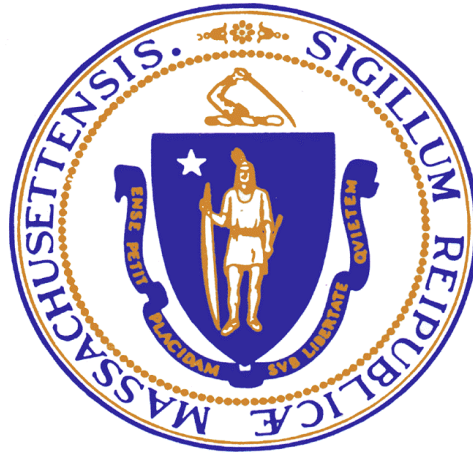**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research

Notice of Availability of Grant Funds (AGF)
for
FFY 2022 State Traffic Safety Information System
Improvements Grant, Section 405(c) Funding

October 20, 2021

Charles D. Baker	**Karyn E. Polito**
Governor	**Lieutenant Governor**
Terrence M. Reidy	**Kevin J. Stanton**
Secretary	**Executive Director**

Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research
Availability of Grant Funds (AGF)
for
FFY 2022 State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements Grant, Section 405(c) funding

I.   AGF Overview

The **Office of Grants and Research (OGR)** is the State Administering Agency for the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** Section 405(c) grant funding received annually by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Funding made available through this AGF comes from a federal grant program, described in 23 U.S. Code § 405 and 23 CFR § 1300.22, known as the **405(c) - State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements Grant.** These sections establish criteria for grants to states to:

- Make measurable improvements to performance attributes (accessibility, accuracy, completeness, integration, timeliness, or uniformity) of state safety data systems (citation/adjudication, crash, driver, EMS/injury surveillance, roadway, or vehicle) that will assist with identifying priorities for federal, state, and local traffic safety programs;

- Evaluate the effectiveness of such efforts;

- Link state data systems, including traffic records and relevant data systems;

- Improve the compatibility and interoperability of state data systems with national data systems and the data systems of other states; and

- Enhance the state's ability to observe and analyze national trends in crash occurrences, rates, outcomes, and circumstances.

Only units of state and local government, state higher educational institutions, or not-for-profit organizations with a public purpose in Massachusetts are eligible to apply for this funding.
Private sector organizations are not eligible to receive this funding.

OGR is issuing this competitive AGF to make multiple grant awards totaling up to $1,100,000 in FFY 2022.

OGR reserves the right to adjust or cancel the amount of funding being made available through this AGF, as any awards made will be contingent upon receipt and availability of NHTSA grant funds.

The funding to support awards for projects resulting from this AGF process is further contingent upon NHTSA's acceptance of these projects into OGR's FFY 2022 or subsequent Highway Safety Plans.

Projects awarded funding through this AGF are anticipated to have a start date on or about February 15, 2022 and to expire on September 30, 2022. Projects approved for a longer award duration will receive a continuation contract/ISA prior to September 30, 2022, with a start date of October 1, 2022, to prevent any lapse in service.

Those awarded funds through this AGF will be expected to adhere to the project timelines and task plans in their grant agreements.

No project will be approved to run past June 30, 2023.

Notice of any changes to the AGF will be posted at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-safety-grants.

Key Dates

- AGF Posted: October 20, 2021
- Letters of Intent: by 5 PM, December 8, 2021
- Questions Regarding AGF: by 5 PM, December 10, 2021
- **Electronic AGF Responses: by 4 PM, December 15, 2021**.
- Project Presentations: on or about January 11, 2022
- ETRCC Review of Projects: anticipated on January 20, 2022
- Award Announcements: on or about February 8, 2022
- Project Start Dates: on or about February 15, 2022

II.   Program Background

Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC)
The TRCC is a NHTSA requirement attached to the Section 405(c) grant program. The Massachusetts TRCC mission is as follows:

"Through the coordinated efforts of its member organizations, provide a forum for the creation, implementation, management, and dissemination of accessible, accurate, complete, integrated, timely, and uniform traffic records data to aid decision-makers working to reduce transportation-related fatalities, injuries, and economic losses in Massachusetts."

