budget narrative format included in [Appendix B](#). In order to allow reviewers to evaluate the

reasonableness, necessity, and allocability of all costs, applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification broken out by individual objectives.

Each project must have its own budget narrative that matches the SF-424A Budget Categories Columns for each project. **DO NOT include cents for Federal costs on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative. Round all cents up or down to whole dollars.**

The budget narrative must reflect the allocability of project activities to the grant. Budgets must reflect the appropriate Federal amounts, as stated under the priorities in subsection (A)(4). FMCSA may adjust the applicant's budget, which will require the submission of an updated SF-424, SF-424A, and budget narrative.

## 2.3 SF-424 and SF-424A

**SF-424, Field 12** – Must reflect the Funding Opportunity Number and the title of the opportunity under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement.

**SF-424, Field 18 - Box (a)** – Must reflect the total estimated Federal funding requested to complete the project plan. As no match/cost sharing is required, enter “0” in **Box (b)**. **Box (g)** should equal the total project amount, which is the sum of boxes (a) and (b). The value of in-kind contributions should be included on the appropriate lines, as applicable. **All costs must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar amount.**

**SF-424A - Section A – Budget Summary** – Must reflect the Federal share in column (e), and the total cost per project in column (g). Each project in the application will be shown on lines one through four as applicable with the Total for each column on line five. Note line five, column (e), (f), and (g) must reconcile with SF-424 field 18, as described above. **All costs must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar amount.**

**Section B – Budget Categories** - Capture the total amount per object class categories, as applicable. In the column headings one through four, enter the titles, that match narrative title, for each of the proposed projects that match the title in Section A and the project plan. Please note, the SF-424A covers the life of the project costs, and not just the first year (as stipulated in the SF-424A instructions). Section B must be completed. **All costs must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar amount.**

## 2.4 Requirements When One or More Projects are Proposed

A project consists of one or more priorities, which work towards achieving a defined goal objective(s). If an applicant chooses to propose multiple projects within a single application, each project must contain separate and distinct project narratives, budget narratives, line-item budgets, and titles for each project proposed within that application package.

When an application contains multiple projects, each project must include the following sections in consecutive order: Brief Introduction, Problem Statement, Performance Objectives, Performance Activity Plan, Performance Measurement Plan, Monitoring Plan, and Budget Narrative. For example, in an application comprised of multiple projects, the first project would include the above sections in

consecutive order. The following projects would respectively follow suit.

Applications with multiple projects must also contain a comprehensive or summary budget that includes expenses per project/per line item. The comprehensive budget must match the application's SF-424 and SF424a.

### 3 Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

The applicant must:

- i. Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application at <https://www.sam.gov>; and
- ii. Obtain and use a unique entity identifier (UEI) created in SAM.gov; and
- iii. Accept the financial assistance certifications and representations required for (non-federal entities) during the SAM.gov registration process and/or renewal per 2 CFR 200.209

The applicant must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and update the registration at least every 12 months from the date of initial registration or subsequently update its information in the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate, and complete.

If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time FMCSA is ready to make a Federal award, FMCSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

## 4 Submission Dates and Times

### 4.1 Deadline

FULL AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS for the CDLPI grant are **DUE ON July 7, 2025, by 5:00 p.m. ET**. Once [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) has received your submission, you will receive email messages to advise you of the progress of your application through the system. Over the next two business days, you should receive two emails: 1) confirming application receipt by the Grants.gov system; and 2) indicating that the application has either been successfully validated by [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) prior to transmission to FMCSA or has been rejected due to errors. The applicant assumes responsibility for a timely and complete submission.



## 4.2 Consideration of Applications

Only applicants who comply with all submission deadline requirements described in this NOFO and electronically submit valid applications through Grants.gov will be eligible for consideration of award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.

## 4.3 Late Applications

FMCSA will not consider a late application except under extraordinary circumstances. A late application will only be accepted if there is a large-scale natural disaster or a Grants.gov system issue that threatens the timely submission of a grant application. Problems with computer systems at the applicant's organization, failure to follow the application instructions or failure to submit or complete the program application or complete required registrations by the submission deadline are not considered system issues.

# 5 Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

All applications under the Notice are subject to E.O. 12372. The applicants with a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), and therefore a requirement to comply with E.O. 12372, are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) website at: [www.whitehouse.gov/omb](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb).

# 6 Funding Restrictions

The CDLPI grant program is not intended to supplement ongoing operational costs of State CDL programs. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. FMCSA may not award grant funding to individuals for personal gain, such as obtaining specialized training for Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) required for CDL licensing or procuring a CMV. This also includes the establishment or implementation of ELDT programs or investigations into Training Providers compliance with 49 CFR Part 380 ELDT requirements. FMCSA will not award grant funding to a for-profit business that does not provide benefits to the SDLAs in improving the national CDL Program and compliance with 49 CFR parts 383 and 384. Its primary purpose is to assist States in achieving and sustaining compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR parts 383 and 384.

FMCSA is not obligated to approve costs incurred outside the award period of performance. These costs are incurred at the sole risk of the applicant and impose no obligation on FMCSA to make an award or increase the amount of the approved budget.

Pre-award costs are not eligible for reimbursement. All costs must be allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary to achieve the project's stated goals, and must comply with the cost principles in 2 CFR part 200. Compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds.

Costs must also be consistently applied and documented. These standards are described in the applicable cost principles and administrative requirements in 2 CFR 200.400 through 200.475; note that 200.405 includes requirements for allocating costs, 200.416, 200.417 include Special Considerations for States, Local Governments, and Indian Tribes, and 200.418, 200.419 include Special Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education. Contact FMCSA's Grants Management Office for additional information.

The rent, lease, or buying of land or buildings is not an allowable cost.

Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in reimbursements under the award being deemed improper and subsequently disallowed.

