



TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAM REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FY 2025 STEP GRANTS

Prepared and Developed by:
The Staff of the Behavioral Traffic Safety Section
(TRF-BTS)

Traffic Safety Division
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483
(512) 416-3200

<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/traffic.html>



November 10, 2023

Table of Contents

Summary.....	4
Eligibility for Funding.....	7
STEP Project Operational Requirements.....	7
STEP-Comprehensive (COMP) Grants.....	10
Baseline Enforcement Information	11
Baseline KA Crash Data	11
STEP-Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Grants	11
Operational Plan.....	13
Public Information & Education (PI&E).....	14
Policies and Procedures	16
Internal Ethics and Compliance Program.....	17
Pre-Award Audit	17
Schedule	19

SECTION ONE OVERVIEW

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Summary

Texas' Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) is a federally funded law enforcement grant program run by the Traffic Safety Division at the Texas Department of Transportation. The goal of the STEP program is for TxDOT to develop strategic partnerships with law enforcement to reduce crashes by creating safer driving environments on Texas roadways through high-visibility engagement (HVE). Any accredited law enforcement agency in Texas is eligible for funding through STEP, though priority to receive the funds and the maximum funding TxDOT awards a given agency is based on the number and type of crashes occurring in the applicant jurisdictions as well as that agency's demonstrated ability, or in the case of first-time proposing agencies an estimated capacity, to perform the work.

Agencies participating in STEP must develop a limited number of specific Enforcement Zones in which all grant-funded enforcement will be conducted. These zones are based on data provided by the Texas Crash Reporting Information System (CRIS) and analyzed and plotted by the Texas Department of Public Safety's Highway Safety Operations Center (HSOC). The Enforcement Zones are limited in number and size to help magnify the impact of the enforcement efforts on troublesome crash areas.

Agency performance will be measured by the number of STEP-funded vehicle stops made within the established Enforcement Zones, and by the impact the enforcement has on the jurisdiction's crash totals. To maximize the value of the vehicle stops conducted during STEP enforcement, agencies are strongly encouraged to focus their Enforcement Zones and community engagement efforts in and around intersections, which are planned points of conflict on the transportation system.

TCOLE-certified training supporting all aspects of STEP enforcement, including grant proposal and Enforcement Zone development, grant administration, data quality and analysis, operational philosophy and strategies, and child-passenger and officer safety courses are available free-of-charge through the [Texas Law Enforcement Liaison program](#). The training courses are designed to help agencies stay current on the latest information and enforcement concepts, and to realize the maximum value STEP enforcement can provide to the agency and the community.

Maximum budget amounts for each agency for STEP grants have been determined using KA (fatal and suspected serious-injury) crash data from the Crash Records Information System (CRIS) and a weighted funding formula to determine eligible amounts for each agency:

- DWI/DUI - Driving While Intoxicated/Driving Under the Influence
- OP - Failure to Use Occupant Restraint, including child-passenger safety seats
- ITC - Intersection Traffic Control
- SP - Speed Enforcement /Control
- CMV - Commercial Motor Vehicles (for CMV grants only)

Proposing agencies may ask TxDOT personnel for assistance in developing their STEP proposal(s).

TxDOT, at its sole discretion, may elect to increase or decrease maximum funding amounts agencies receive. Generally, these increases or decreases will not be more than 10% from the most recently executed project of the same type, but budgets may be changed beyond the 10% based on the agency's previous history, particularly as relates to under-spending funds in previous years, or under-performing on grant-related performance measures including but not limited to failing to focus enforcement on problem crash types or to properly document grant-related activities.

Agencies may request funding amounts they deem appropriate during the RFP process, but actual amounts will be negotiated and finalized after the RFP period closes. As a rule, increases to the funding amount (TxDOT award) will be capped at 10% of the most recently executed project of the same type. For example, if an agency was awarded \$50,000 in TxDOT funding in its most recently executed project, TxDOT would likely cap any requested increase to 10% of \$50,000, or \$5,000, for a total TxDOT award of \$55,000 in the current proposal.

All proposers are required to contribute at least 20% of the total budget in approved match.

Once a proposal is submitted, the requested Federal award cannot be increased. All budgets will be reviewed after the RFP closes. Budgetary adjustments may be necessary if the proposed budget is inaccurate, unreasonable based on an agency's crash history, capacity or ability to work, or contains unallowable items. Final TxDOT awards will be negotiated and finalized during the modification period.

