# VOLUME I – THE APPLICATION PROCESS

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*Revised August 2018*

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INTRODUCTION

Under the authority and approval of Governor Nathan Deal, the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) produces an annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP) which serves as Georgia’s programmatic guide for the implementation of highway safety initiatives and an application for federal grant funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This document is used to justify, develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate traffic safety activities for improvements throughout the federal fiscal year. National, state and county level crash data along with other information such as safety belt use rates are used to insure that the planned projects are data driven with focus on areas of greatest need.

Mission of GOHS

The Mission of the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety is to educate the public on traffic safety and facilitate the implementation of programs that reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities on Georgia roadways.

The programs and activities of GOHS are designed to:

- Cultivate collaborative working relationships with all governmental agencies, employers and private advocacy groups that strive for public safety in communities and on highways.

- Encourage and enhance traffic enforcement activities by forming and supporting statewide law enforcement coalitions.

- Foster greater public involvement in highway safety programs with direct feedback between the public and the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety.

- Develop local traffic safety coalitions for community outreach.
Procedures for Receiving Highway Safety Funds

Origin and Purpose
The State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program was enacted by the Highway Safety Act of 1966 as Section 402 of Title 23, United States Code. Grant funds are provided to the States, the Indian Nations and the Territories each year according to a statutory formula, based on population and road mileage. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) awards performance-based Section 402 formula grants to help states undertake statewide and local programs aimed at reducing highway fatalities and injuries. In receiving Section 402 funds, states must set their own goals, select appropriate programs, and as part of the performance-based agreement, evaluate and report on their results. Section 402 funds provide technical assistance to states and local communities, and are based on national priorities. Over the life cycle of programs funded with Section 402 funds, states and their local municipalities provide the majority of resources to continue programs beyond the start-up phase.

F.A.S.T. ACT

Purpose
On December 4, 2015, the President signed into law the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act” (FAST Act), Public Law 114-94. The FAST Act amended NHTSA’s highway safety grant program (23 U.S.C. 402 or Section 402) and the National Priority Safety Program grants (23 U.S.C 405 or Section 405). Specifically, the FAST Act made limited administrative changes to the Section 402 grant program and made no changes to the contents of the Highway Safety Plan. The interim final rule was published on May 23, 2016 and was open for public comment until the final rule was published and effective on February 26, 2018.

Priority Areas
Through public rule making processes, it was determined that certain highway safety programs funded under Section 402 are most effective in reducing crashes, injuries, and fatalities. These programs, designated as National Priority Program Areas, and more importantly are also Georgia highway safety priority areas. These priority program areas are listed below:

1. Alcohol and Other Drug Countermeasures
2. Occupant Protection
3. Traffic Records
4. Speed Control
5. Police Traffic Services
6. Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety
7. Community Traffic Safety Program (CTSP)
8. Motorcycle Safety
9. Emergency Medical Services
10. Paid Media

In accordance with F.A.S.T., for a state to receive a 402 funding it must provide satisfactory assurances that it will implement activities in support of national highway safety goals that also reflect the primary data-related factors within a state, as identified by the state highway safety planning process including: national traffic safety law enforcement mobilizations; sustained enforcement of impaired driving, occupant protection and speeding-related laws; an annual safety belt use survey conducted in accordance with DOT criteria; and development of statewide data systems.
**Project Funding Period**
The federal government operates on a fiscal year that commences on October 1 and ends on September 30.

Contingent upon congressional allocation of funding and satisfactory performance, projects funded by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) are eligible for continuous funding for a maximum of three (3) years, unless otherwise negotiated. Projects shall be evaluated annually for performance and a renewal application must be submitted and approved each year.

Submission of a project application for a new or renewal project does not assure approval and absolutely no authorization exists to expend funds or obtain reimbursement from GOHS until on or after the effective date indicated on the signed approval letter by the Director of GOHS. In order to comply with federal regulations, grantees must assure that federal funds are not substituted for state and local highway safety program expenditures.

Applications will be reviewed against identified statewide problem areas and existing plans for program activities. They will also be judged on probable impact on crashes, decreasing injuries and fatalities, opportunities for enhancing highway safety delivery systems, and improvement in using existing resources to increase cost effectiveness of highway safety endeavors.

Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) generally funds innovative traffic safety projects at the rate of 100% the first year, with the second and third year level of funding discussed and approved during the review team scoring process with final approval from the GOHS Director. The diminishing levels of funding are designed to encourage the grantee to become self-sufficient, allowing the project to develop into an ongoing part of the agency. At the discretion of the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) Director and a Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) application review committee, a project may be funded beyond 3 years and at different rates. The local agency is expected to establish precedents and develop procedures that support continued operation of the traffic safety program using local funding.

