

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CFDA 20.218 MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CFDA 20.237 HIGH PRIORITY GRANT PROGRAM

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Assistance (FMCSA) program, Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP), and High Priority (HP) grant program share the same objectives to support a safe and efficient surface transportation system. They include:

- Making targeted investments to promote safe commercial motor vehicle (CMV) transportation, including the transportation of passengers and hazardous materials;
- Investing in activities likely to generate maximum reductions in the number and severity of CMV crashes and fatalities resulting from such crashes;
- Adopting and enforcing effective motor carrier, CMV, and driver safety regulations and practices consistent with federal requirements; and
- Assessing and improving statewide performance by setting program goals and meeting performance standards, measures, and benchmarks.

While MCSAP and HP grants share the same objectives, some eligible activities and costs differ. Chapters in the MCSAP Comprehensive Policy provide program-specific policy (including cost eligibility) and technical assistance when administering both MCSAP and HP grant programs. Within the HP grant program, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act established the Innovative Technology Deployment (ITD) program which has goals and objectives that differ from traditional MCSAP activities. However, the ITD program was integrated into HP and MCSAP (for operations and maintenance) to support activities and information technology enhancement that complement and enhance CMV and motor carrier enforcement activities.

II. PROGRAM PROCEDURES

FMCSA developed an electronic commercial vehicle safety plan (CVSP) development tool (called eCVSP) available at [eCVSP Login \(dot.gov\)](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/eCVSP). The eCVSP software application allows a MCSAP lead agency to create an online CVSP and track the progress of CVSP development through to approval. Use of the eCVSP helps ensure that states satisfy the requirements in 49 CFR 350.213, expedites FMCSA's review of the document, facilitates the prompt returning of comments or requests for clarification, and allows the MCSAP lead agency to easily resubmit a revised document.

In accordance with 49 USC 31102(i) and grant/financial management requirements in 2 CFR part 200, each CVSP receives a fair, equitable and objective review prior to award approval.

This review ensures that applicable statutory and regulatory requirements will be met and allowable CVSP projects and activities will succeed. The CVSP review process generally consists of a review in the following areas:

1. *Application Review.* The FMCSA reviews the CVSP and all supplemental attachments (e.g., forms and certifications) for completeness and to ensure that the MCSAP lead agency meets the basic eligibility requirements defined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFA).
2. *Programmatic Review.* The FMCSA review the CVSP to make sure that the information presented is reasonable and understandable and the activities proposed in the application are measurable, achievable, and consistent with program or legislative requirements.
3. *Financial Review.* The FMCSA evaluates the fiscal integrity and financial capability of a MCSAP lead agency, and reviews the CVSP details, including the budget and budget narrative, and any other documentation to examine costs for proposed project/program activities to determine if they appear reasonable, necessary, eligible and allowable for award. Note that approval of the CVSP is not a final approval of costs as defined in accordance with 2 CFR part 200 Subpart E.
4. *Suitability Review.* In accordance with [2 CFR section 200.205](#) the suitability review is discussed in more detail in the MCSAP Comprehensive Policy. The FMCSA evaluates the CVSP against the performance-based information required in accordance with [49 CFR section 350.213](#).

Source of Governing Requirements

The MCSAP grant program is authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94, sections 5101(a) and 5101(c) (2015). The MCSAP is governed by 49 USC 31102 and 31104, and by 49 CFR section 350, as applicable.

The HP grant program is authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94, sections 5101(a) and 5101(c) (2015). HP grants are governed by 49 USC 31102(l) and 31104, and by 49 CFR section 350, as applicable.

Availability of Other Program Information

Additional information about the programs may be found on the FMCSA website at <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/grants>. Program policy guidance for the MCSAP and HP programs may be found at <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/grants/motor-carrier-safety-assistance-program-grant-comprehensive-policy>.

III. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

In developing the audit procedures to test compliance with the requirements for this federal program, the auditor must determine, from the following summary (also included in Part 2, "Matrix of Compliance Requirements"), which of the 12 types of compliance

requirements have been identified as subject to the audit (noted with a “Y” in the summary matrix below), and then determine which of the compliance requirements that are subject to the audit are likely to have a direct and material effect on the federal program at the auditee. For each such compliance requirement subject to the audit, the auditor must use Part 3 (which includes generic details about each compliance requirement other than Special Tests and Provisions) and this program supplement (which includes any program-specific requirements) to perform the audit. When a compliance requirement is shown in the summary below as “N,” it has been identified as not being subject to the audit. Auditors are not expected to test requirements that have been noted with an “N.” See the Safe Harbor Status discussion in Part 1 for additional information.