Note: Click-It-Or-Ticket, Impaired Driving and Operation Slowdown Mobilization Proposals will not be accepted through this Request for Proposal; however, they will be accepted through a separate process. For more information regarding mobilizations, please contact [Larry Krantz, TxDOT Police Traffic Services Program Manager](#).

SECTION TWO
STRATEGIC TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM
(STEP) GRANTS

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Eligibility for Funding

STEP grants provide federal funding for overtime enforcement activities conducted by Texas law enforcement agencies. Organizations eligible for STEP funds include the Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS), sheriff's offices, constable's offices, and local police departments.

Prior to executing a STEP-COMP or STEP-CMV grant, the agency must have:

- An approved and current overtime policy that allows for STEP enforcement to occur
- Approved and current STEP Policies and Procedures that outline the agency's administrative controls and operational concepts (see Page 16);
- Approved Internal Compliance verification (see Page 16)
- A Universal Entity Identification (UEI) number (formerly a DUNS number)

All proposing agencies may request unlimited assistance from TxDOT and from the Texas Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) program in developing any aspect of their grant proposal.

STEP Project Operational Requirements

The following items are requirements for both STEP-COMP and STEP-CMV grants:

- All enforcement activities must be initiated within, or in route to or from, an established Enforcement Zone as outlined in the grant's Operational Plan.
- A minimum number of documented vehicle stops must be made during each hour of enforcement so that enforcement efforts are consistent throughout the assigned shift. The minimum number of stops required depends on the grant type. A minimum average of 2.5 vehicle stops per hour is required for STEP-COMP, and a minimum average of 1 CMV stopped per hour is required on STEP-CMV projects.
- Officers working STEP must witness the violation for which they stop a vehicle. Officers may not be dispatched or otherwise directed to violators, including through the use of spotters.
- All Daily Activity Reports must be legible, contain appropriate additional documentation to describe long periods of inactivity, time-related details for activities that extend the vehicle stop beyond the typical contact with the operator such as vehicle searches, administration of SFST, arrests or waiting for towing services, and signed by a supervising officer.

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

- STEP officers may not claim arrests and arrest time for stops not made by officers working STEP enforcement, or from officers outside their department regardless of their STEP status. However, officers not working STEP may transport offenders arrested by officers working STEP.
- TxDOT will not allow multiple officers on grant time to work together in a single vehicle.
- TxDOT will not allow multiple officers beyond the initiating officer to claim grant time for a single vehicle stop beyond the time it takes to clear the stop or 30 minutes, whichever comes first.

SECTION THREE
GRANT TYPES & DEFINITIONS

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

STEP-Comprehensive (COMP) Grants

Officers conducting enforcement on a STEP-COMP grant should focus their efforts on reducing incidences of intersection-related violations, driving while intoxicated, failure to use occupant restraint systems, enforcement of state and local ordinances on cellular and texting devices and unsafe speed within the high-crash areas they identify, although any traffic-related probable cause may be used to initiate a vehicle stop. A vehicle stop may be counted toward the agency's grant performance only when initiated for infractions witnessed inside of, or in route to or from an established Enforcement Zone by the initiating officer. For purposes of documentation, each officer's Daily Activity Report should reflect the Enforcement Zone in which the stop was made, the time and specific location of the stop (i.e. 4800 block of South Broadway). The officer should run the offender's driver license for warrants, run the vehicle registration for its history, and must document taking one of the following three actions:

- Issuing a written warning
- Issuing a citation
- Making an arrest

Agencies will document and report the numbers of warnings, citations and arrests made on STEP time to TxDOT at the end of each month, but there will be no target numbers established for each individual element. STEP-COMP agencies will be considered to be in compliance with TxDOT performance expectations as long as they document making a minimum average of 2.5 vehicle stops per hour for each enforcement hour and show that minimum activity in each STEP enforcement hour. STEP-COMP subgrantee agencies should make it a priority to conduct enforcement activities during state and federally determined holiday periods, which occur during the months listed in parenthesis:

- Christmas-New Year's (Dec-Jan 1)
- Spring Break (March)
- Memorial Day (May-June)
- Independence Day (June-July)
- Operation: Slowdown (July)
- Labor Day (August)

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Baseline Enforcement Information

Baseline enforcement information serves as a foundation for proposers to measure non-grant traffic enforcement activity against that provided through STEP grants. This information must be provided by the proposers and includes the total number of arrests, citations and warnings made during non-STEP vehicle stops the proposing agency made in the past 12 months. The information must exclude any activity generated with STEP grant dollars. Once the enforcement baseline is established, these figures will be used to compare subsequent years' local- and grant-funded traffic enforcement activity against crash data the agency provides to TxDOT.