Eligible CDLPI grant program costs include, but are not limited to:

- i. **Personnel expenses**, including recruitment and screening, training, salaries and fringe benefits, and supervision. Personnel expenses included in an organization's indirect cost rate (IDC) must not be included as a direct cost in the grant budget.
- ii. **Equipment and travel expenses**, including but not limited to per diem expenses directly related to compliance with the CDL regulations, vehicles (very limited and must be fully supported within project proposal and must include a statement if **electric vehicles** were considered), uniforms, supplies, materials, communications equipment, vehicle maintenance, fuel, and oil (very limited and must be fully supported within project proposal).
- iii. **Clerical and administrative expenses**, to the extent necessary and directly attributable to the grant project and not already included in the indirect cost pool.
- iv. **Expenses related to the improvement of real property** (e.g., refurbishing of paved areas for conducting off-road skills tests) that do not materially increase the value of the property.
- v. **Expenses related to data acquisition, storage, and analysis** that are not being requested under any other FMCSA grant program's funding, that are specifically identifiable as program-related, and that are intended to improve efficiency. The proposal should clearly demonstrate the extent to which these costs will directly benefit the CDLPI grant program. Cost allocation plan(s) should be attached, as applicable, and must illustrate how the costs support the direct benefit to CDL compliance, as supported in the project proposal, as opposed to the benefit for all licensed drivers.

**Note:** Applications requesting information technology funding, such as upgrades or modifications to existing software or equipment, are subject to review by FMCSA's Office of Research and/or the Office of Technology.

FMCSA will not approve reimbursement requests for indirect costs if an approved IDC agreement is not in force for the period that the indirect cost expenses are incurred.

If claiming indirect cost charges, the recipient must include an active approved IDC agreement with the application submitted for funding. Should the recipient fail to provide an approved agreement during the pre-award phase and a grant is awarded, the recipient will have 30 days from the date of award acceptance to provide a copy of the IDC agreement. If we do not receive the required documentation within the allocated time frame, the recipient will not be reimbursed for indirect cost charges for that fiscal year. Once an approved rate is provided to FMCSA, the recipient will then be allowed to claim indirect cost in the following fiscal year of the award. 2 CFR 200.414(c).

Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII of 2 CFR part 200, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 15 percent of modified total direct costs, which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 15 percent de minimis IDC. See 2 CFR 200.414(f).

FMCSA will not approve reimbursement requests for fringe benefit expenses calculated by using a rate if there was not a fringe benefit rate approved by the recipient's Federal cognizant agency for indirect costs in place for the period of time the fringe benefit expenses were incurred. In the absence of such a federally approved fringe rate agreement, FMCSA will approve reimbursement of fringe benefit costs based on actual costs incurred.

All FMCSA grant programs are cost reimbursable, which means that grant recipients must first expend their own money before vouchering by submitting an invoice to FMCSA for costs associated with approved activities identified in the grant agreement. Recipients will be reimbursed by FMCSA for actual costs incurred, provided that the costs are reasonable, approved, allowable, and allocable in accordance with the OMB regulations and FMCSA policy, within the approved budget, and supported by documentation. The recipients must request reimbursement at least once each quarter.

Recipients must submit requests for reimbursement electronically through the Delphi eInvoicing System (iSupplier). Additional information is available at: <https://einvoice.esc.gov/>.

FMCSA will not provide reimbursement for salary-related bonus payments, either as a direct or indirect cost. Bonus costs are not considered a necessary expense under FMCSA awards. See 2 CFR 200.403 – 200.405.

## 7 Other Submission Requirements

Applications must be submitted electronically via <https://www.grants.gov> as described above in this section. In the event of system problems or technical difficulties with the application submittal, please call 1-800-518-4726 or email [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed on Federal holidays). To submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants must:

- i. Create a username and password.
- ii. Establish an E-Business point of contact (POC) in order to respond to the registration emails.
- iii. Establish at least one Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).

Please note the registration process in Grants.gov usually takes 2-4 business weeks to complete. FMCSA will not consider late applications due to failure to register or comply with Grants.gov requirements.

### **Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Funds**

Project budgets should show how different funding sources will share in each activity and present the data in dollars and percentages. The budget should identify other Federal funds the applicant is applying for, has been awarded, or intends to use. Funding sources should be grouped into three categories: non- Federal, current application CDLPI, and other Federal with specific amounts for each funding source.”

### **Sharing of Application Information**

The Department may share application information within the Department or with other Federal agencies if the Department determines that sharing is relevant to the respective program’s objectives.

## SECTION E – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

# 1 Criteria

## 1.1 Eligibility Criteria

FMCSA will first screen all applications received by the due date to determine if the application is eligible. In addition to the eligibility criteria under Section C, FMCSA will review the application for the following criteria.

Eligibility Criteria:	
1.	Was the application submitted by the deadline?
2.	Was the application submitted by an eligible applicant?
3.	Is this application a duplicate submission as confirmed by the applicant?
4.	Was the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) completed?
5.	Was the Budget information for Non-Construction form (SF-424A) completed?
6.	Was the Assurances for Non-Construction form (SF-424B) completed?
7.	Was the grants.gov Certification Regarding Lobbying form completed?
8.	Was the Disclosure of Lobbying activities form (SF-LLL) completed?
9.	Do the Key Contact forms include PI/PD and ADO contact information?
10.	Was a current IDC agreement included in the application? (if applicable)
11.	Does the application include a complete Budget Narrative?
12.	Does the application include a complete Project Narrative?
13.	Does the project support the purpose of the CDLPI grant program and statutes?

## 1.2 Merit Evaluation Criteria

FMCSA subject matter experts will review all eligible applications using the following Merit Evaluation Criteria: Technical Merit Criteria; Budget Cost Analysis Criteria; Program-Specific Criteria; Past Performance Criteria; and Other Review Information. All of these criteria are further explained below.

### 1.2.1 Technical Merit

FMCSA subject matter experts will review all eligible applications using the following Merit Evaluation Criteria:

1. The proposed project(s) meets the CDL program's priorities and statutory requirements and will likely achieve success within the proposed period of performance.

2. The application includes clearly identified performance goal(s), objectives and activities supporting one or more of the Section A.4 priorities, along with quantifiable baseline data, benchmarks, and timelines.
3. The application includes costs that are linked to the project's goals and are reasonable and necessary for the project's success.
4. The proposed approach is reasonable in scope, addresses existing and emerging CDL safety issues, and is likely to be successful within the period of performance.
5. The project plan provides a good description of the innovative approach and clearly articulates the benefit(s) to the national CDL program, if applicable.
6. The application provides a description of how projects and tasks have been effectively managed in the past.
7. The application includes a monitoring and evaluation component that indicates how the recipient will continuously evaluate performance and outcomes and make adjustment, if necessary, which enables FMCSA to monitor performance and progress toward successful completion.

