



OTS Grants Media Approval Process

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

News Releases

- 1. I am using an OTS-supplied release template. Do I still need to send to the OTS PIO for approval?** No. But copy the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and your OTS grant coordinator when you distribute to media and public.
- 2. Does the kick-off release need prior approval before being distributed?** Yes. All kick-off releases, whether using an OTS-supplied news release template or writing your own kick-off news release, requires prior approval from the OTS PIO. The kick-off release should not be distributed until the grant is signed and executed.
- 3. When do I distribute the kick-off news release?** By November 15 and after the grant is signed and executed, but not before October 1. The news release must be sent to the OTS PIO for approval and copied to your OTS grant coordinator.
- 4. We have multiple grants. Do I need to send out separate kick-off releases?** No. The grants can be combined into one announcement of all grants awarded. The news release should state the total amount awarded for all grants, as well as the amounts allocated for each grant program.
- 5. What about warrant or probation sweeps and court stings? Do we need to send a news release for approval on sensitive operations?** No. Time sensitive operations or activities that are embargoed or could impact operations by publicizing in advance are exempt from the OTS PIO approval process. However, announcements and results of activities should still be sent to the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and your OTS grant coordinator. If the activity is embargoed, add an embargo date and time to the release or put "INTERNAL ONLY: DO NOT RELEASE" message in the subject line of email so we know the information is not to be released and for internal purposes only.
- 6. Where may I download the OTS news release templates?** All news release templates for traffic safety campaigns, grant awards, and enforcement activities are available for download on the OTS website: <https://www.ots.ca.gov/grants/program-information/grantee-press-release-templates/>
- 7. Where are the OTS developed educational materials?** The OTS educational materials are available on the "Go Safely, California" website: <https://gosafelyca.org/media-toolkits/>. The OTS Marketing and Public Affairs team is also available to customize the materials for your needs. Contact us at pio@ots.ca.gov.

Social Media

- 8. Do social media posts require prior approval from the OTS?** No. Only graphics and posts that are part of a paid media campaign grant objective using OTS funds or developed using contractual services from a subgrantee require prior approval. We highly encourage grantees to promote traffic safety campaigns and grant activities on social media throughout the grant year and tag the OTS and/or Go Safely, California social accounts in posts. The OTS social handles are OTS_CA on [X](#) (Twitter) and [Instagram](#); CaliforniaOTS on [Facebook](#); GoSafelyCA on [X](#) (Twitter), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).
- 9. We are using contractual services for a paid social media campaign. Do we need to send posts, graphics and videos to the OTS PIO for approval?** Yes. Any paid social

media campaign where artwork, graphics, videos and scripts are developed and produced using a subgrantee or contractual services requires prior approval before distribution.

- 10. We made a flyer that was approved by the OTS PIO in the last grant year and want to use for this grant year. Do we still need to send to the OTS PIO for approval?** Yes. Any news releases, work plans, scripts, storyboards, artwork, graphics, videos or any educational or informational materials that received OTS PIO approval in a prior grant year needs to be resubmitted for approval in the current grant year.

Logos, Educational Materials and Standard Funding Language

- 11. How do I obtain the OTS logos?** All logos are available for download on the OTS website: <https://www.ots.ca.gov/media-and-research/campaigns/new-logo/>.
- 12. Is the “Go Safely, California” logo required on educational materials?** No, but you are welcome to use!
- 13. Where do I find the “Go Safely, California” logo?** They are available for download, along with the OTS logos, from the OTS website: <https://www.ots.ca.gov/media-and-research/campaigns/new-logo/>.
- 14. Is there a specific OTS logo I should use?** Yes, but always use the logo color and lockup that has the best contrast and visibility. We recommend using the square **color** logo as a default for white backgrounds and the square **black** OTS logo for color backgrounds. The square white OTS logo should be used if the color or black logos have poor contrast or are difficult to see. A good rule of thumb is a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1. Refer to “Use of Logo and Standard Funding Language” section of the OTS Grants Materials Approval Process Guidelines document, the [OTS Logo Style Guide](#) or contact pio@ots.ca.gov if you have questions about which logo to use.
- 15. Does the OTS have a branding and logo style guide?** Yes. Our style guide is available on the OTS website: [OTS Logos Style Guide](#)
- 16. We are purchasing a DUI trailer. Where should we put the OTS logo?** The OTS logo should be in at least two places on either the side or front/back of the trailer next to your agency logo. Contact OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov if you need further direction on format-appropriate placement of the logo.
- 17. The PIO approved the design for reflective arm and leg bands. Does this mean we can go ahead and make the purchase?** No. The OTS PIO only approves the content and design of materials. Approval for allowable cost and budget expenditure must come from your OTS grant coordinator.
- 18. I sent a material for approval but have not heard anything. What do I do?** Send the OTS PIO a follow-up email asking for the status of review and copy your OTS grant coordinator. You may also contact the OTS PIO at 916-208-8409. Our goal is to respond within 2 business days, but we may miss a few emails that come through.
- 19. What is the OTS PIO looking for on materials?** Design and content. Is the messaging clear? Does it align with the grant objective? Is there an OTS logo and proper funding language?
- 20. What is the OTS funding language and when is it required?** The OTS funding language should read, space permitting, on all news releases, advisories and printed materials as

