

Utah Highway Safety Office Grant Quick Reference Guide

For full instructions, refer to the [UHSO Grants Management Manual](#)

“Our mission is to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on Utah roadways through collaborative traffic safety programs designed to change behavior.”

www.highwaysafety.utah.gov

The Utah Highway Safety Office (UHSO) awards state, local, and non-profit organizations funding through grant agreements or sub-awards to address state and local traffic safety concerns. New ideas and innovative approaches are encouraged. Grant funds are awarded for traffic safety projects designed to reduce deaths and serious injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes through programs that address driver behavior and/or improve roadway safety or data collection.

Grant Application Process Timeline

February:	Grant Applications Open (for 6 weeks)
March:	Grant Applications Close (note: grant applications must be opened in GEARS within this window, but are not required to be finalized until May)
September:	Grant Award Notification to applicants

Grant Period

Grants begin October 1 and end September 30 (federal fiscal year)

Eligibility

State, county, city, other municipal public agencies, and non-profit organizations may submit applications for federal grant funds provided they have a [Unique Entity Identifier Number](#).

How to Apply

New users may register for the online grants management system at [GEARS](#). Once approved by the UHSO, the user is notified via email and may select My Opportunities to open a grant.

Applications must address at least one of the following program areas and support strategies found in Utah’s Triennial Highway Safety Plan (THSP) or other traffic safety program areas identified and supported by data.

- Aggressive Driving
- Distracted Driving
- Impaired Driving/Drowsy Driving
- Teen Drivers
- Senior Drivers
- Occupant Protection - seat belts, car seats
- Vulnerable Roadway Users - Pedestrian, Bicycle, Motorcycle
- Preventing roadside deaths or injuries of first responders or in work zones
- Rail Safety
- Speed Management
- Community-based safety programs
- Public health partnerships
- Emergency Management Services (EMS)
- Programs that reach underserved populations or those overrepresented in the data

What makes a successful grant application?

A successful application is data-driven and evidence-based, includes SMART (specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, time-specific) goals, and a strong evaluation component. Focus areas could include:

- Eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries
- Improving the operation of traffic safety systems
- Integrating as part of a community-wide crash elimination project
- Increasing the coordination of efforts between several traffic safety agencies

Review the UHSO [Grant Management Manual](#) or contact a [program manager](#) for more information on grant application requirements.

Completing an Application in GEARS [Step-by-step tutorial](#)

Log in at <https://gearsigx.utah.gov/IGXLogin>. Under My Opportunities, click on "Utah Highway Safety 202X." If you currently have a grant with UHSO, you may have an option to "Copy Forward" your current grant to the upcoming year. Note that if you use this option you must still update performance measures, dates, budgets, and any other pertinent information that will have changed from last year.

* If additional project directors need to be added to the grant, please contact the program manager.

Project Title and Area, Local Political Subdivision, Federal Spending Transparency

Complete all necessary fields and checkboxes. Provide a project title that reflects the area and focus area of the grant (ie, Tooele Rural Seat Belt Project)

Project Goal

Provide a broad statement identifying the goals of the project or the desired end result. These goals should also align with the performance measures in the [UHSO's Triennial Highway Safety Plan](#).

Problem Identification [How to search for Utah crash data](#)

Provides the rationale behind the grant application and should be data driven, using verifiable data sources. Utilizing trend data over a 3 to 5 year period, problem ID proves that the issue is truly a problem needing a solution and supports UHSO's identified [Traffic Safety Problem Identification statements](#). These statements are a helpful source of data, as they detail the statewide traffic safety problem for specific program areas. Other sources of data include UHSO's identified [Traffic Safety Problem Identification statements](#), [Utah Crash Data](#), [NHTSA data](#), [Census](#), [IBIS](#), [CDC](#), [GHSA](#), [IIHS](#) and [NEMESIS](#). In addition, police departments or sheriff's offices may be able to provide citation data for the focus area.

The applicant should use traffic crash data and other pertinent information to isolate specific traffic concerns that will be targeted. The statement should include related crash data, community and agency needs, resources available, and other relevant information. Problem ID should establish who the at-risk populations or most affected groups are, and what is the specific traffic safety issue, specifically for the target community. Problem ID should also determine crash hot spots or the location and times where these issues are happening the most.

Project Objectives/Performance Measures

Create a brief but descriptive title for all planned activities, then provide full details in the Description.