**Equipment Purchases**
Under the provisions of Section 402, the purchase of equipment cannot be approved unless it is an actual component of a highway safety program. Cost of purchase for new or replacement equipment with a useful life of one year or more and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more, must be pre-approved by the grant approving officials. Equipment must go through the bid process and have prior approval from the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety and/or NHTSA.

**DOT LEP Guidance**
The Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety will comply and inform its sub-recipient to comply with the “Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons” (DOT LEP Guidance).

**Note:** Please reference the enclosed Grant Terms and Conditions *(pages 15 to 33)* for detailed requirements for the program.
HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANNING PROCESS

- Define highway safety problems through data analysis
- Identify and involve partners in planning process
- Submit HSP for NHTSA review and approval
- Identify, prioritize and select strategies and projects
- Coordinate HSP and data collection with the State SHSP
- Develop performance measures/targets for program areas
Problem Identification Process

Problem analysis is completed by Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS), law enforcement, Department of Transportation, Department of Health Promotion and Behavior/Traffic Safety Research and Evaluation Group, Georgia Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS), contracted epidemiologist with the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, and other involved agencies and groups. The Performance Identification process for performance measures and targets are evidence-based and is consistent with the “Traffic Safety Performance Measures for States and Federal Agencies” (DOT HS 811 025). Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) will regularly review the performance measures and coordinate with other above mentioned agencies for input and update on our performance measures. A state-level analysis was completed, using the most recent data available (currently 2016 FARS data). Motor vehicle crash data, occupant protection survey results, roadway fatality data, and other data on traffic safety problems are analyzed statewide and on county levels. Program level evaluation findings for major issues (impaired driving, safety belts, and pedestrian/bicycle safety) were also included in the problem identification process. Surveillance data along with evaluation findings were used directly to link the identified crash issues, statewide performance goals, strategic partners, the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan, funding opportunities, and capacity to implement sound programs to address the problem.

Highway Safety Planning Process Participants

In developing the Highway Safety Plan, The Governor’s Office of Highway Safety collaborates and received input from the following agencies: Strategic Highway Safety Plan Task Teams (Aggressive Driving, Impaired Driving, Occupant Protection, Serious Crash Type, Age-related Issues, Non-motorized Users, Vehicle Types, Trauma Systems, Traffic/Crash Records Data Analysis, Traffic Incident Management Enhancement), Georgia Department of Drivers Services, Georgia Department of Public Safety, Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Sheriff’s Association, Administrative Office of the Courts, Prosecuting Attorneys Council, and the University of Georgia.

Strategies for Project Selection

The Governor’s Office of Highway Safety provides funding opportunities to police departments, governmental entities, and highway safety advocacy organizations for the purpose of addressing motor vehicle crash problems in local jurisdictions. Grants are received by invitation using a ranking system, through responses to request for proposals (RFP), and through unsolicited submissions where documented highway safety problems exist.

The Ranking System

The Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) contracts with an epidemiologist to aggregate and correlate motor vehicle related data from the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS), Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). From the Epidemiologist’s analysis, Georgia highway safety crash data is ranked by county. The areas considered in this analysis could include speed, impaired driving, restraint use, pedestrian, motorcycles, and bicycle. Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) utilizes this information to identify a list of jurisdictions with high numbers of traffic safety crashes, injuries, and fatalities. Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) purges the lists and contacts jurisdictions to seek interest/support in addressing the problems/gaps identified in the analysis.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

As innovative programs are developed, specific requests for proposals are distributed to communities, special interest groups, governmental agencies and other stakeholders through electronic mediums (i.e. the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) Website, GATEN, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police, Sheriff's Association, Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia Municipal Association, ACCG, GAMPO and GPSTC). The request for proposals (RFP) provides an introduction to the specific problem(s), eligibility criteria, program targets and objectives, suggested activities, and methods of evaluation. Upon receipt of all applicants responding to the request for proposals (RFP), a review team of planning and finance representatives is assigned the task of assessing applications to determine if the proposed projects are viable via the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) online reporting system, Electronic Grants of Highway Safety (eGOHS Plus).
**Discretionary Grants**
Funds are also used to support governmental entities furthering Governor's Office of Highway Safety's mission. In these instances, the purpose, scope, and funding requirements are subjected to Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) staff review and scoring prior to Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) Director Approval. Milestones and performance objectives are tailored to the specific project/purpose and established prior to any commitment of funds. All prospective applicants must follow Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) procedures in applying for highway safety funds.

**Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) Renewal Process**
Projects that have been deemed vital to the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) mission by the Director may receive funding for multiple years based on the availability of funds. All renewal applications are reviewed along with other potential funding requests.