REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS 2027
Highway Safety Grant Program
IIJA Section 405(b)

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs

Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division
Highway Safety Program

Issue Date: August 19, 2026
Application Due Date: September 30, 2026

IIJA Section 405(b)
Highway Safety
Occupant Protection
Enforcement Paid Media
Campaign

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs' (ADECA) Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety (LETS) Division awards federal and state funds to state, local, and non-profit organizations to partner in solving Alabama's traffic safety problems. Funds are awarded for use in reducing deaths and serious injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes, through the implementation of programs that address driver behavior and/or improve roadway safety or data collection. Funding for this grant opportunity is provided by the National Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The procedures outlined in this Request for Application are based upon the requirements of the Highway Safety Act of 1966 (United States Code, Title 23, Chapter 4, § 402, § 405 & Section 1906) and subsequent amendments; the "Fixing America's Surface Transportation" (FAST) Act, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Public Law 117-58, Alabama Codes; and Administrative Orders issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The LETS Division is now accepting applications for projects under Purpose Area: ***Occupant Protection Enforcement Paid Media Campaign.*** These programs and services are specifically those that provide education to the public regarding enforcement efforts to encourage seat belt use throughout the year, specifically during the *Click It or Ticket* campaign. The project will need to include the creation and production of campaign materials, as well as the media buy and placement throughout the state during the appropriate time frames in the year.

Eligible Applicants include state agencies, universities, and units of local government. Applicants must demonstrate experience in public safety or behavior modification media campaigns, and a capacity to manage federally funded projects. Recipient must be able to produce media materials, as well as coordinate the media placement using a variety of platforms.

The **Award Period** will run from **October 1, 2026**, until **September 30, 2027**. Continued funding will be determined on an annual basis and will be contingent upon the availability of funds, performance, continuous compliance with grant management requirements, project success and future applications.

Applications must be submitted to the Alabama Grants website, an online grants management system. Alabama Grants can be accessed through the following link: https://grants.alabama.gov/
Children's Policy Councils and local libraries can be utilized for applicants with limited or no internet/broadband access to submit an application.

Submission Information - All applications must be received no later than 5:00 pm **September 30, 2026.**

Late Applications submitted after the due date will not be considered. Any items arriving to our office separate of the original application submission will not be added to the application. The Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division reserves the right to determine if an application is unresponsive to the request, or to reject any incomplete applications without review.

Questions pertaining to this Request for Application may be submitted by email to Lynne Wilman, Highway Safety Unit Chief, lynne.wilman@adeca.alabama.gov

This 'Request for Applications' does not indicate acceptance or approval of any application in response to this request. No grant or contract payment can be made until an agreement has been fully executed. Therefore, no work shall begin on projects selected for funding until an executed grant agreement or professional services contract has been received. All awards are contingent upon state receipt of federal funds awarded.

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PART I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background on the Occupant Protection Program

Motor vehicle crashes remain a leading cause of preventable death and injury in Alabama, underscoring the continued need for targeted occupant protection initiatives. According to the Alabama Department of Public Health, motor vehicle crashes account for more than half of all unintentional injury deaths in the state, with many of these fatalities linked to failure to use basic occupant protection such as seat belts and child restraints.

Seat belts are the single most effective countermeasure for reducing fatalities and serious injuries in crashes. When used correctly, they reduce the risk of death for front-seat occupants by approximately 45% and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50%. Despite this proven effectiveness, a significant proportion of crash fatalities in Alabama involve unrestrained occupants. Data from statewide safety initiatives indicate that in 2024, 36% of motor vehicle occupant fatalities were not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash, even though overall seat belt use in the state exceeds 90%. This disparity highlights a persistent high-risk population whose behavior contributes disproportionately to fatalities.

Recent observational survey data further reinforces this trend. Alabama's seat belt use rate has remained relatively high, yet this plateau suggests that traditional education alone is insufficient to influence the remaining non-compliant population. Research consistently shows that individuals who do not wear seat belts are more likely to engage in other high-risk behaviors, such as impaired driving, increasing both crash risk and crash severity.

As it is an approved countermeasure by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), ADECA currently funds overtime enforcement efforts by law enforcement agencies in the state to encourage safer driving behavior by the motoring public. These enforcement details are conducted throughout the year, with a special focus during the *Click It or Ticket* campaign held in late May-early June each year. To maximize the impact of enforcement campaigns, states are expected to develop corresponding media messaging.