The TRCC assists OGR with identifying projects to receive Section 405(c) funding, monitor project progress, and maintain strategic direction for our traffic records systems. All this is assisted by the TRCC helping OGR to annually update and approve a Strategic Plan for Traffic Records Improvements and to submit an annual application for 405(c) funding to NHTSA. The TRCC membership consists of representatives of the six core data systems and key data collectors and users. More TRCC information and examples of current and prior 405(c) funded projects are available in the FFY 2022 Strategic Plan at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-records.

Traffic Records Assessment
In early 2019, OGR and its TRCC partners finalized a NHTSA-required traffic records self-assessment.

This assessment and its recommendations are a critical source of project ideas for TRCC members and other traffic records stakeholders and a resource during the TRCC review and selection of projects. Below are the currently unmet recommendations. The full assessment is available at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-records. The status of these recommendations and related assessment questions can be found in the FFY 2022 Strategic Plan at the above-referenced web address.

Crash Recommendations: improve the…
- applicable guidelines for
- interfaces with
- data quality control program for

… the system to reflect best practices in NHTSA's 2019 Traffic Records Program Assessment Advisory (Advisory).

Driver Recommendations: improve the …
- data dictionary for
- data quality control program for

… the system to reflect best practices in the Advisory.

Vehicle Recommendations: improve the …
- interfaces with
- data quality control program for

… the system to reflect best practices in the Advisory.

Roadway Recommendations: improve the …
- data dictionary for
- data quality control program for

… the system to reflect best practices in the Advisory.

Citation and Adjudication Recommendations: improve the …
- description and contents of
- data dictionary for
- data quality control program for

… the system to reflect best practices in the Advisory.

Injury Surveillance/EMS Recommendations: improve the …
- interfaces with
- data quality control program for

… the systems to reflect best practices in the Advisory.

Data Use & Integration Recommendation: improve the traffic records systems capacity to integrate data to reflect best practices identified in the Advisory.

Other Resources
More information on the Massachusetts traffic records systems is in the 2014 Crash Data Audit and the 2019 Utilization of Crash and Medical Data to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crash Severity Findings Report at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-records. Another useful information source is the Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan at www.mass.gov/service-details/strategic-highway-safety-plan.

III.   Application Information and Requirements

- Applicants must submit a non-binding letter of intent by **5 PM, December 8, 2021.** A letter of intent must be on an organization's letterhead, hand-signed by an appropriate representative of the organization, and include the following information: project title, description of the proposed project and key partners (suggest no more than four sentences), confirmation that the organization's senior IT official supports the project, expected start and end dates, and the amount of funding sought. Send the letter as PDF to brook.chipman@mass.gov.

- **Responses to this AGF must be submitted on the provided documents, Attachment A - Application, and Attachment B - Budget Worksheets, by the due date highlighted in the Key Dates section above.** See these attachments and below for additional response requirements. These attachments, and other required documents necessary for an award to be finalized, are available at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-safety-grants.

- If an organization is requesting funding for more than one project, you must submit a separate Attachment A - Application and Attachment B - Budget Worksheets for each project.

- Projects related to the Massachusetts citation and/or crash systems must align with the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System (MACCS) overseen by the Department of Criminal Justice Information System.

- Applications for projects dependent upon state or regional-level public sector partner(s) must be supported with a hand-signed letter(s) of support on partner letterhead and submitted with your application. Partner CEOs or CIOs must sign such letters.

- Projects must work to meet **at least one** unmet recommendation from the Commonwealth's *2019 Traffic Records Assessment* at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-records.

- Projects must have **a minimum of one** measurable benchmark and performance measure related to a performance attribute of one of the six core traffic records systems. Ideally, this benchmark and performance measure will be based on the methodology set forth in the *Model Performance Measures for State Traffic Records Systems* (DOT HS 811 441), as updated, at

https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/811441.

- As applicable, proposed projects must comply with the latest version of the *Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, at https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-ict-refresh, and other related federal requirements as well as (2) the *Web Accessibility Standards*, issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security at www.mass.gov/eotss, and other related state requirements.

