OTS Grants Media Approval Process FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Press 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 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 template or not, requires prior approval from the OTS PIO. The kick-off release should not be sent out until the grant is fully signed and executed.
3. **When am I supposed to send out the kick-off press release?** By November 15, but not before October 1. The release must be sent to the OTS PIO for approval and copied to your Coordinator. The grant must be fully signed and executed before distribution.
4. **We have three grants. Do I need to send out three separate kickoff releases?** No. The grants can be combined into one announcement of all grants awarded.
5. **What about warrant or probation sweeps and court stings? Do we need to send a 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 PIO approval process. However, announcements and results of activities should still be sent to the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and your Coordinator. If the activity is embargoed, add an embargo date and time to release or put "INTERNAL ONLY: DO NOT RELEASE" message in subject line of email so we know the information is not to be released and for internal purposes only.
6. **Where may I download OTS press release templates**? All 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/

Social Media

7. **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!
8. **What are the OTS social media handles?** OTS_CA on Twitter and Instagram; CaliforniaOTS on Facebook; GoSafelyCA on Twitter and Facebook.
9. **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 press releases, work plans, scripts, storyboards, artwork, graphics, videos or any educational or informational materials that received PIO approval in a prior grant year needs to be resubmitted for approval in the current grant year.

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Logos and Funding Language

10. **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/

11. **Where are the OTS developed educational materials?** The OTS educational materials are available on the "Go Safely, California" website: https://gosafelyca.org/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.

12. **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 coordinator.

13. **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 Coordinator. You may also contact the OTS PIO at 916-509-3020. Our goal is to respond within 2 business days, but we may miss a few emails that come through.

14. **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?

15. **What is the OTS funding language and when is it required?** The OTS funding language should read, space permitting, on all press 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.***

16. **Do I really 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.

17. **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. Contact the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and the OTS PIO will send a speaker request form for the grantee to fill out.

18. **I want to use an OTS campaign logo. How do I request one?** Contact the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and we will provide an OTS campaign logo (DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze, Sober or Hand Em' Over, Think Two Steps Ahead, Etc.)

19. **What if we hold event and you are unable to attend?** Email the OTS PIO at pio@ots.ca.gov and copy your OTS 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.

20. **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.

21. **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 coordinator applies for allowable cost and budget expenditures.

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