Description of Performance Measure, Activities, and Timelines

Project Objectives or Performance Measures assist in reaching the program goal, by describing how it will be measured and the activities connected with it. Innovation and creativity are welcome, with research and explanation offered to support new ideas. They should be SMART = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound. Example: By June 2026, 75% of students at participating schools will receive requisite safe bicycling skills through bike training sessions.



Budget items must be supported by performance measures. For example, a performance measure that mentions training and attending in-state and out-of-state conferences will be connected to "travel" or a paid media performance measure would be connected to "contractual" in the budget, etc.

All applications should have one Project Objective that states, "Submit quarterly and final reports on time" with the Description: "Submit quarterly reports within 30 days of quarter ending, except for the third quarter, which is due by July 10th. Final reports within 30 days of the end of the fiscal year."

Project Evaluation [*The Art of Appropriate Evaluation*](#)

The UHSO must select programs that will be effective in reaching the goal of reducing traffic-related deaths and injuries. In order to determine a program's effectiveness each project is required to include an evaluation component in the grant proposal.

Evaluation should be part of the initial program planning process and begins when program goals and objectives are being developed. The key to successful evaluation is to build it in from the start.

Develop measures to determine project success (e.g. change in behavior, public opinion, policy, etc.) and describe how evaluations will be conducted (e.g. review crash data, surveys, field observations, etc.).

Project Income

Most projects do not generate income, however, some exceptions apply. See [CFR 1200.34](#) and/or the project income section of the certifications and assurances document, for further clarification.

Budget

Personnel and Benefits - Estimated costs for personnel & benefits for the grant year. *Claiming personnel requires additional source documentation in quarterly expenditure reports*

Travel - Federal grant funds may be used for appropriate travel costs associated with attendance at in- and out-of-state highway safety-related meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops, and training. *Claiming travel requires additional source documentation*

Contractual Services - Contract/agreement with a vendor for specific goods and/or services (ie, media, interpreter services, etc). Must be in the approved budget prior to the expenditure of funds. Attach a copy of the contract in the grant application file under an activity report that is titled "contracts."

Equipment - Any nonexpendable, tangible, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more. *Must have prior approval from NHTSA.*

Supplies and Operating - Any item that encourages the public to adopt highway safety practices with an acquisition cost of less than \$10,000. Purchase of supplies does not require NHTSA pre-approval, however, supplies purchased with grant funds must be used for traffic safety and/or enforcement purposes only. Consult your Program Manager for guidance on allowable supplies or see the UHSO Grant Management Manual. Non-authorized use of supplies is grounds for refunding a portion of the value to the UHSO. Indirect costs are entered in Supplies and Operating; see the Grant Manual.

Budget Summary - Confirm numbers are correct before proceeding.

Certifications - Review the Certifications and Assurances document, check the required boxes, and attach a copy of your agency's seat belt policy.

Miscellaneous Attachments - add any pertinent documents (contracts, work plans, etc)

Once submitted, the grant goes through an internal approval process. A Program Manager will contact the Project Director to determine the next steps, discuss budgetary alterations, if more detail is needed in the application, etc.

Project Management

Once awarded a grant through the UHSO, it is the project director's responsibility to maintain that project throughout the year

- A successful project includes quarterly or monthly and final activity reports that document the challenges, successes, and progress of the project, expenditure reports (with copies of all invoices), equipment reports and approvals (if applicable), travel expenses with appropriate documentation, quarterly personnel activity reports (if applicable), copies of correspondence, copies of any contracts issued
- Activity & Expenditure Reports are due by the end of the month following the quarter
 - **Quarter 1** (October-December) - reports due January 31
 - **Quarter 2** (January-March) - reports due April 30
 - **Quarter 3** (April-June) - report due the first week of July due to State Fiscal Closeout
 - **Quarter 4** (July-September) - reports due October 31
- Review grant spending regularly and avoid waiting until the end of the year to order supplies, etc
 - Causes issues with delivery dates/overlapping fiscal years
 - The goal of the grant is to spend funds *throughout the year* as needed in conjunction with the activities performed during the year and not just in one large order at the end of the year to use unspent funds

Activity Reports [Step-by-step tutorial](#)

Must be submitted quarterly, even if there is no activity to report

- **Report Selection:** Click the appropriate button (typically “Activity Report” unless involved in enforcement activities) and provide a Reference Title (ie, 1st Quarter Report)
- **Performance Measures**
 - **On time?** Each performance measure should be reported on, whether there is progress made or not; this shows that the project director is aware of each measure and the deadlines associated with them
 - The report should describe the activities undertaken during the quarter to accomplish the objectives outlined in the grant along with progress made or challenges found in addressing the problem statement
- **Evaluation:** The grantee should include any evaluation that occurred during each quarter
- **Attachments:** Links to news advisories, screenshots of social media posts, printed materials such as flyers or press releases, and anything that supports the activities described in the activity report