Baseline KA Crash Data

Proposers must enter the three-year-average KA crash data for their jurisdiction as provided by TxDOT. The baseline numbers are critical in establishing the number and key contributing factors for fatal and serious-injury crashes in a community and are used to measure the effectiveness of grant-related enforcement efforts in reducing crashes.

County Sheriff's Departments and Constable's Offices should use the KA crash data for the county, found under "Outside City Limits (county name)" unless otherwise approved by TxDOT.

STEP-Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Grants

Law enforcement agencies requesting or already operating a STEP-COMP grant may also request a STEP-CMV grant. Officers conducting enforcement on a STEP-CMV grant should make enforcement of Intersection Traffic Control, Impaired Driving, Occupant Protection, Speed and Distracted Driving their top priority during enforcement, although any traffic-related probable cause can be used to initiate a CMV stop. STEP-CMV enforcement operations are the same as STEP-COMP above but with the following exceptions:

- Officers may not weigh the offending vehicle, inspect equipment or review driver logs while on STEP time;
- Officers must conduct document stopping at least one CMV in each enforcement hour worked.
- Officers may make additional non-CMV traffic stops while working CMV to demonstrate consistent activity, but those stops will NOT count toward the 1-stop-per-hour requirement.

**SECTION FOUR
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Operational Plan

Agencies will use geolocated KA (Fatal and Serious Injury) crash data from the CRIS database to establish the foundation for at least two STEP Enforcement Zones within their jurisdiction. Crash heat maps for your jurisdiction developed by the Texas Department of Public Safety's Highway Safety Operations Center (DPS-HSOC) are available by visiting [the BuckleUpTexas.com website](https://www.buckleuptexas.com) and then following the link to "TxDOT STEP Program Resources." Proposers must use the FY 2025 STEP-COMP or FY 2025 STEP-CMV mapping portal provided by the DPS-HSOC to identify and measure the locations of their enforcement zones. A comprehensive map of all the agency's requested zones and detailed maps of each zone will be uploaded to the grant proposal in the Operational Plan Enforcement Zones portion of the document. Assistance with identifying and building zones using this portal is available through the LEL program.

Every STEP-COMP and STEP-CMV agency may develop up to two Enforcement Zones per grant, however most grants will have no more than two zones. In order to qualify for additional zones, the agency must have enough enforcement hours on their grant to support the addition so a continuous presence, defined as at least 40 hours per month per zone, can be maintained in each zone throughout the life of the grant. The formula for determining the maximum number of enforcement zones is 40 enforcement hours per zone per month, or 480 enforcement hours per year per zone. Agencies need to have at least 1,200 enforcement hours on a grant in order to qualify for a third zone.

The purpose of the creation of STEP Enforcement Zones is to focus consistent high-visibility enforcement on areas with a history of high KA crashes, and zones should be developed and patrolled accordingly. Therefore, only KA crash data from the CRIS database may be used to initiate the creation of an Enforcement Zone. In the event that an agency has no KA crashes in its jurisdiction, TxDOT may approve, on a case-by-case basis, patrol zones based on other data available to the agency.

At a minimum, Enforcement Zones should be anchored by the locations of one or more KA crashes and expanded to include areas of approach in any direction and for a reasonable distance from the crash site or sites in evidence. As a rule, Enforcement Zones should cover no more than four (4) square miles, although it may take the form of any logical shape as long as that shape is bounded on all sides by intersecting roadways. For example, in a city, the Enforcement Zone may align with the street grid and be centered on high-crash intersections, whereas on a rural highway, the Enforcement Zone might encompass four contiguous miles that include the high-crash area(s), but do not include other areas outside of the highway's linear footprint.

All STEP Enforcement Zones must be approved by TxDOT prior to enforcement beginning in that zone. Identifying new Enforcement Zones after the grant begins is discouraged, and agencies may be asked to delete zones if new zones are added to maintain the maximum allowed number of zones. STEP enforcement should be used to patrol areas identified through historical crash data, not to react to short-term trends. Zones built to satisfy a short-term or temporary need will not be allowed.

