

Project description – Annual Direct Observation Survey of Safety Belt Use

Please reference “Overview of OHSP competitive grant award process” on the Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) web site (<http://www.michigan.gov/ohsp>) for an explanation of the process.

Background

Traffic crashes remain the number one cause of death before age thirty-five and a leading cause of death at all ages. The use of safety belts is a simple and effective method of reducing injuries and deaths in motor vehicle crashes. To increase safety belt use and decrease fatalities and injuries, Michigan has required the use of safety belts by front seat occupants of motor vehicles since 1985 and has allowed primary (standard) enforcement of this law since 2000.

The Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) has commissioned an annual survey to determine the statewide safety belt use rate every year since 1983. This survey became more formal and consistent with the implementation of federal guidelines for safety belt surveys in the early 1990s. The current survey methodology has remained nearly unchanged since 1993, with the annual safety belt survey occurring around Labor Day each year. This consistency has demonstrated Michigan’s progress in increasing safety belt use and allowed longitudinal comparison of survey results.

Purpose

The annual safety belt survey provides a consistent basis of comparison for passenger safety and the success of traffic safety programs. The grantee shall carry out the annual Labor Day direct observation survey and report the results. The expected steps in this process are: verify that the current survey methodology remains suitable for the annual evaluation, retain and train observers for the survey, observe and record safety belt use along selected demographic characteristics, analyze the resulting data, prepare a report on the findings, and respond to any questions concerning the observations and report.

Deliverables

The grantee shall provide OHSP with the preliminary safety belt use rate, as determined by the observations, within two weeks of the end of observations. The grantee shall provide OHSP with a draft of the full report within one month after the preliminary estimate is available, and the final report one month after that (125 print copies and an electronic copy).

Observations and the report must comply with all federal guidelines for observational surveys of safety belt use, notably to be found in the Federal Register at 63 FR 46389-46394 and 65 FR 13679-13683. These guidelines require a full explanation of the methodology employed, as well as the safety belt use for each category of vehicle.

The report must include a detailed explanation of methodology used, including observation site selection, collection of observation data, and calculation of results. The report must show overall safety belt use, safety belt use by stratum or region, by vehicle type, time of day, day of week, vehicle occupant sex, estimated age, and seating position. The report should cross-tabulate results in each stratum/region against vehicle type, in each vehicle occupant sex against age, and in each vehicle type against all other demographics. Other vehicle characteristics and driver demographics, such as ethnicity, are welcomed. The report must make relevant comparisons to previous years’ results, including notes of statistically significant changes. OHSP welcomes innovations in reporting and analysis.

Additional specifications

For purposes of consistency and longitudinal comparison, the grantee shall be expected to use the existing methodology, as approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Intended deviations from the existing methodology for selecting sites, conducting observations, or calculating results must be outlined in the proposal, consistent with program objectives, and approved by OHSP and NHTSA. It shall be the responsibility of the grantee to secure such approvals before training observers and conducting observations, with sufficient lead time before activity begins. Observations of safety belt use must begin after August 12, 2006 and conclude before September 17, 2006; the specific observation dates are at the grantee's discretion, though the guidelines do require that observations take place on every day of the week and during all daylight hours.

The existing methodology allows for either paper or electronic collection of observation data, and the grantee can choose either so long as deadlines are met. Specific survey sites may be redrawn in accordance with the existing methodology, if necessary or desired.

The organization awarded the grant must agree to abide by the OHSP "Grant Management Requirements," as posted on the OHSP web site. Following the selection of a successful proposal, the grantee must complete the formal grant application and review process through Michigan's web-based grant application to finalize grant details. All OHSP grants are administered on a reimbursement basis. All grant-related costs incurred are first paid by the grantee, the grantee bills OHSP, and then OHSP reimburses the grantee. Quarterly progress and financial reports are required, even for quarters with no activity.

Funding for this project is contingent upon the availability of U.S. Department of Transportation Highway Safety Funds for fiscal year 2006. Changes in federal plans may lead to changes in OHSP programs requiring reasonable accommodations from grantees to keep existing projects consistent with organizational goals. OHSP appreciates the difficulty of adjusting plans and appreciates grantees' flexibility in adapting projects to evolving conditions.

Due date

All proposals for this project must be received at OHSP by July 20, 2005. Proposals may be submitted electronically in Adobe Acrobat or Microsoft Office format. If submitting paper copies, the candidate must submit five (5) copies.

Contact information

Please direct proposals and any questions about this grant opportunity to:

Pi tro Semifero

Office of Highway Safety Planning

4000 Collins Road, P.O. Box 30633

Lansing, MI 48910-8133

(517) 333-5320

semiferp@michigan.gov