A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	J	L	M	N
Activities Allowed or Unallowed	Allowable Costs/Cost Principles	Cash Management	Eligibility	Equipment/Real Property Management	Matching, Level of Effort, Earmarking	Period Of Performance	Procurement Suspension & Debarment	Program Income	Reporting	Subrecipient Monitoring	Special Tests and Provisions
Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N

A. Activities Allowed or Unallowed

The primary MCSAP activities eligible for reimbursement include the National Program Elements currently outlined in 49 CFR section 350.203:

1. Driver and Vehicle Inspections
2. Traffic Enforcement
3. Compliance Reviews, Carrier Interventions, Investigations, and New Entrant Safety Audits
4. Public Education and Awareness
5. Data Collection

In addition, 49 CFR section 350.227 lists other activities eligible for reimbursement under the MCSAP. In addition, the FAST Act added other CMV safety activities that are eligible under MCSAP. These include:

- a. Border enforcement safety activities (inspections, traffic enforcement, etc.)

- b. Performance and Registration Information Systems Management (PRISM)
- c. Innovative Technology Deployment (ITD) (operations and maintenance only)

The state must ensure that these activities, if financed through MCSAP funds, will not diminish the effectiveness of the development and implementation of the programs to improve motor carrier, CMV, and driver safety.

These other activities also include:

- Sanitary food transportation inspections performed under 49 USC 5701.
- The following activities, when carried out in conjunction with an appropriate North American Standard (NAS) inspection of a CMV and inspection report.
- Enforcement of CMV size and weight limitations at locations, excluding fixed-weight facilities, such as near steep grades or mountainous terrains, where the weight of a CMV can significantly affect the safe operation of the vehicle, or at ports where intermodal shipping containers enter and leave the United States.
- Detection of and enforcement actions taken as a result of criminal activity; including trafficking of human beings, in a CMV or by any occupant, including the operator, of the CMV.

F. Equipment and Real Property Management

1. Equipment Management Requirements for Subrecipients of States

Notwithstanding 2 CFR section 200.313, subrecipients of states shall follow such policies and procedures allowed by the state with respect to the use, management and disposal of equipment acquired under a DOT award (2 CFR section 1201.313).

2. Matching

The FAST Act sets minimum matching requirements for each grant program. Matching means the portion of project costs not paid by federal funds. For example, FMCSA grant programs require that FMCSA reimburse 85 percent of eligible project costs, while the recipient provides the remaining 15 percent share.

After award, recipients must document all expenditures relating to cost sharing or matching in the same manner as those for the federal grant funds. Every item must be verifiable (i.e., tracked and documented) and any claimed cost share expense can only be counted once. In addition, a cost sharing or matching requirement may not be met by costs borne by another federal grant except as provided by federal statute. The FAST Act allows FMCSA to modify the federal share of a grant program from the standard 85/15 threshold (85 percent federal, 15

percent recipient share). FMCSA may opt to offer 100 percent federal financial assistance for a specific project(s) and/or priorities within a grant program. Other projects funded at 100 percent federal share may be announced in the NOFA as a National Priority and are at the discretion of FMCSA.

The value of third party in-kind contributions may be accepted as the match. The use of third party in-kind contributions should be identified in the grant/sub-grant agreement, or amendments thereto, and approved by FMCSA. The use of in-kind contributions may not be made retroactive prior to approval of the work program or an amendment thereto. Recipient (or sub-recipients) should be aware that they are responsible for ensuring that the following additional criteria are met:

- The third-party performing the work must agree to allow the value of the work to be used as the match;
- The cost of the third-party work must not be borne by other federal funds or be used as a match for other federally funded grants/sub-grants;
- The work performed by the third party must be an eligible activity that benefits the federally funded work and must be identified in the work program;
- The third-party costs (e.g., salaries, fringe benefits) must be allowable under 2 CFR section 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles;
- The third-party work must be performed during the period to which the matching requirement applies; and
- The third party in-kind contributions must be verifiable from the records of the recipient or sub-recipient and these records must show how the value placed on third party in kind contributions was derived.

