

Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Q&As

What are the primary changes to the SHSP under the FAST Act?

The FAST Act continued the SHSP requirements put in place under MAP-21, including regularly recurring SHSP evaluation and updates, consultation with additional stakeholders (e.g. county transportation officials), consideration of additional safety factors during the update process, and a penalty for not having an updated SHSP.

What is the SHSP Update Cycle?

States must complete an SHSP update no later than 5 years from the previous approved version (23 CFR 924.9(a)(3)(i)). SHSP updates must meet the requirements for a State SHSP as defined in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11) and meet the requirements for SHSP updates and approvals as described in 23 U.S.C. 148(d) and 148(g)(2), and that are further defined in 23 CFR 924.

What is the SHSP Evaluation Cycle?

At a minimum, States must evaluate their SHSPs as part of the States' regularly recurring SHSP update process (23CFR 924.13 (a)(2)). This evaluation helps confirm the validity of the SHSP's emphasis areas and strategies based on analysis of current safety data, and identifies issues related to the SHSP's process, implementation, and progress that should be considered during each subsequent SHSP update.

Must other plans and programs coordinate with the SHSP?

Yes. The State's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) must be coordinated with the SHSP. To obligate HSIP funds, a State must develop, implement, and update an SHSP that identifies and analyzes highway safety problems and opportunities (23 U.S.C. 148(c)), and highway safety improvement projects must be consistent with the State's SHSP (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(4)(A)). Likewise, the SHSP must be consistent with the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 135(g), which pertains to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(H)).

The SHSP must also be coordinated with a State's safety plan. Specifically, the State must coordinate its Highway Safety Plan (HSP), data collection, and information systems with the SHSP (as required under Highway Safety Programs) (23 U.S.C. 402(b)(1)(F)(v)). The lead State commercial motor vehicle safety agency must also coordinate the plan, data collection, and information systems with the State highway safety improvement program required under section 148(c) of title 23 (49 U.S.C. 31102(c)(2)(K)).



Is participation by local road jurisdictions required in the development of SHSPs?

Yes, the statute requires that the SHSP be developed after consultation with a broad range of safety stakeholders (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)). This includes regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), if applicable; State and local traffic enforcement officials; county transportation officials; other major Federal, State, tribal, and local safety stakeholders, and; other stakeholders as outlined in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11). Depending on the SHSP safety priority areas and strategies, States may want to consult with additional partners, such as representatives from the public health, education, and medical professions.

Does the FHWA Division Office approve the updated SHSP?

The FHWA Division Office approves the process by which the State updates the SHSP, but not the updated SHSP itself. The SHSP process is approved by the FHWA Division Administrator if: (1) the updated SHSP is consistent with the requirements for updates and approval under section 148(d) and the requirements for an SHSP as defined in section 148(a)(11); and (2) the process the State used to update the SHSP is consistent with the requirements of section 148.

Who are the “State representatives of nonmotorized users” referenced in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(A)(ix)?

The statute defines the entities that must be consulted when developing the SHSP, including “State representatives of nonmotorized users.” Each State has a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator in its State Department of Transportation to promote and facilitate the increased use of nonmotorized transportation. At a minimum, these State Coordinators should be consulted when developing the SHSP. Depending on the needs of the State, other groups that represent bicycle and pedestrian safety interests could also be consulted.

What is the penalty for failure to have an approved, updated SHSP?

A State that does not have an updated SHSP by August 1, 2017, (23 U.S.C. 148 (d)(3)) with a process approved by the FHWA Division Administrator, will not be eligible to receive additional formula obligation limitation during the annual redistribution of one-year obligation limitation (often referred to as “August Redistribution”). This penalty will remain in effect for each succeeding fiscal year until the fiscal year during which the plan has an approved process, which must be by August 1 to avoid the penalty that year.