A comprehensive occupant protection paid media campaign in Alabama is therefore necessary to:

- Reinforce enforcement efforts with persuasive, targeted messaging during high visibility enforcement campaigns, such as *Click It or Ticket*;
- Ultimately reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Alabama roadways.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is seeking applications from qualified organizations to implement a paid media campaign aimed at increasing awareness and promoting safe practices for proper seat belt and child restraint usage in Alabama communities. The goal is to reduce restraint-deficient serious injuries and fatalities in traffic crashes by developing, implementing, and managing a data-driven occupant protection media campaign.

B. Project Scope

ADECA is seeking applications from qualified organizations to create and implement a statewide occupant protection paid media program. The goal of this initiative is to improve motorist safety by increasing awareness and knowledge of the importance of seat belt usage and publicizing high visibility enforcement efforts like *Click It or Ticket* and follow the best practices from the NHTSA's traffic safety communications calendar.

This program will target overrepresented demographics in restraint deficient crashes, and evidence-based risk-takers more likely to engage in dangerous behavior. Proper child restraint usage should also be considered in media spot development. Media campaign materials will need to be placed on variety of platforms proven to capture target demographics.

The selected applicant(s) will be responsible for the following:

Campaign Development

- Work with ADECA staff to develop targeted, evidence-based messaging related to enforcement campaign awareness and seat belt usage best practices
- Ensure compliance with federal and state communication guidelines

Creative Production

- Produce high-quality media assets (e.g., video, audio, digital, print)
- Ensure accessibility standards are met

Media Planning and Placement

- Develop a strategic media plan targeting high-risk areas or demographics
- Purchase and place media across appropriate channels, including:
    - Digital platforms
    - Broadcast (TV/radio)
    - Outdoor advertising
    - Social media

Data-Driven Targeting

- Use crash data, demographic data, and behavioral insights to optimize placements on a variety of platforms that reach the entire state, with a special focus on target demographics and locations
- Adjust strategy based on performance metrics

Campaign Management

- Oversee campaign execution from launch to completion
- Coordinate with ADECA and relevant stakeholders to deploy complementary media materials throughout the communications calendar year

F. Reporting and Evaluation

- Provide regular performance reports, including:
    - Reach and impressions
    - Engagement metrics
    - Media efficiency
- Conduct a final evaluation measuring campaign effectiveness

C. Allowable Expenses

- Purchase of training materials and resources

- Personnel, training as a component of an overall program, operating expenses, and supplies are allowable expenses if they are related to the programs that address the authorized program areas. Program-related conferences and travel are allowable expenses; however, subgrantees are encouraged to request pre-approval from ADECA for such expenses, to avoid common travel errors. Equipment purchases are only allowable with pre-approval from ADECA as well.
- The cost of space used for the benefit of the program is allowable subject to the conditions described in 2 CFR § 200.465.
- Printing, publishing, duplication, and other operating expenses are allowed, pending approval from ADECA and compliance with recognition of funding conditions. All expenditures must be related to the implementation of an actual program that is defined in the program narrative sections of the application.
- Grant-funded personnel must accurately reflect the percentage of time dedicated to grant activities. (See also all non-supplanting provisions in the Grant Terms and Conditions.)
- Audit fees can be included in project budgets to cover the costs associated with an audit of the project on a pro-rata basis (if the agency receives at least $750,000 or more in federal funds).

D. Others Costs Generally Unallowable

- Any expenditures that are not a part of an approved program or project (within the authorized program areas) are not allowable;
  - Any expenditure not directly related to the project.
  - Alcohol or Drugs
  - Giveaway or Promotional Items
  - Food or Beverages
  - Bonuses, Commissions, Gifts, and Incentives
  - Entertainment
  - Fund Raising
  - General Cost of business/supplanting: Federal funds must be used to supplement existing funds for project activities and not replace those funds which have been appropriated for the same purpose.
  - Land/Building Acquisition
  - Late Charges
  - Legal Fees
  - Lobbying
  - Office furnishings
  - Rental Cars - unless previously justified and approved by LETS

Allowable and unallowable expense details can be found in the 200 C.F.R. 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles. When an applicant/organization is awarded highway safety funding, they must abide by all federal requirements, which includes all applicable federal statutes, regulations, executive orders, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) guidelines, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and other federal requirements as referenced on the NHTSA Resources Guide. This web page and all associated federal regulations must be reviewed by the applicant and are available on the website at: https://www.nhtsa.gov/highway-safety-grants-program/resources-guide .