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Public Information & Education (PI&E)

Law enforcement agencies are required to conduct PI&E activities throughout the grant period. Salaries being claimed for PI&E activities must be included in the budget, but when combined with administrative costs may not exceed 10% of the total TxDOT award.

Law enforcement agencies are required to provide a minimum number of documented PI&E activities throughout the grant period as outlined in the grant proposal. These should coincide with identified holiday mobilization periods and include appropriate motorist education efforts. For example, during the Memorial Day Mobilization period, otherwise known as Click-It-Or-Ticket, agencies should develop media opportunities focused on the importance of buckling up and properly securing children, or a similarly themed community event.

Agencies are encouraged to coordinate their PI&E efforts with their local TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist, and when possible, agencies are encouraged to hold PI&E events inside their active Enforcement Zones to help draw media and public attention to the crash-related issues in those areas. More details on specific PI&E requirements can be found in the proposal.

**SECTION FIVE
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Policies and Procedures

All STEP agencies must either have established written STEP operating policies and procedures, or develop policies and procedures prior to a STEP grant being executed. The applicant will certify via signed cover letter appended to the STEP Policy and Procedures document uploaded into eGrants that the applying agency has such procedures contained in the uploaded document, or will develop, certify and upload STEP Policies and Procedures prior to grant execution. At a minimum, STEP Policies and Procedures must include:

- **Roles and Responsibilities** – a description of which position serves as STEP project director and a list of their main responsibilities, including detailed information for supervisory review (i.e. timesheets, activity reports, citations, etc. and how often the reviews should occur) prior to reimbursement request.
- **STEP Shifts** – a description of how the agency selects individuals to work a STEP shift.
- **Authorization to Work** – a description of how prior approval is obtained for an individual authorized to work a STEP shift.
- **Work Restrictions** – a list of any restrictions imposed on working STEP, such as limitations on the number of hours an officer can work per shift, etc.
- **Supervision** – a description of how the agency supervises officers working STEP shifts.
- **Overtime Status** – a description on how the agency determines an individual's overtime status before working STEP.
- **Documentation** – a description of how an individual's time worked on a STEP shift is documented.
- **Required STEP Documentation** – a description of the paperwork that is required after the STEP shift ends (i.e., time sheets, overtime cards, STEP daily activity reports, citations).
- **Approval Process** – a description of the process the supervisor uses to approve and document the hours worked.
- **Performance Targets** – a description of the process used to oversee the agency's performance toward meeting the grant's performance measures/target numbers.

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Internal Ethics and Compliance Program

Each agency will be required to undergo a review by TxDOT's Internal Compliance Program prior to grant execution. Agencies must demonstrate compliance with [Title 43 Texas Administrative Code §25.906\(b\)](#) by certifying adoption of an internal ethics and compliance program that satisfies the requirements of [Title 43 Texas Administrative Code §10.51](#) (relating to Internal Ethics and Compliance Program) prior to any grant execution.

Pre-Award Audit

Agencies may be required to undergo a Pre-Award Audit prior to grant execution.

**SECTION SIX
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Texas Traffic Safety Program

FY 2025 Request for Proposals – STEP Grants

Schedule

The proposal process schedule includes major milestones and target due dates culminating in an executed grant agreement. The proposal submission due date is set; all others are subject to change. Any updates will be posted at <https://www.txdot.gov/apps/eGrants/eGrantsHelp/rfp.html>.

The following table outlines the proposal schedule:

Activity / Milestone	Target Due Date
Submission	
Request for Proposals (RFP) Posted	11/10/2023
Proposal Submission Training for General/STEP Grants	11/15/2023
Deadline for Proposal Questions	11/29/2023 Noon
Proposal Q&A Posted	12/04/2023
Deadline for Proposal Submission	01/04/2024
Negotiations	
Proposal Negotiations Begin	03/20/2024
Proposal Negotiations Completed	04/10/2024
Funding Approval	
Funding List and Minute Order Developed	05/01/2024
Funding Approved by Transportation Commission	05/30/2024
Annual Grant Application (AGA)	
AGA Development	06/15/2024
AGA Submitted to NHTSA	07/01/2024
AGA Approved and Published	09/30/2024
Award Grants	
Grants Awarded, Executed and Activated in eGrants	10/01/2024

Please refer any questions or comments about this process to [Larry Krantz, TxDOT Police Traffic Services Program Manager](#).