### **1.2.2 Budget Management Review/Cost Analysis Criteria**

These criteria involve the budget: whether costs are allowable in accordance with Federal grant requirements, including the appropriateness and reasonableness of the budget estimate and the resources to be dedicated to the project; and the reasonableness and feasibility of the schedule relative to the application timeline.

The budget should describe specific activities that support the objective(s) of the project plan/program. FMCSA considers whether budget components such as staffing, equipment, training, and travel are clearly linked to the project's goal(s) and are necessary to adequately compensate, equip, train, and enable personnel to conduct the activities included in the project plan.

The budget evaluation helps identify project-related risks that must be considered prior to recommendation, in addition to those risks arising from technical uncertainty. FMCSA will evaluate applications and other information, including, but not limited to:

1. Elements of work included in the application have associated budget costs and, conversely, all elements in the applicant's budget have corresponding work elements included in the application.
2. Budget costs are allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable per 2 CFR part 200.
3. Cost in a particular cost category has been properly identified as allowable, with the necessary detail for its use, and is not duplicative of the other budget line items.
4. All equipment, training, and travel components are clearly linked to the project goal and are necessary to adequately equip, train, and enable personnel to conduct the activities included in the project plan.
5. A debarment and suspension review that included a review of the applicant's administrative capability self-certification form and a check against the records in SAM

(currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System). Please note that an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

6. Any applicant included comments, which FMCSA will review, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.206 (Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants).
7. An evaluation of the applicant's Single Audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act in accordance with 2 CFR part 200 Subpart F, grantees shall provide copies of the audit reports to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC) (see 2 CFR 200.512 (b)). This is only applicable and federally mandated to recipients that expended \$1,000,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year. FMCSA may, at its discretion, request further information and/or conduct an audit to confirm compliance as indicated on the SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, as provided for in the United States Code or the Code of Federal Regulations.

### **1.2.3 Program-Specific Criteria**

The application must carry out a CDL project that reflects the program's priorities and statutory requirements that will likely achieve successful completion within the award's period of performance.

This relates to program-specific policy areas such as statutory references, published policy documents, etc., that may factor into an award recommendation. CDLPI program-specific factors may include but are not limited to:

1. The extent to which the project(s) supports the NOFO priorities and CDLPI statutes.
2. The extent to which the project will close a compliance finding identified in an APR, STR, or another written correspondence to the SDLA.
3. The extent to which a project complements the applicant's existing program or enhances its capabilities.
4. The extent to which a project supports the applicant's potential for continued success in achieving and maintaining compliance with all CDL program requirements currently in effect or scheduled to take effect in the near future; and
5. The extent to which a project demonstrates an innovative approach with potential benefit to the nationwide CDLPI program, if applicable.

### **1.2.4 Past Performance Criteria**

This review provides information that is considered a possible indicator of future performance. Applicants that have previously received FMCSA grant funding will be evaluated in part on their ability to complete prior year awards on time, their compliance with those grant terms and conditions,

including review of any financial and performance quarterly reports and the results of any FMCSA grant monitoring activities, to include budget execution, original budget vs. final budget, and unexpended balances.

Applicants that have not previously received grant funding from FMCSA are not subject to this review, and their applications will not be eliminated from funding consideration on this basis.

FMCSA will evaluate applications and past performance to determine the extent to which the applicant had any problems related to programmatic management and whether any issues have been noted related to project management, compatibility, adherence to project timelines, programmatic reporting, etc.

Based upon monitoring conducted by a grantor, reviewers will determine if there are issues with any organizational, financial, or business management practices, such as vouchering, financial reporting, cost allocation, debt rating, or Subpart F (formerly A-133) Single Audit findings.

Based on the applicant's past performance, FMCSA will determine how well the application demonstrates that the:

1. Proposed project/program is reasonable in scope and likely to succeed within the period of performance.
2. Proposed expenditures are reasonable and necessary to conduct the proposed projects.
3. Milestones and timelines allow performance to be monitored.
4. Current project tasks are successfully performed and managed (e.g., within budget and on schedule).

## **1.2.5 Other Selection Considerations**

### **Additional Selection Criteria**

1. Supporting economic vitality at the national and regional level;
2. Utilizing alternative funding sources and innovative financing models to attract non-federal sources of infrastructure investment;
3. Using innovative approaches to improve safety and expedite project delivery;
4. Holding grant recipients accountable for their performance and achieving specific measurable outcomes identified by grant applicants;
5. Consistent with the Department's Rural Opportunities for Use Transportation for Economic Success (R.O.U.T.E.S) Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>), the Department recognizes that rural transportation networks face unique challenges. To the extent that those challenges are reflected in the merit criteria listed in this section, the Department will consider how the activities proposed in the application will address those challenges, regardless of the geographic location of those activities.



6. To the extent permitted by law and to the extent applicable, priority will be given to grant applications in accordance with [DOT Order – Ensuring Reliance upon Sound Economic Analysis in Department of Transportation Policies, Program, and Activities](#)

## 2 Review and Selection Process

### 2.1 Review Process

FMCSA will review all eligible applications received by the application deadline according to the merit evaluation criteria outlined in Section 1 above. The review and selection process will consist of an intake/eligibility criteria review, a technical and budget review, a program office review, and final selection. During the technical and budget review, FMCSA technical and financial staff members evaluate and analyze applications applying the evaluation criteria and submit their assessments to the program office. Then, the program office will gather and consider the results of the evaluations according to the technical merit, budget review/cost analysis, program-specific, past performance, and other review criteria, described in subsection (1) above, and assign ratings, consistent with the descriptions in this NOFO. The program office will recommend the initial selection of projects for the FMCSA Administrator's review. Finally, the FMCSA Administrator will select awards for review and approval.

### 2.2 Ratings

FMCSA prioritizes applications using the ratings shown below based on the applicability of the merit criteria and other preferences to the application.