Final Activity Report: due November 10

- Summary of the year’s activities - successes and challenges - *in addition* to quarterly reports
- This information may be shared with NHTSA via the state’s annual report; therefore, it is critical that grantees pay particular attention to the details of this final report
- Used to determine the effectiveness of a grantee’s highway safety project
 - UHSO takes past performance into consideration when approving future awards

Expenditure Reports [Step-by Step Tutorial](#)

Expenditure reports may not be processed until the Activity report has been received, reviewed, and approved

Late expenditures may not be paid, due to federal fiscal year closeout deadlines.

- **Reporting period:** should reflect the quarter in which you are requesting reimbursement
- **Expenditure - Personnel:**
 - Ensure the percentage of time claimed matches the percentage in the original budget
 - Time Certification Forms are required each quarter
 - Timesheet from payroll with employee name, actual dates and hours worked, employee and supervisor signature, and number of hours worked are required *for 1st and 4th quarter*
- **Expenditure - Travel:**
 - Travel costs associated with attendance at in- and out-of-state highway safety-related meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops, and training - and pre-approved in grant
 - For individual travel reimbursements, combine hotel receipts, per diem forms, and agendas (separate documents for each person)
 - Food provided for highway safety-related meetings hosted by the subgrantee should be carefully considered as food tends to be scrutinized more than other purchases:
 - Note that food purchased for a meeting must be reasonable and not considered a “giveaway item” (ie, granola bars for children attending a walk-to-school event)
 - Example: a traffic safety coalition convenes during the lunch hour, which facilitates the participation of individuals who might otherwise be unavailable
 - For each meeting, combine detailed receipts, agenda, roster with signatures, and a flier that supports the training/event (separate document per meeting)

- **Expenditure - Contractual:** if in the approved budget
- **Expenditure - Equipment:** if in approved budget
- **Expenditure - Supplies and Operating**
 - Purchases must be allowable and approved in the grant budget. If in doubt, ask the program manager first!
 - Does the purchase help meet the project's objectives?
 - Is the item charged to the correct time frame (within the fiscal year and/or claim period)?
 - Indirect costs (IDC): should be claimed under Supplies and Operating - use this [Indirect Costs Worksheet](#) and/or work with your program manager if you have questions.
 - List the agreed-upon IDC rate in the line item (ie, Indirect costs - 15%)
- **Reimbursement Summary:** Review and click "Save"
- **Attachments:**
 - Source documentation for a purchase should be combined into one PDF (i.e., invoice, packing slip, etc)
 - Receipts/packing slips must have Received date and initial/signature
 - Must be clear, legible, and include details about what was purchased, not simply a credit card receipt with no detail
 - Cannot reimburse from order confirmations/quotes, must be an invoice/receipt
 - Ensure the attachment name correlates with the budget line item description
 - Add attachments in the same order as they are listed in the line items, if possible

Allowable/Unallowable Costs See NHTSA's [memo](#) on allowable costs

Common allowable costs include but are not limited to:

- Safety Items for Public Distribution - *sole purpose* is to improve highway safety
 - Allowable examples: Car seats, bicycle helmets, reflector/reflectorized tape to improve pedestrian conspicuity (must be identified as part of an educational program)
 - A reflectorized backpack or jacket is *unallowable* - safety is not the *sole purpose*
- Program administration (consultant services, meetings, conferences, research)
- Media (television, radio, or social media ads, signs, banners, and posters)
- Travel, Training, Supplies and operating expenses directly related to project operation
- Printed materials (traffic safety-themed coloring book, pamphlet with safety information)
- Law Enforcement Overtime (typically managed internally through UHSO, not individual grants)
- Equipment (Contact [Police Traffic Services Program Manager](#) for speed trailers, radars, lidars)
- Must be specifically identified in the grant and based on problem ID
- When in doubt, your program manager can reach out to NHTSA for further clarification

Unallowable costs include but are not limited to:

- Any expenditure not directly related to the project or not identified in the original application
- Giveaway or Promotional Items (keychains, stickers, shirts, slap bracelets, etc)
- Entertainment, Gifts, Fundraising
- General cost of business/supplanting
- Lobbying, Late charges, Legal Fees, Sales tax
- Facilities and construction, including office furnishings and fixtures
- Program administration (supplanting civilian or military agencies, alcoholic beverages, entertainment, commercial drivers)