- Supplanting of state or local funds with federal grant funds from this program is prohibited. Supplanting includes: (a.) replacing routine and/or existing state or local allocations with federal grant funds and/or (b.) using federal grant funds for costs of activities that constitute general expenses required to carry out the overall responsibilities of the state, local, or federally recognized Indian tribal government. Funds provided through this grant must supplement, not supplant, state or local funding sources.

- OGR expects all entities receiving awards through this AGF process and entering into grant agreements to begin grant-funded services within 90 days of funding access (unless a later service start date is noted in the timeline and task plan of the agreement). Failure to do so may result in termination of the grant award.

- Applicants with current Section 405(c) grant awards cannot receive new 405(c) grant awards until their first awards are 30% or more complete at the time of application. Such applicants should consult with OGR prior to applying.

- Applicants must show in their AGF response how they would provide a minimum 20% state or local funded hard and/or soft match based on the proposed total project cost. (For example, if the total project is $100,000, OGR will provide up to $80,000, and a subrecipient must provide at least a $20,000 match). There is **no** match requirement for projects from applicants under the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

- All applicants must have and submit a copy of their employee seat belt use policy to be eligible for funding. Only Executive Branch state agencies are exempt from this requirement. **Failure to submit a copy of your policy will result in your application not being eligible for funding.** A sample safety belt use policy is available on request at brook.chipman@mass.gov.

  Executive Branch agencies are covered by the policy on safety belt use in the Commonwealth's New Employee Orientation Guide (4.14) and any related agency-specific policy which OGR has on file.

IV. Allowable Costs and Budget Related Requirements

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefit
- Indirect
- Consultant / Contractor
- Equipment/Software and related installation and delivery costs
- Travel
- Supplies
- Other costs may be allowable with prior OGR approval

Definitions of each budget cost category are provided below.

Allowable Budget Cost Categories	Definitions and Documentation Requirements
Personnel Costs	Full or part-time regular salaried employees working on the grant. At a minimum, reporting will need to detail employee names, hours worked per pay period, and the hourly rate.
Fringe Benefit Costs	Eligible costs include the employer share of the following: • Life insurance • Health insurance • Social security costs • Pension costs • Unemployment insurance costs • Workers compensation insurance • Payroll taxes Cost amounts for direct fringe benefits can be either actual costs or rates per employee calculated by the fiscal or human resource unit in your organization (rate computations must be included). **Include a copy of the federally approved rate agreement in the application response.**
Indirect Cost	Applicants that want to charge indirect costs through the use of an indirect cost rate may use a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. **Include a copy of the federally approved rate agreement in the application response**. Applicants that have never received a federally approved indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs. If the applicant's accounting system permits, indirect costs may instead be allocated in the budget, including the category "other" if the costs being identified do not fit into one of the direct cost categories. For more information, see Title 2 CFR Part 200.

Consultant/ Contractor Costs	Consultant or contractor fees. The maximum rate for consultants is $650 for an eight-hour day or $81.25 per hour (excluding travel and subsistence costs). Any request for compensation over $650 per day hour day or $81.25 per hour requires prior written approval by OGR. This rate is the exception, not the rule.
Equipment/Software Costs	Tangible non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year; cost based on classification of equipment. Must be directly related to project need/ implementation.
Travel Costs	Travel directly related to the purpose of the grant. In-state travel costs associated with the grant shall include mileage rates, not in excess of $0.45 per mile, as well as the actual costs of tolls and parking. No grant funds may be spent for out-of-state conference fees, out-of-state travel, or out-of-state lodging without prior written approval from OGR.
Supplies Costs	Supplies required for the program (pens, pencils, postage, training materials, copying paper, and other expendable items such as books, ink, etc.).
Other Costs	Miscellaneous items (e.g., telephone costs, training material costs).

More on Equipment/Software Costs

No 'stand-alone' purchases. NHTSA requires all equipment/software acquired with grant funds to address a project need and be necessary for program implementation. OGR strongly recommends applicants inquire beforehand whether a proposed equipment/software purchase meets this requirement.

Another key NHTSA requirement for equipment/software purchases is prior written NHTSA approval for purchases of $5,000 or over. This approval will be secured after an award is made through an equipment/software request letter developed by OGR with subrecipient assistance. This NHTSA approval must also be renewed for each federal fiscal year a project is conducted. Such purchases must also align with the Buy America Act (23 U.S.C. §313).