- a. **Highly Responsive**: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the NOFO, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the Government's performance requirements, and demonstrates minimal or no weaknesses.
- b. **Responsive**: Applicant addresses most aspects of the criteria and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements but contains weaknesses. These weaknesses may be addressed by recommending the award and including a specific programmatic or administrative post-award term and condition or a reduction to requested funding. Applicant otherwise fully addresses all aspects of the criteria and demonstrates the likelihood of meeting the Government's expectations and requirements.
- c. **Not Responsive**: Applicant does not sufficiently address the criteria and/or failed to submit required documentation. For example, the application is missing a budget, the project narrative lacks a clearly defined problem statement, missing objectives/goals, etc. The information that the applicant has presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the Government's requirements and/or adherence to application submission requirements.

## 2.3 Applicant Information

As determined necessary to support the evaluation and selection process, FMCSA may conduct discussions with applicants to clarify elements of the technical and budget applications, seek additional information as to whether the project can be completed with a reduced award, and request additional detailed and itemized cost information, such as the SF-424, SF-424A, project plans, and budget narratives.

## 2.4 Compliance with DOT Order 2100.7, Ensuring Reliance upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs, and Activities

The Department intends to apply principles from DOT Order 2100.7, Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in DOT's Policies, Programs and Activities, when evaluating applications and making award selections. To the maximum extent permitted by law, FMCSA will prioritize projects that are in alignment with the principles outlined in DOT Order 2100.7.

# 3 Additional Information: Risk Assessment

Prior to award, each selected applicant will be subject to a risk assessment, as required by 2 CFR 200.206. Depending on the level and severity of FMCSA's risk assessment findings, FMCSA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive the award. FMCSA may also impose additional grant award terms and conditions above its customary general terms and conditions.

The risk assessment is conducted in several parts:

- i. A suspension and debarment review that includes a review of the applicant's administrative capability self-certification form and a check against the records in SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System).
  - An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.
- ii. FMCSA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.206; and
- iii. An evaluation of the applicant's Single Audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act, if applicable. FMCSA may, at its discretion, request further

information and/or conduct an audit to confirm compliance as indicated on the SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, as provided for in the United States Code or the Code of Federal Regulations.

## SECTION F – FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### 1 Federal Award Notices

Following the evaluation outlined in Section E, the Notice of Grant Agreement (NGA) signed by the FMCSA Grant Officer is the authorizing financial assistance document. The NGA will be sent through GrantSolutions, and it should be accepted by the recipient as soon as possible. FMCSA may approve full or partial funding of a grant application. The NGA issued to the recipient will specify whether the award is a grant or a cooperative agreement and will include any special award terms and conditions, if applicable.

After the application review process, FMCSA may need to contact the applicant with additional questions or for clarification of the application's components. FMCSA also reserves the right to determine the amount of awarded funding, including but not limited to factors such as reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support, prior to recommending any project for funding. Although the process is intended to be collaborative, FMCSA reserves the right to make final decisions on all awards. If being considered for funding, applicants may be required to submit an updated SF-424, SF-424A, supplemental budget, or project narrative based on a partial or modified grant recommendation. FMCSA expects to contact applicants, if necessary, during the Spring of 202X. This contact between applicants and FMCSA does not constitute any assurance that funding will be awarded.

Applicants chosen for grant funding are formally notified electronically by the FMCSA grant management system ([www.grantsolutions.gov/](http://www.grantsolutions.gov/)) before the grant's execution. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email. FMCSA cannot award grants or release information concerning applications recommended for funding until approval is obtained from the Secretary of Transportation. Further, FMCSA cannot award grants until the enactment of authorizing legislation, an appropriations act, budget authority, and apportionment from OMB. FMCSA may issue partial funding awards up to the level authorized.

Acceptance of the grant award constitutes the recipient's agreement to comply with all applicable statutes, regulations, E.O., OMB circulars, and terms and conditions of the award, including the reporting requirements shown below.

FMCSA will send a letter to notify those who were not funded with suggestions for how applications can be improved for the next grant cycle. FMCSA does not have an appeal process for unsuccessful applications for discretionary grant funds.

### 2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All awards will be administered pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted by DOT at 2 CFR part 1201 and FMCSA statutes and regulations.

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to SAM, and administrative capability, can be found in the Grants.gov application package under the “Related Documents” tab. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all documents when preparing applications. Contact the POC listed in the overview of the funding notification if you have questions on these provisions.

### **Compliance with Federal Laws and Policies**

The applicant assures and certifies, with respect to any application and awarded Project under this NOFO, that it will comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, guidelines, and requirements as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Federal funds and will cooperate with Federal officials in the enforcement of Federal law, including cooperating with and not impeding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other Federal offices and components of the Department of Homeland Security in the enforcement of Federal immigration law.

### **Domestic Preference Requirements**

As expressed in Executive Order 14005, Ensuring the Future Is Made in All of America by All of America’s Workers (86 FR 7475), it is the policy of the executive branch to maximize, consistent with law, the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. The Department expects all applicants to comply with that requirement without needing a waiver. However, to obtain a waiver, a recipient must be prepared to demonstrate how they will maximize the use of domestic goods, products, and materials in constructing their project.

### **Civil Rights and Title VI**

As a condition of a grant award, grant recipients must demonstrate that the recipient is in compliance with civil rights obligations and nondiscrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations (49 CFR Part 21) (including any amendments thereto), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and all other civil rights requirements and accompanying regulations. This demonstration may include a current Title VI Program Plan and a Community Participation Plan (alternatively called a Public Participation Plan) or confirmation that these documents have previously been submitted to DOT; and a description of how the recipient has and will ensure its infrastructure, facilities, and activities for which it has ADA responsibility, are accessible and nondiscriminatory to people with disabilities. In addition, pursuant to section (3)(b)(iv)(A) of Executive Order 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*, the Sponsor must agree that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government’s payment decisions for purposes of section 31 U.S.C. 3729(b)(4), and pursuant to section (3)(b)(iv)(B) of Executive Order 14173, the Sponsor must certify that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

DOT and the applicable Operating Administrations’ Office of Civil Rights may work with awarded grant recipients to ensure full compliance with Federal civil rights requirements. Recipients are encouraged to demonstrate efforts to create an equal employment opportunity in the workplace.

