

Grant Proposals for CDL Program Funding

This attachment describes national commercial driver's license (CDL) program priorities as well as information about State funding eligibility requirements, the State grant submittal and selection process, and the CDL program proposal requirements.

National CDL Program Priorities for FY 2004

The CDL grant program is the latest in a series of efforts by the DOT and FMCSA to enhance and improve the CDL program. Since implementation of the CDL program in 1986, FMCSA has promulgated regulations addressing State compliance with CDL requirements; conducted a CDL Benefits and Effectiveness Study; initiated outreach to the judiciary on CDL sanctions and enforcement issues; established forums for driver licensing agencies and the commercial motor vehicle industry; developed and funded the CDL Driver History Initiative to assist States in the timely development and transmission of complete and accurate driver moving violation conviction information; expanded the State CDL compliance review program; evaluated commercial driver's license program vulnerabilities through a study of the States of Illinois and Florida and most recently cosponsored a driver licensing fraud forum. In addition, FMCSA issued a final rule on July 31, 2002, implementing 15 CDL related provisions of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999 (MCSIA). All of these efforts have attempted to improve existing or potential weakness in the CDL program, both at the State and Federal levels.

Based on the results of an FMCSA review of the CDL program administration in Illinois and Florida, 11 general conclusions were reached together with an additional 26 State oversight, fraud prevention and data management and problem drivers. English language issues and Federal control and oversight of CDL. Those conclusions and recommendations are directed to all jurisdictions that administer CDL programs. We encourage States to read the Illinois and Florida CDL report at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyprogs/cdl.htm. States would also benefit by seriously considering the recommendations made in this report and those contained in the CDL Benefits and Effectiveness Study and the May 2002 Office of the Inspector General (OIG) report when developing a proposal for CDL program improvements.

For the FY 2004 CDL grant program, FMCSA will give high priority to grant proposals that address one or more of the following national priorities for improving the effectiveness of the CDL program, both at the State and national levels:

- Problem areas uncovered in State CDL programs during State CDL compliance reviews and identified on the State's Action Plan. Program deficiencies identified by the OIG that also jeopardize the intent of the CDL program and bring into question the States' compliance with existing CDL regulations will be given the highest priority in the selection process.
- Detection and prevention of fraudulent activities through better implementation of the CDL program management control and oversight practices, including use of program trend data and statistical reports to detect areas of weakness, and covert operations to uncover any fraudulent activities of State personnel and within third-party testing facilities.
- Improvements to the accuracy, speed, and completeness of driver history information exchange among the various components of the system, including law enforcement, prosecutors, the courts, and State driver licensing agencies, both within the State and between States. Such projects may include

CDL system improvements involving the electronic transmission of citation, conviction and disqualification data from the roadside through the courts to the State driver licensing agency and between State driver licensing agencies.

- Outreach and training to the judicial community on the CDL program in general and specifically, the importance of proper adjudication and sanctioning.
- Implementation of the Social Security Number verification program for new and existing CDL drivers.
- Implementation of MCSIA provisions to improve the effectiveness of the CDL program within and among the States including legislative, program and systems improvements and revisions.

State Funding Eligibility Requirements

All of the States and the District of Columbia are eligible to receive National CDL Program funds directly from FMCSA. Each State must meet the following six conditions to qualify for CDL program grant funds:

1. Assume responsibility for improving motor carrier safety and adopting and administering State safety laws and regulations that are compatible with the Federal CDL requirements (49 CFR Parts 383 and 384).
2. Designate in its CDL priorities proposal the lead State CDL agency responsible for implementing the plan.
3. Maintain the aggregate expenditure of funds by the State and its political subdivisions, exclusive of Federal funds, for commercial drivers license activities eligible for funding under this part, at a level at least equal to the average expenditure for Federal or State fiscal years 1997, 1998 and 1999.
4. Prepare and submit to FMCSA quarterly reports on project progress, status and expenditures and a final report at the end of the project.
5. Adopt and use the reporting standards and forms required by FMCSA to record work activities performed under the CDL program proposal.
6. Coordinate the CDL program proposal, data collection and information systems, with State MCSAP and highway safety programs.

State Grant Submittal and Selection Process

1. The lead CDL agency must submit the State's performance-based CDL program proposal request to FMCSA's Division Administrator by June 18, 2004.
2. The Division Administrator will review the proposal and forward it to the State Programs Division by July 2, 2004, with his or her written comments and recommendations.
3. The State Programs Division will convene a technical review panel to prioritize the State proposals for funding, based on the proposal's quantifiable need, adherence to State eligibility requirements and support of national CDL priorities.

