

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Grants & Research
Highway Safety Division



Notice of Solicitation of Applications for
FFY2026 Child Passenger Safety Education
and Assistance Program

Posted: March 5, 2026

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I. Introduction

The Office of Grants and Research (OGR) is currently accepting applications from eligible entities for the FFY 2026 Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program. This program, funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), aims to reduce child passenger injuries and fatalities by **ensuring low-income families who do not qualify for a free car seat from their health insurance provider receive a free car seat(s) and caregivers are educated on their proper installation and usage. Awarded applicants will be provided with car seats for distribution to families in need by certified child passenger safety (CPS) technicians, who will professionally install each seat when a vehicle is present at the time of distribution.**

OGR is the State Administering Agency for NHTSA's traffic safety grants to reduce roadway crashes, injuries, fatalities, and their associated economic losses in Massachusetts. In support of this goal, OGR is pleased to make up to \$500,000 available for the FFY 2026 CPS Education and Assistance Program. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until either all the funds set aside for the program have been used or August 31, 2026, whichever comes first.

The application, car seat order form, and other solicitation-related documents are available on the [Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program](#) page of OGR's website. Each applicant may submit an order valued at up to \$10,000; there is no minimum order amount. Please keep in mind that resources are limited, and all requests must be reasonable and demonstrate sufficient need.

II. Purpose

Nationwide, traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for children aged 12 and under. Size-appropriate car seats installed and used correctly have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of death and injury to children involved in crashes. However, improper seat installation and restraint misuse are widespread. NHTSA estimates 46 percent of seats are installed incorrectly by parents, and Massachusetts has a 57.3 percent misuse rate according to the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF) online database

Massachusetts state law requires all children riding in passenger motor vehicles to be in a federally approved child passenger restraint that is properly secured and fastened according to the manufacturer's instructions until they are 8 years old or more than 57 inches tall. When a child reaches the age of 8 and/or outgrows their booster seat, they must wear a seat belt.

III. Eligibility

Massachusetts municipal agencies, state agencies, not-for-profit hospitals, and 501 (c)(3) organizations serving low-income children and/or families that meet **all** the requirements listed below are eligible to apply for this opportunity. Applicants **must**:

- Have at least one certified CPS technician on staff who is currently completing in-person seat checks for your organization. See [Section VIII](#) for more information regarding upcoming CPS Technician Certification training opportunities.
- Discuss how you will identify low-income families in need of a car seat and/or identify low-income serving organizations you will partner with to ensure distribution is prioritized to those with the greatest need.
- Justify the need for the seats being requested, both the quantity and the seat type(s).
- Have an active account in the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF) online database. See [Section V](#) for more information.



Returning applicants who received seats from this program in FFY 2023, 2024, and/or 2025 and are **not** up to date with submitting check data into the NDCF for seats distributed **will not be eligible** to receive additional seats through this solicitation.

IV. Application Details

Eligible entities must submit the [Online Application](#) found on the [Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program](#) page of OGR's website.

Applicants must upload the Car Seat Order Form in its original Excel Format via the Online Application (do not convert the Excel file to a PDF or any other format). Applicants must complete the "Description" and "Justification" sections for each type of seat being requested to be considered for an award, applications that are missing the requested information will be considered incomplete and **will not be reviewed**.

OGR will accept applications on a rolling basis until either all the funds set aside for the program are depleted or August 31, 2026, whichever comes first.

Each applicant may submit an order valued at up to **\$10,000**. Grant writers **MUST** consult with their organization's CPS technician(s) to determine their order.

OGR and Statewide CPS Training Program vendor, Baystate Medical Center, will review all applications received to determine if the eligibility criteria stated throughout this solicitation have been met. It is important that applicants provide detailed answers to each question to justify the need for the seats (both the quantity and types) included in their order and to ensure there is a plan to provide the seats to low-income families who do not otherwise have access to a free seat(s).

Applicants that fail to meet the eligibility requirements detailed in this document will not be awarded car seats. OGR may schedule a virtual meeting with an applicant to help to inform funding decisions.

If selected to receive car seats under this solicitation, OGR will submit your seat order and delivery instructions to Child Source; tracking information may be provided once your order has shipped. Please note your order may come in one or multiple shipments, depending on supplier inventory. OGR will do its best to ensure all delivery instructions are adhered to, however, we cannot guarantee that special requests will be met. Someone from the recipient organization must be present to accept the delivery. If you do not receive the correct order, you must let the delivery driver know at the time of delivery. OGR will receive the invoice for your car seats and will pay Child Source directly.

OGR estimates that awarded agencies will receive their car seats approximately 2-4 weeks after their application has been approved by OGR.

Please note, after award decisions are made, OGR reserves the right to alter orders due to price changes and/or supplier inventory. In such cases, OGR will notify the awarded organization of any changes.