Examples of equipment that will **not** be approved under this grant program include, but are not limited to, radar detectors, lidar, security cameras, speed radar signs or trailers, traffic data recorders, and variable message boards.

Unallowable Costs
In addition to the supplanting prohibition noted above, there are unallowable costs and other restrictions noted in Title 2 CFR Chapter II Part 200 - UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS (in particular Subpart E – Cost Principles) at www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ed90f54836feb6a994 f657188eb05e33&node=2:1.1.2.2.1&rgn=div5. Also, within NHTSA guidance that applies to Section

405(c) funds and other federal grant funding at www.nhtsa.gov/highway-safety-grants-program/resources-guide.

OGR does **not** allow overtime or separately purchased warranty/service plan expenses under this grant program.

V.   Application Review Process

At the start of the process, an OGR-selected AGF review committee with OGR staff and one or more outside reviewers will ensure AGF responses adhere to the AGF requirements. OGR anticipates recruiting one or more outside reviewers from the TRCC (an external reviewer can't be from an entity that has submitted an AGF response).

As part of the committee's process, applicants must present on their projects to the committee on or about January 11, 2022. These presentations will be open to all TRCC members. If presentations are required at that time to be virtual, applicants must make available video recordings of their presentations to post on the OGR website within the following week. The committee will then review proposed projects using a Four-Box Analysis and Scoring Tool similar to those used in the past by the TRCC.

The review committee will first prioritize projects using the following Four Box Analysis, with 'A' the highest priority, then B, C, and finally D.

A - LOW COST – HIGH PAYOFF (good opportunity/high priority)	B - HIGH COST – HIGH PAYOFF (moderate opportunity/higher to middle priority)
C - LOW COSTS – LOW PAYOFF (moderate opportunity/lower to middle priority)	D - HIGH COST – LOW PAYOFF (poor opportunity/low priority)

The projects will then be further prioritized within each of the boxes using the following scoring tool.

- Project Overview/Description/Needs Assessment/Timeline (up to 50 Points)

- Project Benchmark and Performance Measure (up to 20 Points)

- Budget (up to 20 Points)

- Project Presentation (up to 10 points)

Scores from reviewers will be added together and averaged, and any differing award recommendations reconciled through committee deliberation.

The committee will then produce a report on its deliberations, with a rank ordering of the scores of the proposed projects and suggested award amounts. The report will also have information on any Section 405(c) funded grant work since FFY 2021 done by an applicant being considered for new funding. This information will include performance against the benchmark(s) in the original application or any accepted update, project reporting issues, and level of unspent funding. This report, applicant presentation materials, and the AGF responses will be shared with the TRCC.

An Executive-level TRCC (ETRCC) meeting is anticipated to be held on January 20, 2022. The ETRCC can do one of the following:

1. Accept 'as is' the project recommendations including suggested award amounts in the AGF review committee's report; or

2. Make minor adjustments to the AGF review committee project recommendations and suggested award amounts, then approve the updated report; or

3. Use a Four-Box Analysis and Scoring Tool process similar to that used by the AGF review committee to develop and approve its own project recommendations and award amounts.

ETRCC members from entities with applications under consideration in the AGF process cannot participate in any vote to select projects.

The resulting project recommendations and suggested award amounts from the ETRCC will then advance to NHTSA for consideration and anticipated acceptance in the OGR FFY 2022 Highway Safety Plan. OGR will then forward these decisions to the Executive Director of OGR, Secretary of Public Safety and Security, and Governor's Office for review and final approval.

VI. Post-Award Requirements and Information

- **If an award occurs based on a response to this AGF**, the applicant will be required to complete one or more of the following documents to finalize a grant agreement based on the State Contract or ISA:
    o OGR General Subrecipient Grant Conditions,
    o Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing (unless a current, acceptable version of this form is on file at OGR),
    o Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA),
    o Other state forms that may be required.

    These forms are at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-safety-grants.

- Depending on the start and end dates of a project, OGR may require an entity awarded funds to provide a breakdown by federal fiscal years of its project budget and related

programmatic/deliverables details.