E. Application Review Process

Once applications are submitted through the online system, https://grants.alabama.gov/, the application will be reviewed by ADECA LETS staff to:

- Ensure the application meets basic criteria.
- Conduct a risk assessment of the agency and project.
- Compare the application with current, needs, priorities and activities.
- Assess organization capacity and experience
- Assess Statement of Problem and Implementation Plan
- Assess if Budget estimates are within funding capacity.

Applications are reviewed by the grant staff's internal review team. The determination of whether the proposed project has the potential to impact traffic safety goals will be based on its ability to develop, produce and place media materials throughout the state for an impactful behavioral modification campaign. The applying organization must show demonstrated experience in traffic safety or public health media campaign development and management. Applicants should have experience managing federal or state grant funds in compliance with reporting and financial requirements. There should also be experience with managing large media buys with a variety of vendors.

Potential campaign design and the methods and procedures to implement the project should contain clarity and feasibility of the proposed activities and timeline. There should be alignment of the activities with project goals. The project should be supported with a strong evaluation plan that will allow ADECA to assess the effectiveness of the campaign at its conclusion. The grant opportunity is competitive as funding is limited.

F. Risk Assessments

Federal regulations require grantees (ADECA) to conduct a risk assessment of each applicant before an award can be made. A risk assessment must be based on each applicant with regard to current or previous funding, unresolved audit issues, delinquent programmatic and fiscal reporting, and prior performance.

Applicants with any findings may carry special conditions such as increased monitoring and/or prohibitions on drawing funds until certain requirements are met. Applicants with substantial or persistent performance or compliance issues, long-standing open audits, or open criminal investigations will likely not be considered for an award until all issues are resolved. All assessments are unique and will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

PART II – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Submission Information

For FY 2027, applicants will complete and submit their applications in Alabama Grants at https://grants.alabama.gov/.

Applicants must submit the full application(s) by 5:00 p.m., September 30,2026.

B. System Navigation

- Navigate to https://grants.alabama.gov/IGXLogin
- Have an Authorized Official (AO) for your organization register as a new user.
- Complete and submit a registration request.
- Wait for an email confirmation granting access to the system.
- After receiving the confirmation, your AO can login to the system and designate access to your organizational account to other staff members as appropriate. (See the Grantee Admin Manual or Grantee Admin Training Video under the Alabama Grants' Training Materials section.)

Based on the organization type selected under the organization profile, a user will see any available funding opportunities under the "My Opportunities" panel of the user's dashboard.

Any application or documentation in support of an application not submitted in Alabama Grants will not be accepted for review. The Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division reserves the right to reject any incomplete applications without review.

Contact Information:
For assistance with technical issues, such as forgetting username and/or password, adding dashboard panels, or navigating the website in Alabama Grants, contact the Agate Software Helpdesk at **helpdesk@agatesoftware.com** or at 1 (800) 820-1890. The Agate Software Helpdesk operates from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST Monday - Friday.

C. General Application Instructions

In this section, the narrative should provide an overall explanation of the services that your agency provides. The narrative must be clear enough to allow program managers to understand what the agency does and the services it provides.
This section must contain the following:

1. Problem Statement

The problem identification includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Identification of the problems to be addressed,
- Description of the geographic areas affected,
- Who the problem affects and the consequences,
- Under what circumstances the problems occur,
- Other current efforts to assist in alleviating the problem (existing programs or services),

- Rates of increase or decrease in the problem by showing the percentage of change for a period covering at least two years,
- Percentages of change with actual numbers (i.e., from 2018 to 2019 infant fatalities increased from 2 deaths to 5). Reflect the data in your objectives.

2. Goals and Objectives

The goal is a broad statement of the desired result or anticipated outcome of the program. The goal addresses the problem identified in the Problem Statement section. The goal is generic to encompass more than one project, realistic and achievable.