4. Funding will be awarded to States that demonstrate the greatest impact on the effectiveness of the CDL program in improving highway safety and potential for reducing commercial motor vehicle related fatalities through a performance-based approach which identifies State-specific CDL program challenges and how the State will address those high challenges.

CDL Program Proposal Contents

The state's request for CDL Program funding will be made through submission of a performance-based CDL program proposal. Rather than measuring activity levels or input, a performance-based proposal focuses program effort on outcomes such as reduction in commercial vehicle crashes, fatalities and injuries or increases in the number of drivers convicted and disqualified.

While providing flexibility to States, grant proposals must meet certain criteria. The grant proposal criteria are designed to ensure that project proposals will enhance CDL programs in the State. CDL proposals may involve law enforcement, courts, prosecutors, and driver licensing agencies. To be effective, CDL program improvement projects should reflect the expertise and commitment of all participants needed to make the project work. Consequently, grant applications must specify that all relevant participants in the process are involved in the project. A thorough evaluation design is another key requirement.

The CDL program plan must contain the following seven items:

1. Certification that the State meets the eligibility requirements listed above, including identification of the lead agency for the project.
2. It is recommended that the State identify an interdisciplinary working group within the State, including but not limited to, representation from the motor vehicle licensing agency, court system, prosecutors, State law enforcement, Governor's Highway Safety Representative, and State Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) agency.
3. A description area requiring attention or improvement and what the project will achieve. The grant proposal should define, analyze, and document user procedures, including projected barriers to project success, such as any statutory limitations that may affect communication and recording of convictions on the system.
4. A detailed, performance-based plan for implementing the project, including time lines for completion, for each problem or risk to be addressed by the project, as outlined in the attached Problem Statement and Objective form (See Attachment B). Each problem plan will contain the following sections:
 - (a) A definitive problem statement for the objective to be achieved by the plan. The plan must identify the source of the data, and who is responsible for its collection, maintenance and analysis.
 - (b) A performance objective, stated in quantifiable terms, to be achieved through the plan. Objectives must include performance measures. The objective may also include documented improvements in other programs areas (e.g., legislative or regulatory authority, enforcement results, or resource allocations).
 - (c) Strategies to be employed to achieve performance objectives. Strategies may include education, enforcement, legislation, use of technology, and improvements to infrastructure.

- (d) Specific activities intended to achieve the stated strategies and objectives and their relationship to national CDL program priorities discussed at the beginning of this attachment along with specific quantifiable performance measures.
 - (e) A description of the State's method for ongoing monitoring of the progress of its plan. This should include who will conduct the monitoring, the frequency with which it will be carried out, and who will be responsible for preparing monthly reports.
5. A plan for preparing a final report, including the evaluation findings and recommendations for other States regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the project. All grant recipients will be required to provide quarterly progress reports on funded projects and agree to share project results with other jurisdictions.
6. A detailed budget which supports the plan, describing the expenditures for allocable costs such as personnel and related costs, equipment purchases, printing, information system costs, and other eligible costs. These costs must be consistent with the following seven types of expenses to be eligible for reimbursement:
- (a) Personnel expenses, including recruitment and screening, training, salaries and fringe benefits, and supervision.
 - (b) Travel expenses, including per diem, directly related to carrying out the objectives of the project.
 - (c) Equipment expenses, including computer hardware and software, directly related to carrying out the objectives of the project.
 - (d) Indirect expenses for facilities used exclusively to house project staff and equipment to the extent they are measurable and recurring (e.g., rent and overhead).
 - (e) Expenses related to data acquisition, storage, and analysis that are specifically identifiable as project-related to monitoring progress and developing final project findings and recommendations.
 - (f) Clerical and administrative expenses, to the extent necessary and directly attributable to the project.
 - (g) Expenses related to the improvement of real property (e.g., installation of cooling system for computer hardware), directly related to carrying out the objectives of the project. Acquisition of real property, land, or buildings is not eligible costs.

The budget must be sufficiently detailed so that it may be evaluated on the costs assigned to each proposed task, the allocation of resources to complete the tasks, the procurement of hardware and/or software (if applicable), staff hours (broken out by labor category), and other costs (e.g., travel, printing, etc.), including a match breakdown. The budget should closely correspond to the tasks outlined in the implementation plan.

7. Executed Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program form, CDL-1 (See Attachment B).

Additional Information

If you have any questions or you need additional information, please contact Margaret Jones at 202-493-0439 or margaret.jones@fmcsa.dot.gov.