### **Federal Anti-Discrimination**

As a condition of award, pursuant to Section (3)(b)(iv)(A), Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination And Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, the recipient must agree that its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code.

As a condition of award, pursuant to Section (3)(b)(iv)(B), Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination And Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, by entering into a grant or cooperative agreement, the recipient must certify that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

### **Performance and Program Evaluation**

As a condition of grant award, grant recipients may be required to participate in an evaluation undertaken by DOT or another agency or partner. The evaluation may take different forms such as an implementation assessment across grant recipients, an impact and/or outcomes analysis of all or selected sites within or across grant recipients, or a benefit/cost analysis or assessment of return on investment. DOT may require applicants to collect data elements to aid the evaluation. As a part of the evaluation, as a condition of award, grant recipients must agree to: 1) make records available to the evaluation contractor or DOT staff; 2) provide access to program records, and any other relevant documents to calculate costs and benefits; (3) in the case of an impact analysis, facilitate the access to relevant information as requested; and (4) follow evaluation procedures as specified by the evaluation contractor or DOT staff.

Recipients and subrecipients are also encouraged to incorporate program evaluation including associated data collection activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting an agency priority goal(s). Title I of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), Pub. L. No. 115-435 (2019) urges Federal awarding agencies and Federal assistance recipients and subrecipients to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, to improve delivery, and to elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means "an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency." 5 U.S.C. § 311. Credible program evaluation activities are implemented with relevance and utility, rigor, independence and objectivity, transparency, and ethics (OMB Circular A-11, Part 6 Section 290).

For grant recipients receiving an award, evaluation costs are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect), unless prohibited by statute or regulation, and such costs may include the personnel and equipment needed for data infrastructure and expertise in data analysis, performance, and evaluation. (2 CFR part 200).

## **3 Reporting**

The grant terms and conditions outline the reporting requirements that the recipient must meet after award. Reporting responsibilities include quarterly program performance reports using the Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR) and quarterly financial status using the Federal Financial Report (SF-FFR, also known as the SF-425). Recipients must submit financial and performance reports

electronically through GrantSolutions; contact the primary or secondary point of contact listed in the overview of the funding notification for additional information.

If the cumulative total value of all your currently active grants and other awards is more than \$10,000,000 you must comply with the post-award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2 CFR part 200.

## SECTION G – FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions about this NOFO, please contact FMCSA's Grants Management Office:

- Email:** [FMCSA\\_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov](mailto:FMCSA_GrantMgmtHelpdesk@dot.gov)
- Telephone:** (202) 366-0621 (Grants Management Help Desk)
- Mail:** U. S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
Grants Management Office (MC-BG)  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, West Building  
Washington, DC 20590
- Office hours:** 9 a.m.to 5 p.m., Eastern Time  
Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.



## SECTION H – OTHER INFORMATION

This NOFO is intended for informational purposes and reflects current planning. If there is any inconsistency between the information contained in this NOFO and the terms of any resulting funding agreement, the terms of the funding agreement are controlling. Additionally, FMCSA may make changes or additions to this NOFO. All changes will be announced through Grants.gov. We encourage you to sign up for Grants.gov emails to be notified of the changes at <https://www.grants.gov/connect/manage-subscriptions/>

FMCSA plans to conduct an informational webinar for all prospective applicants. During this conference, FMCSA staff will review NOFO requirements at a high level; share best practices and lessons learned; and answer questions from prospective applicants as allowed by FMCSA policy. Please check for updates using the Funding Opportunity Number assigned to this award at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or subscribe, as described above.

For a general overview of the grants management cycle, FMCSA has developed grant resources for its applicants. These resources are available at <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/Grants/default.aspx>.

In addition, links to best practices and tips for completing a CDLPI grant application can be found below:

- CDLPI Best Practices: [Best Practices: Preparing a CDLPI Grant Application](#)
- [Tips for Completing Your CDLPI Grant Application](#)

The following attachments have been added to Grants.gov under this announcement. These attachments are available in Grants.gov under the “Related Documents” tab.

- [Appendix A](#): Application Package Requirements Checklist
- [Appendix B](#): Budget Narrative Guidance

## APPENDIX A – APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

Below is a non-exhaustive list of documents necessary for a responsive grant application. This list is intended to assist applicants in compiling their application. However, because the required documents may differ slightly based on the nature of the grant application, applicants should not rely solely on this checklist and must still read the entire NOFO to ensure that they have included all required documents.

FMCSA reserves the right to request additional documentation or information to confirm compliance with applicable laws.

Document Name	Document Description and Location Information	Submit in:
SAM.gov	Registration and Financial Assistance General Certifications & Representations found on Sam.gov	<b>SAM.gov</b>
Project Plan	Project plan must include: Brief Introduction; Problem Statement(s); Performance Objective; Performance Activity Plan; Performance Measurement Plan; and Monitoring Plan. <b>Review Section D. 2</b>	<b>Grants.gov</b>
SDLA Self-Assessment	SDLAs must include a CDL Program self- assessment. It may be a part of the Project Plan or submitted as a separate document. <b>Review Section D. 2. ii a.(1)</b>	<b>Grants.gov</b>
Budget Narrative	A budget narrative is a description, by budget category (object class), that details the costs necessary to complete the proposed projects. <b>Review section D. 2.ii. g.</b>	<b>Grants.gov</b>
SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance	Required standard application form for all requests for Federal assistance. Form requests contact information for: 1) Lead Principal Investigator or Program Director (program/project manager) [enter in Box 8f]; and 2) Authorized Representative (AR) Official (authorized signer) [enter in AR section following Box 21]. Available in the Grants.gov application package. <b>Review Section D. 2. iii</b>	<b>Grants.gov</b>
SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs	Required standard budget form for requests for Federal assistance. Available in the Grants.gov application package. <b>Review Section D. 2. iii</b>	<b>Grants.gov</b>

SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs	Required standard assurances form associated with accepting Federal assistance funds. This document indicates that the organization is in substantial compliance with various programs, regulations, and Federal laws for a non-construction program. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	<b>Grants.gov</b>
Grants.gov Lobbying Form	Required form that allows organizations to indicate that they do not engage in lobbying activities. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	<b>Grants.gov</b>
SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)	Standard form to report their lobbying activities if applicable. Available in the Grants.gov application package.	<b>Grants.gov</b>
Key Contacts Form	Form for additional requested contacts that are <b><u>NOT</u></b> already on the SF-424 form. Information for the GrantSolutions roles of: 1) Additional Persons for the role of Authorized Representative Official (authorized signer); 2) Additional Persons for the role of Principal Investigator or Program Director (program/project manager); and 3) the lead role of Financial Official (person who files FFRs in GrantSolutions Grants Manager). NOTE: If more than one individual is designated in the same role, one individual must be identified as primary. Review the instructions in the Grants gov application package.	<b>Grants.gov</b>
Attachment Form	Attachments should be submitted in Grants.gov with the application package. While supplemental attachments are allowed, the application's project and budget narratives must include all required information. The narrative must indicate when a supplemental attachment needs to be referenced.	<b>Grants.gov</b>

<p>IDC Agreement</p>	<p>Organization’s signed current approved IDC from the cognizant Federal agency or letter of request to cognizant agency for rate establishment or adjustment. If claiming indirect cost charges, the recipient must include an active approved Indirect Cost agreement with the application submitted for funding. Should the recipient fail to provide an approved agreement during the pre-award phase and a grant is awarded, the grant recipient will have 90 days from the date of award acceptance to provide a copy of the IDC agreement. If we do not receive the required documentation within the allocated time frame, the recipient will not be reimbursed for indirect charges for that fiscal year. Once an approved rate is provided to FMCSA, the recipient will then be allowed to claim indirect costs in the following fiscal year of the award. 2 CFR § 200.414(c).</p> <p>Any non–Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non–Federal entities described in appendix VII to 2 CFR part 200, paragraph D. 1. b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct costs, which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 15% de minimis IDC 2 CFR § 200.414(f). Review Section D. 6.</p>	<p><b>Grants.gov</b></p>
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## APPENDIX B – BUDGET NARRATIVE GUIDANCE

### What is a Budget Narrative?

The budget narrative explains the “what,” “how,” and “why” of each line item cost to carry out grant project goals, objectives, and activities. A budget narrative explains each budget component that supports the costs of the proposed work and should describe why each budget item is required to achieve the proposed project goals and objectives. It should also explain in detail how budget costs were calculated to support the cost being reasonable and allocable.

The budget narrative should be clear, specific, detailed, and mathematically correct. Be sure to round all requested Federal funds and match to the nearest whole dollar. Please ensure the budget narrative totals match the SF-424A budget categories by project that is being requested.

FMCSA reviews the budget narrative to confirm that costs are allowable, allocable, necessary, and reasonable. A well-developed budget narrative is also an effective management tool; a budget that doesn’t represent a project’s needs makes it difficult to recommend for funding and to assess financial performance over the life of the project. The budget narrative serves a number of critical functions:

- Describes your need for or the necessity of an expense, and what cost allocation base being used if it benefits more than CDLPI purposes.
- Documents how reasonable the request is and conveys your judgment as well as the feasibility of the project based on available and proposed resources.
- Helps FMCSA review high-risk cost items to determine funding; and
- Describes how much of each cost will be provided by Federal funding. Include this information in the narrative section for each type of cost.

## What Costs are included in a Budget Narrative?

**Personnel:** Personnel costs are salaries for employees working directly on a grant project. Only include costs for personnel **employed** by your organization. Costs should be consistent with those paid for similar types of work within the organization. Individuals **not employed** by your organization will be classified as either a sub-recipient or contractor. See the contractual object class for additional information.

Below is a sample personnel budget narrative. FMCSA evaluates the personnel budget narrative to determine whether the proposed number of personnel is appropriate and includes sufficient staffing to meet the project objectives. The proposed effort should be consistent with the effort required by the project plan. The labor mix should be consistent with the caliber of effort – professional/nonprofessional/clerical – required by the grant project plan. FMCSA also reviews the personnel budget to determine whether or not the salary ranges proposed are reasonable.

Sample Personnel Budget Narrative					
Position(s)	# of Staff	% of Time	Work Year Hours	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
Supervisor	1	100	2,080	\$28	\$58,240
Staff member (Full-Time)	1	100	2,080	\$19.00	\$39,520
Staff member (Part-Time)	10	50	2,080	\$19.00	\$197,600
<b>Total Cost for Personnel:</b>					<b>\$295,360</b>
<b>Total Personnel</b>					<b>7</b>
<p>The Supervisor oversees activities of the project. She or he spends 100 percent of the time implementing this project, supervising staff, and conducting activities to meet the objectives of this project. Activities include: supervising daily operation of projects and staff, providing staff training/technical assistance, coordinating staff work schedule/assignments, ensuring data entry, tracking and following up on procedures to meet quality assurance, and tracking policy to ensure compliance. There are 11 staff members (1 full-time, 10 part-time) who provide additional program support. Each is paid an hourly wage of \$19; part-time staff members will average 50 percent of their time on grant activities. The full-time staff member wages equal \$39,520 annually, with the part-time (10) staff members averaging 1,040 hours or 50 percent on grant activities @ \$19,760 per year for a cumulative total (for all 10 part-time staff members) of \$197,600.</p>					

**Fringe Benefits:** Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of leave (vacation, family-related, sick, or military), employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. The costs of fringe benefits are allowable under 2 CFR 200.431 provided that the benefits are reasonable and are required by law, non-Federal entity-employee agreement, or written policy of the non-federal entity. FMCSA will reimburse fringe costs only for the personnel performing grant-related duties and only for the percentage of time they devote to the project. Some helpful tips:

- Explain how the fringe benefit amount is calculated (e.g., actual fringe benefit percentages or a fringe rate approved by the Health and Human Services Statewide Cost Allocation Plan or cognizant agency). Explain what is included in the benefit package.
- Do not combine the fringe benefit cost with direct salaries and wages in the personnel category.

Below is a sample fringe benefit budget narrative. Note that the personnel in the personnel budget narrative should be reflected in the fringe benefits budget narrative. The level of personnel participation (full-time or part-time) must also correspond to the fringe charged.