V. Seat Distribution Guidelines

This opportunity is not a general giveaway for the public. As such, **the availability of free seats must not be advertised publicly (e.g., on social media, in press releases, event announcements)**. Instead, subrecipients are required to make meaningful and substantial efforts to ensure seats go to low-income families. These efforts may involve work internally (patients, clients) or externally (partnering with local organizations, such as WIC offices, shelters, neighborhood health centers, and Boys & Girls Clubs).

 OGR has developed a **Car Seat Referral Form** to help establish partnerships, determine low-income status, and ensure a family is not eligible for a car seat from their health insurance provider, thus, ensuring seats are distributed to those most in need. The subrecipient can either use this form to screen families themselves or provide the form to another organization who can screen clients/patients for need and make referrals to the subrecipient for car seat assistance and education. A copy of this Referral Form and MassHealth Car Seat Benefit listing can be found on [Pages 6-7](#).

 **For each car seat distributed**, the technician **must** complete a Car Seat Check Form (Current Version is 9.0) and submit the form to the NDCF online database, with “State Funds” entered in the Car Seat Donor field. The NDCF database allows organizations and OGR to monitor trends and track car seat distribution and inventory levels.

Seats must be installed into vehicles by or with the help of a certified CPS technician(s) unless the caregiver does not own a vehicle and intends to use the seat for travel in someone else’s vehicle. In this case, the technician may provide a pre-registered and unboxed seat to the caregiver and provide a demonstration on its proper installation and usage. A check form **must** always be filled out, with a liability statement signed by the caregiver, and submitted into the NDCF online database even when no vehicle is present.

Applicant organizations must be registered to use the NDCF. To create an account, please visit carseatcheckform.org and follow the steps listed. To verify your agency is already on the "Agency List" or to add your agency, [follow these instructions](#). Please refer to the [NDCF Digital Form User Guide](#) for more information, including tutorial videos.

There are four options for entering seat checks into the NDCF database:

1. If connected to the Internet/Wi-Fi, the technician can use their phone/tablet/computer to sign into their account on carseatcheckform.org. Select Create Check Form, complete all relevant fields, and submit the form directly into the NDCF online database.
2. If connected to the Internet/Wi-Fi, the technician can use their phone/tablet/computer to sign into the NDCF App, select Create Check Form complete all relevant fields, press save, go to View or Submit Saved Check Forms, find the form, and press Submit.
3. If not connected to the Internet/Wi-Fi, the technician can still use the NDCF App on their phone/tablet/computer. Select Create Check Form, complete all relevant fields, and press Save. Once the device is connected to the internet/Wi-Fi, the technician can go into View or Submit Saved Check Forms on the app, find the form, and press Submit.
 - a. **Note:** The technician must first sign into the app while online to load their settings to use the app offline.
4. Checks can also be recorded using the NDCF paper form ([Current Version is 9.0](#)) and then manually enter the information into the NDCF database using a phone/tablet/computer.

VI. Award Conditions

Applicants that are awarded funding under this program must adhere to the following conditions:

- Car seats must be stored in a secure location.
- Car seats cannot be delivered to and/or stored in a private residence.
- All seats must be distributed at no cost and cannot be part of a fundraiser or raffle.
- OGR is not responsible for redelivery costs resulting from staff not being present to accept delivery.

- It is the subrecipient's responsibility to notify the delivery driver of any incorrect or defective car seat orders.
- Orders cannot be corrected after the driver departs the delivery site.
- Subrecipients must immediately report to OGR if they no longer have a certified technician on staff or have ended their CPS program and must coordinate with OGR to transfer any undistributed car seats to another organization.
- A subrecipient who fails to comply with any of the requirements outlined in this document will not be eligible to receive future awards through the Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program.
- OGR strongly encourages subrecipients to actively participate in Child Passenger Safety Week and National Seat Check Saturday. Child Passenger Safety Week is an annual educational campaign focused on bringing awareness to how parents and caregivers can keep children safe in vehicles. The recognition week takes place during the third week of September, culminating in National Seat Check Saturday. Subrecipients should consider hosting a local event or partnering with regional organizations for **National Seat Belt Saturday**, which will occur this year on September 26, 2026.

VII. Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification Training

The Massachusetts CPS Technician Certification Training is a three-day course that combines classroom and hands-on learning. There is no cost to attend; OGR covers the costs of instructors and certification fees. To be certified as a CPS Technician, you must attend the entire three days and pass both written (open book) quizzes and skills assessments. Successful completion certifies you as a CPS Technician for two years. Please visit [Safe Kids Worldwide](#) to search for upcoming trainings in Massachusetts.