- What do you want to achieve?
- Explain the goal(s) of the proposed project in simple, straightforward terms. **One or two** broad goals are sufficient.
- The goals identify intended impacts or outcomes, and the results the program wants to achieve.
- Each goal should have one or more **measurable objectives** describing how the agency will reach that goal. Be realistic.
- State the goals as a determination of achievement and relevant to the problem.
- The goals MUST tie into the Problem Statement and Outcome Evaluation.
- State how the project is cost effective.
- Administrative goals should not be your main point.

3. Methods and Procedures

Applicants are to describe the activities, services, and project proposed. It should be clear to the reader that the project has been well thought out, excellent planning is evident, and good outcomes are projected and documented. Project should be based on an approved evidence-based program or provide documented evidence of prior success. A one-year timeline of activities should be included. Also, be sure to detail the specific tasks and activities that grant funded staff will be conducting during the project.

4. Evaluation

The applicant must demonstrate the ability to collect and analyze collected data to effectively monitor program success. All data collected should also relate to the stated goals and objectives.
Good ways to measure results include percentage increases or decreases, numerical increases or decreases, and surveys administered at the beginning and end of the project that measure participants' changes in attitudes and/or increases in knowledge. Explain how you plan on tracking and evaluating the project to ensure that the stated goals of the project are met. Having these measures in place will also help with the quarterly reporting requirement.

5. Budget/Budget Narrative

Your application will include a budget detail and a budget narrative section, which should provide justification and describe in detail the basis for determining the cost of the items included in each budget category. A simple repeat of the calculation shown on the budget detail pages is not an acceptable narrative. Proposed expenditures should be allocable, reasonable, and allowable.

Personnel:

- Salaries: List the name of the employee (or put TBD if unknown), position/title, salary, rate of pay, and estimated percent of time devoted to the project. Example: Jane Doe, Program Manager, $1200 (paycheck amount), 12 (she gets paid monthly and there are 12 months in a year), and she will dedicate 50% of her time to the project so $1200 x 12 x 50% = $7200 OR Jane Doe, Evaluator, $15 (hourly rate), 520 (anticipated hours they will work, this example is based off 10 hours a week for 52 weeks), and of these 520 hours she will devote 100% of her time to the project so $15 x 520 x 100% = $7800.
- Fringe: Indicate each type of fringe benefit included and keep in mind that the computation should be explained in the budget narrative section. This section is based on the employer's share of expenses. When completing this section, please remember the following:
    i. Maximum amount allowed for FICA = 7.65% of salaries
    ii. SUI is based on the first $8,000 of an employee's pay per calendar year.
    iii. Allowable insurances include health, disability, and life.
    iv. Workers' compensation is a rate unique for your agency.

Professional Services: Any persons performing work on this project, who are not employees of the subgrantee should be included under this category. A signed and dated contract must be executed for each person performing contractual services on an awarded grant. Please make sure to include in the Budget Narrative section the type of services being provided and hourly rate. **Note:** Travel for Professional Services should be listed within this category and not in the Travel section.

Travel: Travel expenses for work performed in association with and charged to this project should be included. Travel expenses are paid per the applicant's written travel policies or State of Alabama policies, whichever is more restrictive.

Operating Expenses: List all expected Operating Expenses necessary for carrying out the activities associated with the proposed project that will be charged to an awarded grant. Rent, utilities, supplies, printing, postage, etc. must be allocated if used to accomplish other functions of the agency. Equipment such as printers and laptops (less than $5,000 per unit) should go in this category. **Note**: This should also include any indirect costs.

Equipment: List any equipment purchases necessary for carrying out the activities associated with the proposed project that will be charged to an awarded grant. **Note**: Equipment is defined as one unit of equipment with a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $10,000 or more. **Any equipment that is less than $10,000 should be listed under Operating Expenses.

- Note Concerning Indirect Cost or Cost Allocation: In accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(a)(1)(xiv) and (a)(4), and 2 CFR 200.414, subrecipients of Federal awards may charge indirect costs to the award unless statutorily prohibited by the Federal program and in accordance with any applicable administrative caps on Federal funding. ADECA will not negotiate indirect cost rates with subrecipients but will accept a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate of the 10% de minimis rate of the modified total direct cost (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR 200. If requesting the 10% de minimis rate, subrecipients must submit a certification that the entity has never received a federally approved indirect cost rate. Subrecipients are allowed to allocate and change direct costs

through cost allocation. However, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but not charged as both or inconsistently charged to the Federal award. Once chosen, the method must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a negotiated rate is approved by the subrecipients' Federal cognizant agency.

