

Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

Rail Transit Safety Education Grants Information Sheet - 2026

Overview:

For over 50 years the rail safety non-profit organization, Operation Lifesaver (OL), has been educating the public about the need to remain safe around railroad tracks and trains. In 2002, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) began partnering with Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) to apply its safety programs to light and commuter rail systems. Since then, numerous transit agencies around the country have benefited from the Operation Lifesaver, Inc and FTA partnership.

Eligible recipients of these grants include transit agencies and governmental entities that provide transit service. The project must relate to rail safety, including commuter rail, heavy rail, light rail, and streetcars. Bus safety activities are not eligible. The rail service must either be currently operating or expected to begin operating within 36 months of the date of application.

Grants are capped at \$20,000. A 25% non-federal match is required (cash or in-kind). ***Travel, Food & Beverage, and administrative costs are not eligible***

Timeline and Important Dates:

Grant Application Period:	June 1, 2026 – August 1, 2026
Grant Awards Announced to Agencies:	No later than September 30, 2026
Grant Projects Must End by:	August 31, 2027
Required Final Report/Receipts Due:	September 30, 2027*

*Final payments will not be made if final reports and receipts are not received by October 15, 2027, as OLI's grant with FTA closes after which OLI can no longer access the grant funds.

Eligibility Requirements:

Education and outreach materials developed using these grant funds will be:

- developed in consultation with the State Coordinator of the state Operation Lifesaver (OL) program (if applicable). To find your State Coordinator, go to <https://oli.org/state-coordinators> . If your state does not have an Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator listed on OLI's website, contact Wende Corcoran at wcorcoran@oli.org for guidance.
- reviewed and approved by Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI).
- co-branded by the transit agency and Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
- made available to the public at large and for use by other transit agencies on OLI's website

Required Elements of Application:

- A defined safety need that the project will address, with supporting data
- A clearly defined target audience for your safety awareness campaign
- A project plan and project budget must be submitted
- Identification of the source of the non-federal matching funds that will be dedicated for the project
- A communications plan and evaluation plan for the project must be submitted

Evaluation Guidelines:

The Review Committee will use the evaluation scoring system below to determine which grant applications are awarded funding. Each application has a possible score of 100 points. The following elements of the application will add or subtract points from the total score:

- Up to 15 points will be awarded for the description of the Defined Safety Need that the project will address, with supporting data.
- Up to 10 points will be awarded for describing a clearly defined target audience for the safety education project.
- Up to 25 points will be awarded for the Project Plan description. The Project Plan shall include: (1) clear project goal, (2) listing of project activities; and (3) time frame for carrying out the project.
- Up to 15 points will be awarded for the Project Budget, listing funding sources for project activities and elements, in-kind matching funds, and other items. Grant seekers will download a budget template that includes formulas to automatically calculate the required match percentages and total funding requested for the project. Points are awarded based on completeness and specificity of budget submittal.
- Up to 10 points will be awarded based on the amount of non-federal matching funds (including in-kind services) dedicated to the proposed project. These percentages will be automatically calculated when the grant seeker completes the budget template. (Note: non-federal match must be at least 25 percent.)
- Up to 10 points will be awarded based on the communications plan for the safety campaign.
- Up to 15 points will be awarded for the Evaluation Plan. Points are awarded based on the grant seeker's description of how they will evaluate the project after its completion, including meaningful metrics for measuring effectiveness and how he will determine whether the project met its goal. Final data can be sent to OLI up to 6 months after the grant closes.

To apply, click on one of the following links.

First-time Common Grant Application users click [here](#) to register.

Returning Common Grant Application users click [here](#).

Grants awarded by OLI will be subawards to the following Federal Grant. As such, applicants must review, and agree to abide by, the requirements of the award detailed below:

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Award ID Number (FAIN): DC-2026-006-00

OLI ID #: 5995

CFDA Number: 20531

Total Award: \$300,000

Period of Performance: 4/14/26-9/1/27

R&D: This award includes research and development activities

Indirect Costs: This award includes 15% de minimis indirect cost rate

Award Summary Description: Award to Operation Lifesaver, Inc. to provide tailored technical assistance to state operation lifesaver programs, transit agencies, and the general public regarding safety best practices to prevent fatalities and injuries at and around rail grade crossings.

Additional Requirements

1. All grants must be used in accordance with Federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the Federal award.
2. Grantee agrees to permit OLI and its auditors to have access to its records and financial statements as necessary for OLI to meet its monitoring and management requirements.
3. **Certifications.** By execution of this Amendment the undersigned grantee hereby certifies, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, that the following statements are true. The undersigned grantee shall provide immediate written notice to OLI if, at any time prior to or during the period of performance of this award, he/she learns that these certifications were erroneous when submitted or have become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
 - a. Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – in accordance with the provisions of Appendix B to 49 CFR Part 29, the undersigned grantee certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
 - b. Drug-Free Workplace Program – pursuant to 49 CFR Part 32, the undersigned grantee certifies that it will or continue to provide a drug-free workplace.
 - c. Single Audit Verification – in accordance with provisions of CFR 200.501 Subpart F, the undersigned grantee certifies that it utilizes an independent public accounting firm to conduct required Single Audits.

OLI Contact:

Wende Corcoran

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