Sample Fringe Benefits Budget Narrative				
Position(s)	Fringe Rate	% of Time	Annual Salary	Total Cost
Supervisor	16.72%	100	\$58,240	\$9,738
Staff Member (full time)	16.72%	100	\$39,520	\$6,608
Staff Member (part-time)	16.72%	50	\$39,520	\$3,304
<b>Sub-Total Fringe Benefits</b>				<b>\$19,650</b>
Fringe benefits include cost of health insurance, retirement, workers' compensation, and unemployment benefit plans. It is calculated at the average rate of 16.72 percent as recognized by the cognizant agency. This rate is applied to the average hourly rate of \$28 per supervisor and \$19 per staff member, with a projected 2,080 hours worked annually for each. The 1 part-time staff member will average 50% working on the program or an average of 1,040 hours.				

**Travel:** Travel costs for employees of the agency include field work activities or travel to professional meetings. FMCSA reviews the travel budget to ensure that amounts are reasonable based on the level of effort described in the project plan and alignment with 2 CFR 200.475.

Generally speaking, FMCSA will accept in-State travel costs for routine operations as reasonable unless there is a specific reason to question them. FMCSA evaluates out-of-State travel to ensure the trips planned are necessary to complete the scope of work (usually training or meeting attendance), and that the number of travelers is consistent with the trip's purpose. Some helpful tips:

- Include estimates for potential travel such as possible FMCSA required meetings, with estimated costs of attendance.
- Explain the reason for travel expenses for project personnel (staff training, field interviews, advisory group meeting, etc.) and, if known, identify the location/destination of travel.
- Do not include payroll, fringe, or other costs as part of the travel. For example, payroll/fringe is included in personnel and fuel costs are included in other.

Below is a sample travel budget narrative. Costs for **employee** attendance at conferences, such as with FMCSA, can be put into the budget without the need to break out what the daily cost will be; however, when vouchered, costs should be reported as actuals. Expenses must be auditable (i.e., backed up by actual days on the road, State per diem costs, hotel expenses, and any allowable miscellaneous costs).

Sample Travel Cost Budget Narrative			
Purpose	# of Staff	Days	Total Cost
Routine Travel	10	10	\$4,600
San Diego Conference	15	5	\$28,410
<b>Total Cost for Travel:</b>			<b>\$33,010</b>
<p>Costs represent necessary travel funds for staff members to perform their assigned duties for X (describe the activities which should support the project plan). Reimbursement is based upon the current State per diem and rules. The per diem rate for each day is \$46. (NOTE: Travel by contractors should be included as part of the contract's cost.)</p> <p>Training, course or meeting title, in San Diego for 15 staff members with an average cost per person of \$600 for airfare or \$9,000; \$204 State-approved per diem or \$3,060; \$290 for hotel accommodation or \$4,350; and \$800 for registration fees or \$12,000, for a total of \$28,410.</p> <p>Airfare for training in Arlington, VA for 3 persons with an average airfare cost (per person) of \$900 x 3 persons = \$2,700.</p>			



**Equipment:** Equipment is tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a unit acquisition cost of the lesser of the capitalization threshold established by the non-Federal entity or \$10,000. FMCSA evaluates the need for the equipment in the budget narrative (e.g., ratio of employees to equipment) and how it supports project activities. FMCSA also evaluates the extent to which the equipment is being used to support more than one cost objective. If it does support more than one purpose/objective, FMCSA reviews the costs to ensure the expenses have been properly allocated. Additionally, FMCSA reviews past performance information to determine if the same equipment for the project/program was purchased in previous years.

Some helpful tips: If your equipment threshold is below \$10,000, indicate that in the narrative so that FMCSA can verify why lower cost items are included in this line. Items costing less than \$10,000 each should be categorized as supplies or other, depending on the item.

- Explain the purpose and use of each item of equipment. Prorate the costs, if applicable.
- Common purchases like a computer system (when purchased as a package – e.g., keyboard, monitor, and hard drive as a single unit) are considered equipment if the total cost of each of those units exceeds the threshold. If these same items are purchased individually (not as a package) and each component is below the threshold, list these costs as supplies.
- When developing your budget, analyze the cost/benefit of purchasing versus leasing equipment, particularly high cost items, and those subject to rapid technical obsolescence. **List rented or leased equipment costs** in the contractual or the other object class, depending on your procurement method. See the guidance under the other object class for additional information.

Sample Equipment Cost Budget Narrative			
Item Name	# of Items	Cost per Item	Total Cost
Vehicles	3	\$30,000	\$90,000
<b>Total Cost for Equipment:</b>			<b>\$90,000</b>
<p>The applicant requests 3 new vehicles to perform covert monitoring as replacements for vehicles that have reached their useful life as determined by the State's vehicle replacement policy. These vehicles will only be used for grant eligible purposes and are needed to achieve the activities proposed in the application. The cost for purchasing the vehicles is approximately \$36,000 each based on the State's procurement contract. <i>(If requesting an sport utility vehicle (SUV), please explain why it's necessary to meet the objectives of the project plan.)</i> Must indicate if electric vehicle was considered.</p>			

**Supplies:** Supplies are tangible personal property other than equipment. FMCSA evaluates supplies costs to ensure that enough detail is provided to enable an informed reader to understand that the cost is reasonable. For example, an applicant need not provide details on the number of paper clips that it will purchase. At the same time, FMCSA cannot accept an amount for office supplies that would equal, say, \$8,000 a year per person without further clarification. Some helpful tips:

- A good way to document supplies is to indicate the approximate expenditure of the unit as a whole (e.g., office supplies for the unit cost \$XX per month).
- Remember to include a quantity and unit cost for larger cost supply items such as computers and printers.

Sample Supplies Cost Budget Narrative				
Item Name	# of Units/Items	Unit of Measurement	Cost per Unit	Total Cost
General office supplies	12	month	\$39	\$468
Laptop computers	12	each	\$2,000	\$24,000
<b>Sub-Total Supplies</b>				<b>\$24,468</b>
General office supplies include paper, printer ink, etc., for 26 staff members in the program. These 26 staff members require supplies that are estimated at \$39 per month for 12 months. Ten part-time staff members require laptop computers, which will be used only to fulfill project activities. These staff members perform assigned duties as described in the project's narrative. There 10 part-time staff members needing laptops; the extra two laptops are requested for replacement purposes.				