- For non-state agencies, this is a cost-reimbursement style grant that requires the submission of monthly reports described below. State agencies will receive grant funding through the state accounting system (MMARS) that will allow them to start to incur project expenses. State agencies must also submit monthly reports.

- Monthly expenditure and activity reports in a format approved by OGR will be required on or about the fifteenth (15) day following the close of a month. Activity reports must be hand-signed by the project manager, the expenditure reports hand-signed by an appropriate departmental representative. Electronic submission of these reports is preferred in PDF format. OGR reserves the right to require original hand-signed submission of these reports. During any federal fiscal year the project operates, the last activity report must summarize (between 175 to 200 words) all significant project accomplishments, in particular progress made from the benchmark(s) towards performance measure(s). Expenditure reports must be supported with required backup (i.e., MMARS reports, paid vendor bills, etc.).

- No costs incurred by a subrecipient before or after the effective period for a State Contract or ISA will be reimbursable.

- Subrecipients that do not observe reporting deadlines, submit incomplete reports, fail to follow the timeline in the State Contract or ISA, or engage in other practices not in keeping with good grant management will be at risk for losing OGR grant funding and becoming ineligible for future OGR funding.

- Based on our efforts to utilize federal funds in the most efficient and effective manner, to increase program participation, and to administer with fairness to all participating subrecipients, OGR shares with the TRCC during the AGF process information on recent 405(c) grant-funded work of applicants being considered for new funding. The following subjects will be addressed: performance against the benchmark(s) in the original application or any accepted update, project reporting issues, and unspent funding level.

- Be advised an OGR grant award to a subrecipient does not guarantee reimbursement. Funding is subject to appropriation and is contingent upon compliance with all grant conditions and eligibility requirements. If the federal government determines that a subrecipient does not comply with federal eligibility requirements, OGR cannot guarantee alternative funding sources. The subrecipient must ensure compliance with all grant conditions and eligibility requirements.

- All subrecipients who are law enforcement agencies receiving any state or federal grant award from OGR will be required to gather and submit case-specific information on officer-

administration of Narcan/Naloxone using a reporting tool as determined by EOPSS.

- Please note any entity sent a grant award packet (State Contract or ISA) resulting from this AGF process will have a maximum of 30 days from the date of receipt to return all hand-signed award documents to OGR. Failure to do so may result in termination of the grant award.

- At its discretion, OGR may, on behalf of the ETRCC, provide grant funding that becomes available from a canceled project or retracted award associated with this AGF process to a qualified applicant(s) who did not receive funding through this AGF process.

- Grant-funded contractor or consultant expenses or equipment or supply purchases not specifically approved in the subrecipient's State Contract or ISA must be reviewed by and receive written approval in advance from OGR. The review will include the intended procurement approach. The resulting subcontract or purchase must reflect all applicable requirements of the subrecipient's ISA or state contract with OGR.

VII. Submission Process and Deadline

Completed and hand-signed AGF response documents (Attachment A - Application & Attachment B – Budget Worksheets) and supporting documents (i.e., partner support letter(s), federally approved indirect cost and/or fringe rate agreement, risk assessment form, employee seat belt policy, etc.) must be e-mailed as a single PDF to Mr. Brook Chipman, Program Manager, at brook.chipman@mass.gov, **by 4 PM, December 15, 2021**.

Please remember the signature required on Attachment A - Application must be done as a 'wet' hand signature. No electronic or digital signatures will not be accepted.

If you have any questions regarding this AGF process, please contact Mr. Chipman at brook.chipman@mass.gov **by 5 pm on December 10, 2021.** Given the competitive nature of this AGF, no questions on the merits of a proposed project can be answered. All questions received and answers provided will be posted in a non-attributable manner at www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-safety-grants **on or about December 13, 2021**.

VIII. Application Checklist

☐ Letter of intent in PDF format submitted by e-mail by **5 PM, December 8, 2021**

☐ E-mail submission of complete and hand-signed AGF response documents and supporting documents (i.e., partner support letter(s), federally approved indirect cost and/or fringe rate agreement, risk assessment form, employee seat belt policy, etc.) as a single PDF **by 4 PM, December 15, 2021.**