PART III – ADDITIONAL REQUIRED FORMS

1. **State of Alabama Disclosure Statement**
   Act 2001-955 requires the disclosure statement to be completed and filed with all applications, bids, contracts, or grant applications to the State of Alabama in excess of $25,000. The form must be signed, dated, and notarized prior to submission. Complete all lines as indicated. If an item does not apply, denote N/A (not applicable).

2. **Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements**
   This form certifies the subrecipient will provide a drug-free workplace. Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements form must be signed and included with the grant application.

3. **Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Involuntary Exclusion**
   Lower Tier Covered Transactions (Sub-Recipient) – This form is used to ensure that an agency is not suspended or otherwise excluded from receiving federal funding, must be signed, and returned with the application.

4. **Certification Regarding Lobbying**
   Compliance with federal certifications requirements for restrictions on lobbying. Must complete and be signed by the Authorizing Official before disbursement of funds.

5. **Equal Employment Opportunity Certification**
   Compliance is required with the following federal laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. The Equal Employment Opportunity Program Certification must be completed and signed by the Authorizing Official.

6. **Financial Questionnaire**
   The questionnaire is a tool designed to assist both subgrantee and the LETS staff in assessing the subgrantee's management capabilities. Subrecipient organizations are expected to have certain systems, policies, and procedures in place for managing their own funds, equipment, and personnel. The questionnaire must be completed, signed, and included in the application.

7. **Risk Assessment Questionnaire**
   This questionnaire is a supplemental tool for completing a full risk assessment. A risk assessment must be conducted on each applicant before an award can be made. A higher risk rating may require additional grant requirements or special conditions. All assessments are unique and are handled on a case-by-case basis.

8. **E-Verify**
   E-Verify is an Internet-based system that compares information from an employee's Form I- 9, Employment Eligibility Verification, to data from U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Social Security Administration records to confirm employment eligibility. You can enroll in E-Verify through http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify .

9. **Certificate of Compliance the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act** to be completed by non-government agencies. The form certifies that employers will not violate federal immigration law or knowingly employ, hire for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama. A contracting party (subrecipient) found in violation of this provision shall be deemed in breach of the grant agreement and shall be responsible for any and all resulting damages. If you are unable to open the link, contact lynne.wilman@adeca.alabama.gov for a pdf email copy.

PART IV - AWARD INFORMATION

A. Period of Performance

The LETS Division anticipates awarded projects to begin **October 1, 2026**, and to terminate no later than **September 30, 2027**.

B. Cost Matching

Cost matching is not required under NHTSA Section 405(b).

C. Estimated Funding

Selected applications will receive a grant for an amount not to exceed the amount requested by the applicant or that which is negotiated between the selected applicant and the LETS Division.

New applicants:
The maximum subaward for applicants is $400,000.00 for a one-year period. The LETS Division reserves the right to award a lesser amount.

D. Program Reporting Requirements

Progress reports are to be submitted in a calendar quarter basis, regardless of the start date of the subgrant project. These reports must provide an update on the project's objectives. Failure to submit reports in a timely manner will significantly delay any reimbursements submitted within the grant period. See table below for the progress reports and financial reports due dates:

Report Period	Due on or before the following dates
October 1 through December 31	January 15th
January 1 through March 31	April 15th
April 1 through June 30	July 15th
July 1 through September 30	October 15th
Final Report	November 15th

E. Award Acceptance

Selected applicants will receive an email notification to log into Alabama Grants to accept the award when funding decisions are made. IMPORTANT: Only the Authorizing Official has the authority to accept the grant award which constitutes a binding, contractual agreement. If anyone other than the Authorizing Official accepts the award on their behalf, you must submit a letter on letterhead stating that person has been given statutory authority to enter into the grant agreement on the Authorizing Official's behalf.

F. Standard Subgrant Agreement Conditions and Assurances

Selected applicants are required to sign the Standard Subgrant Agreement Conditions and Assurances, which include but are not limited to requirements under federal and state laws in addition to requirements for accounting, data collection and reporting. Subgrant Agreement Conditions and Assurances will be signed upon an application's funding approval.