**Contractual:** A contract is a legal instrument by which a recipient purchases products or services necessary to carry out the Federal project.

FMCSA reviews the contractual budget narrative to ensure it contains sufficient descriptive information about what specific costs (products and/or services) would be charged to the grant, a rationale for how those costs were derived, and the applicability and necessity of each to the grant.

A helpful tip: Include the name of the vendor/subrecipient, if known. If not, indicate that the selection is pending and provide an estimated timeframe by which the vendor/subrecipient will be selected. In the application, **the most important** component of the contractual budget narrative is the purpose of the contract/sub-grant and **how the cost was estimated or derived. If the contractor is completing a task that benefits more than the purpose of the CDLPI grant program, a cost allocation plan must be included, or FMCSA will determine the allocation based on the number of CDL/CLP drivers vs the total driver licensed population in a State.**

**Guidance for Contract Costs:** A contractor is one who provides goods and services within normal business operations; provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers; normally operates in a competitive environment; provides goods or services that are ancillary (but necessary) to the operation of the Federal program. A contractor is not subject to Federal compliance requirements as a result of the grant, though similar requirements may apply for other reasons.

For example, contractual costs could include training, maintenance contracts, or other service contracts except those that belong in different object classes such as equipment or supplies (depending on your organization's policy). The term "procurement" is used to identify the process of acquiring goods and services from sources outside of the recipient organization.

When procuring property and services under a Federal award, an organization must follow the procurement standards at 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326 and the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements using non-Federal funds. Non-competitive procurements should only be used in limited circumstances and should be a last resort.

Non-competitive procurements must comply with 2 CFR 200.320(c).

**Guidance for Subrecipient Costs:** A subaward is an award provided by the recipient (also known as a pass-through entity or a prime recipient) to a sub-recipient. Characteristics of a subrecipient include that a sub-recipient's performance is measured in relation to whether objectives of a Federal program were met; a sub-recipient is responsible for programmatic decision making; is responsible for adherence to applicable Federal program requirements specified in the Federal award; and (in accordance with its agreement) uses the Federal funds to carry out a program for a public purpose specified in authorizing statute, as opposed to providing goods or services for the benefit of the pass-through entity.

A subaward may be provided through any form of legal agreement, including an agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract. Federal regulations require that all sub-recipients obtain and maintain a UEI number and continue to maintain an active System for Award Management registration at all times during an active Federal award.

Below is a sample contractual budget narrative for contractor costs. If you intend to provide funding to another organization as a sub-award, provide a new object class budget narrative and line item budget for each sub-recipient organization.

Sample Contractual Cost Budget Narrative	
Description of Services	Total Cost
Contract services for programming: 800 hours @ \$250	\$200,000
<b>Total Cost for Contractual:</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<p>Contract services for programming include an assessment of the data timeliness and quality of State data systems; in addition, the contractor oversees the development of plans to implement improvements to the system that support the State's programs. The contractor will install the necessary software and ensure that it is compatible with all existing platforms.</p> <p>Note: If the system changes will be benefit all licenses, not just CDL/CLP licenses then a cost allocation plan must be provided/attached to support the cost being budgeted for the objectives and activities in the project plan.</p>	

**Other:** Other costs are costs that do not fit within any of the other object class categories. Typical costs in this category include rent for space used to conduct occasional project activities, for leases, conference registration expenses, professional services (consultants) and for printing costs. FMCSA reviews Other costs to determine whether these costs are consistent with the proposed work plan, are necessary to complete the approved work plan, and are not duplicative of costs included in the indirect cost amount. FMCSA also evaluates the costs to ensure that no unallowable costs, such as entertainment expenses, are included. Below is a sample Other budget narrative. Some helpful tips:

- Group Other object class costs whenever possible (i.e., communication, printing, maintenance) in the budget and explain how they support the grant activities; include a description by cost of each expense classified as Other. **NOTE:** Rental, lease and/or purchase of land or buildings is prohibited by the CDLPI statute.
- Ensure that Other costs such as professional services (consultants), audit, postage, printing, facilities expenses, and so forth are not already accounted for in either your IDC agreement or cost allocation plan.

Sample Other Cost Budget Narrative				
Item Name	# of Unit/ Items	Unit of Measurement	Cost Per Unit	Total Cost
Printing materials	1000	Per item	\$0.50	\$500
<b>Total Cost for Other:</b>				<b>\$500</b>
Printed materials are used during outreach activities and at national stakeholder meetings. The average cost per unit is \$0.50.				

**Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs (IDCs) are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that benefit more than one project, but are not easily or accurately allocable to more than one project. They may be administrative and/or operational. FMCSA reviews IDCs to ensure the rate is valid, calculations are correct in the budget, and that the rate is applied to the appropriate base.

Remember to include your IDC agreement with your application in Grants.gov if your project's budget will include indirect costs. If your rate will not be approved by the application due date, attach the letter of renewal or letter of request that you sent to your cognizant agency. This documentation is used as a placeholder until the rate is approved. Recipients may not receive reimbursement for indirect costs until the rate is approved.

To support the budgeted indirect costs, provide the calculations that were used to derive the amount, such as the base to which the IDC was applied, the type of rate (i.e., provisional, fixed, pre-determined or de minimis), the rate (e.g., 3.5%), and the total amount.

Sample Indirect Cost Budget Narrative:			
Type of Rate: (provisional, fixed or pre-determined)	Rate percentage	Base of Budgeted amount	Total Indirect Cost
Provisional General and Administrative Rate (G&A)	3.5%	\$10,000	\$350
Provisional Overhead	5.0%	\$12,000	\$600
<b>Total Cost for Indirect Costs:</b>			<b>\$950.00</b>
See attached IDC agreement, DOJ is cognizant agency, to support the rates used in budgeting. The G&A base of \$10,000 is labor + fringe benefits. The overhead base is \$12,000, which is labor, fringe and other direct costs.			