follows: **Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.**

- 21. Do I need to put the standard funding language on a bike light or reflective armband?**
No. The OTS logo and standard funding language are only required when there is space permitting.
- 22. Are we allowed to give away or promote the distribution of free safety items to the public?**
Items such as bike lights, reflective arm/leg bands, child car seats, bicycle helmets and other items whose sole purpose is to improve highway safety should not be incentivized as a giveaway, "freebie," or promotional item. Per [NHTSA Memorandum Use of NHTSA Highway Safety Grant Funds for Certain Purchases](#), "the project may not be limited to distribution of the items" and must have an educational component and justifiable problem identification. Suggested language for flyers, social media posts, banners or bulletins announcing events or trainings include "Child safety seats at no-cost following education classes," "Safety equipment available at no-cost following training on proper use," or "instruction on helmet fitting with bicycle helmets available to youth in need." Contact the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov or your OTS grant coordinator for guidance on promotion of grant activities and events.
- 23. What if I am using materials or offering prizes that are not an allowable cost but are being donated or paid for by a partner?** Any materials using the OTS logo or used for a grant-related activity or objective that is not an allowable cost should have the following disclaimers on the materials: "This item is provided courtesy of (Company or Organization name)," "Prizes provided courtesy of (Company or Organization name)," or "This item was paid for by (Company or Organization name)." Examples of items that are not allowable include: bumper stickers, keychains, goodie bags, electronics (Airpods, laptops, etc.), or any other "swag" or promotional item used as an incentive, giveaway or prize. [See example of language](#) on a promotional banner for the Safety Sam mascot contest. Refer to [NHTSA Memorandum Use of NHTSA Highway Safety Grant Funds for Certain Purchases](#) or contact your OTS grant coordinator for further guidance.
- 24. I have an education presentation that will be used for a class. Does this require prior approval?** Yes. Powerpoint presentations for education classes require prior approval. However, training classes for Law Enforcement (i.e. DRE, ARIDE), Child Passenger Safety Technician certification/recertification (CPST) or any specific subject matter courses that are for professional licensing/certification are exempt from the pre-approval process.
- 25. How much notice is sufficient to request OTS attendance at a grant-funded event?** At least 21 days, or when the event is first announced. To request OTS attendance, fill out the [OTS Speaker Request Form](#) and email it to the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov.
- 26. Are we allowed to use OTS campaign logos or materials?** Yes. Contact the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and we will provide any campaign logos or materials for your use.
- 27. What if we hold an event and the OTS is unable to attend?** Email the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and copy your OTS grant coordinator with brief highlights, including any media coverage, within 7 days following the grant-related event or program. Please put these highlights in your QPRs.

- 28. Do we need to put the OTS logo on social media graphics?** No, but the OTS logo should be added to any post that is part of a paid media campaign or developed with contractual services from a subgrantee. See question 15 for specifics on logo use and refer to the [OTS Logo Style Guide](#) for additional guidance.
- 29. Are we allowed to approve materials by subgrantees?** No. All materials developed by subgrantees and using OTS funds must be sent to the OTS PIO for review and approval. The same approval process through your OTS grant coordinator applies for allowable cost and budget expenditures.
- 30. I am developing a Powerpoint presentation for a class. Do I need to send to the OTS PIO for approval?** Yes. Online presentations and trainings require prior approval from the OTS PIO. Send to pio@ots.ca.gov and copy your OTS grant coordinator for approval. Certified training courses are exempt from the approval process.