3. **Level of Effort**

The MCSAP lead agency must maintain a certain level of expenditure, in addition to the required 15 percent matching share of a MCSAP grant. This financial requirement is known as maintenance of effort (MOE) or level of effort. The purpose of the MOE is to ensure that MCSAP lead agencies are committed to maintaining their own state funded CMV safety programs, notwithstanding federal funding.

A MCSAP lead agency must maintain within each federal fiscal year a level of effort that is at least equal to the average of what the MCSAP lead agency spent on MCSAP eligible activities in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 and FY 2005. Expenditures of other state agencies, local agencies, or sub-grantees (whether

supported by MCSAP grant funds or not), other federal funds, and MCSAP lead agency matching funds are not to be included in the MOE calculation.

A change in the MCSAP lead agency does not negate the MOE requirement because the state funding for these efforts also transitioned to the new state lead agency. The concept of “successor in interest” applies. Thus, no state may have a zero MOE simply because the MCSAP lead agency is different in a current year than it was in FYs 2004 and 2005, and the successor agency must meet the MOE requirements established by the FY 2004 and FY 2005 baseline.

Because non-CMV and CMV traffic enforcement activities without an inspection were not authorized until the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted in late FY 2005, MCSAP lead agencies are not to include these expenditures in calculating the MOE baseline. MCSAP lead agencies may, however, include documented non-CMV traffic enforcement and other new efforts and initiatives they have implemented since FYs 2004 and 2005 to meet the annual MOE obligation.

The MCSAP lead agency must retain the documentation used to calculate the MOE average for audit purposes. In the absence of records, a reasonable estimate, based upon available information should be submitted to FMCSA for review and approval. MCSAP lead agencies must self-certify (per [49 CFR sections 350.211](#) and [350.213](#)) that the calculated MOE will be met each fiscal year and reflect their MOE in their CVSP. The state must annually submit its MOE substantiation document to FMCSA to support the actual expenditures during the fiscal year.

4. **Earmarking**

Not Applicable

H. Period of Performance

The notice of grant award (NGA) contains the grant agreement’s period of performance. The NGA period of performance means the time during which the grant recipient may incur obligations to carry out the work authorized under the grant agreement. The FMCSA may establish a shorter, but not longer, grant agreement period of performance than what the statutory availability of funds timeframe allows. All allowable periods of performance are located in 49 USC 31104(f), as amended by the FAST Act.

J. Program Income

Notwithstanding 2 CFR section 200.80, except as otherwise provided in federal statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the federal award, program income also does not include taxes, special assessments, levies, and fines raised by a grantee and subgrantee, and interest earned on any of them. Please see 2 CFR 200.307 (f) 2 CFR 200.77 (period of performance) and 2 CFR 200.407 (prior written approval).

L. Reporting

1. Financial Reporting

The FMCSA will not reimburse recipients from a grant for an amount that is more than the government share of costs incurred as of the date of the voucher. This signifies that recipients are limited in the percentage of costs per voucher, not per grant. For example, states are limited to 85 percent reimbursement under MCSAP. Because FMCSA's reimbursement requirement is incurred by the date of each voucher, the state must meet the matching share requirement, for example 15 percent per voucher.

- a. *SF-270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement - Applicable*
- b. *SF-271, Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Program - Not Applicable*
- c. *SF-425, Federal Financial Report - Applicable*

2. Performance Reporting

The FMCSA requires recipients to provide performance progress and financial reports as a condition of the grant agreement. These reports help FMCSA monitor recipient progress towards the project objectives and provide an important measure of accountability for the recipient. The FMCSA has standardized the information required in the performance report; however, at a minimum, each performance report must contain the following information:

- a. An account of significant progress (findings, events, trends, etc.) made during the reporting period;
- b. A description of any technical and/or cost problem(s) encountered or anticipated that will affect completion of the grant within the time and fiscal constraints as set forth in this agreement, together with recommended solutions or corrective action plans (with dates) to such problems, or identification of specific action that is required by the FMCSA, or a statement that no problems were encountered;

- c. An outline of work and activities planned for the next reporting period;
and
- d. Provide status update/resolution for all outstanding findings from
program reviews and/or audits.

3. Special Reporting

Not Applicable