If you are attending a training course to qualify for this opportunity, you are expected to serve your clients, patients, and/or community as a CPS Technician. Organizations who are awarded car seats through this opportunity but are found to have inactive technicians who were used to establish eligibility may not be eligible for this program in the future.

If you are looking to create a new CPS Program within your organization, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health created this [toolkit](#) to help. While designed for EMS providers, it can also serve as a guide for non-EMS organizations.

VIII. Contact Information

Please direct any questions about this solicitation, the Online Application, or the Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program to OGR Program Coordinator, Jennifer Slonina at Jennifer.Slonina@mass.gov.

For questions related to CPS Technician Certification including training opportunities, recertification, and using the NDCF, please contact Statewide Training Coordinator and Lead Instructor, Mandi Summers at Mandi.Summers@baystatehealth.org.

CAR SEAT – Referral Form

The mission of our Child Passenger Safety Program is to provide car seats to low-income residents along with installation assistance and education on their usage. To ensure our limited resources benefit as many families as possible, the referring organization must first check with the parent/guardian’s health insurance provider to see if the member is eligible to receive a free car seat for their child. There is a listing of car seat benefits for each MassHealth plan on the following page.

If the members’ plan does not provide a seat, then a representative from the referring organization may fill out this form and submit it to: _____.
(Your Technician's Email address)

We cannot guarantee we will have a seat available. If there is a seat for the referred child, a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician will follow up with the parent/guardian to schedule an appointment. The child should be present for the appointment, if possible, to ensure proper fit. The parent/guardian should also bring their vehicle to the appointment (if they have one). **Please note** as a requirement of being provided with a car seat from this program, the parent/guardian must sign a general liability statement.

- As a representative of the referring organization, I confirm that I have checked with the parent/guardian and/or child’s health insurance provider and the member is not eligible for a free car seat for this child.
- As a representative of the referring organization, I understand that the information recorded below will only be used to schedule and conduct an appointment with the parent/guardian.

| Referral Organization Contact Information | |
|--|--|
| Organization: | |
| Contact Name: | |
| Phone: | |
| Email: | |
| Parent/Guardian Contact Information | |
| Name: | |
| Town of Residence: | |
| Car Make/Model: | |
| Phone: | |
| Email: | |
| Child Information | |
| Due Date or Age: | |
| Height: | |
| Weight: | |
| Reason/Justification of Need | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Mass General Brigham Plan Member <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Tufts Plan Member <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Standard Plan Member <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Limited Plan Member <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Community Care Cooperative (C3) Plan Member not eligible via C3’s car seat program <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Fallon Expectant Parent (28+ Weeks) Unable to Obtain Car Seat Before Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> MassHealth Revere Health Choice Expectant Parent (20+ Weeks) Unable to Obtain Car Seat Before Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> No Health Insurance | |

MassHealth Plans - Car Seat Benefit Overview

| Plan | Car Seat Benefit | How Members Can Access the Benefit |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Community Care Cooperative (C3) | Car seat program for those who qualify. Contact the plan for more information. | Customer Service: 866-676-9226 |
| Fallon | <p>Members are eligible for one convertible car seat per child and can access this benefit by enrolling in the Oh Baby! program any time prior to the birth or adoption through age 2.</p> <p>Car seat is delivered by mail after birth and is not an infant carrier.</p> <p>No delivery to a PO box.</p> | Call Fallon customer service for information or apply to the program directly online using the following link: Oh Baby! - Enrollment Form |
| Health New England (HNE) | The BeHealthy Partnership offers a free car seat or booster seat | Mothers/Expecting Mothers call BeHealthy Partnership Member Services at 413-788-0123 |
| Mass General Brigham | None | Customer Service: 800-462-5449 |
| Revere Health Choice | <p>Members are eligible to receive one car seat and one booster seat per lifetime.</p> <p>Members are eligible to receive an infant car seat if they are 20+ weeks pregnant</p> | To join the Healthy Beginnings Program, visit www.reverehealthchoice.com/pregnant and submit the Sign-Up form |
| Tufts | <p>Tufts Health Together offers parents a \$25 gift card to buy a booster or convertible car seat.</p> <p>The gift card is available to women who are 28+ weeks pregnant or member children up to 8-years-old.</p> | Call Member Services at 888-257-1985 or fill out the EXTRAS Reward Form and follow the instructions here: Tufts Health Together (MassHealth) - EXTRAS Car Seat Reward Form |
| WellSense | <p>Each child between 5-65 lbs. can receive a convertible car seat once per lifetime.</p> <p>Expectant mothers can request a seat up to 45 days prior to their due date.</p> <p>When a child is between the ages of 4-8 years old, they are eligible to receive a booster car seat.</p> | Contact Member Services at 1-888-566-0010 to request a car seat. (Note: All car seats are shipped directly to the member's home address) |