

Speed Safety Camera Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains frequently asked questions (FAQ) that partners and stakeholders may have related to the planning, deployment, and operations of speed safety cameras. These FAQ's have been developed as a quick resource for common questions that we have received, and additional information and resources are available on the [FHWA Speed Management Reference Materials](#) webpage.

Updated [09/18/2024]

Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the States or the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide information regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

1. Q: Does FHWA recommend deployments of speed safety cameras?

A: Yes. In areas with a demonstrated speeding-related crash problem, FHWA promotes speed safety cameras as one of 28 [proven safety countermeasures](#). The [USDOT National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) states that when deployed equitably and applied appropriately to roads with the greatest risk of harm due to speeding, speed safety cameras can provide significant safety benefits and save lives. FHWA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have published the new [Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide](#) which helps State, local and Tribal agencies plan, deploy, and operate speed safety camera programs as part of their broader comprehensive speed management program. USDOT's webinar on the Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide roll-out is available at: [Webinar Recording for Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide](#). (passcode: r!^hp#9R)

2. Q: Can FHWA financial assistance be used to support deployment of speed safety cameras?

A: Yes. FHWA and NHTSA financial assistance may be used for speed safety cameras. The deployment of speed safety cameras may be eligible for funding from several FHWA programs, such as the Highway Safety Improvement Program, and some discretionary grant programs, such as the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program, subject to the individual program's eligibility criteria.

3. Q: What are the HSIP eligibility considerations for speed safety cameras?

A: Speed safety cameras are considered a specified safety project under HSIP, as the definition of a specified safety project includes a project that facilitates enforcement of traffic

safety laws (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(B)(ii)). There are several considerations when using HSIP funds for specified safety projects. First, a State may use not more than 10 percent of its HSIP apportionment on specified safety projects (23 U.S.C. 148(e)(3)(A)). Second, to be eligible for HSIP funding as a specified safety project, the speed safety camera project must be consistent with all HSIP requirements (23 U.S.C. 148(e)(3)(C)(i)), meaning that the project must be consistent with the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(4)(A)) and be identified through the State's data-driven process (23 U.S.C. 148(c)(2)(B)).

4. *Q: Can HSIP funds be used for media buys and other forms of outreach to promote public awareness related to speed safety cameras?*

A: Yes. Specified safety projects include projects that promote public awareness and informs the public regarding highway safety matters (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(B)(i)). In addition to HSIP requirements, these non-infrastructure projects must also meet related requirements contained in 2 CFR part 200.

5. *Q: Can HSIP funds be used for the direct purchase of equipment related to speed safety cameras?*

A: Yes. Per the FHWA memo dated December 14, 2018, [Eligibility of Construction and Highway Safety Equipment Acquisition Costs as a Direct Charge](#), a FHWA Division Administrator may approve HSIP funding for the direct charge of equipment provided it meets all other requirements of HSIP and those outlined in the memo. Additionally, the equipment is subject to FHWA's Buy America requirement (23 U.S.C. 313, 23 CFR 635.410), and the domestic content procurement preferences under Section 70914 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. No. 117-58) (enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act). Also, the requirements contained in 2 CFR 200.216 and [FHWA guidance related to Implementation of Prohibition on Certain Telecommunications Equipment or Services](#), dated August 13, 2020, apply.

6. *Q: Does the revenue generated from speed safety camera fines impact or reduce the amount of Federal funds awarded?*

A: No. Revenue generated through the payment of fines related to speed safety camera violations are not considered program income unless specifically identified in the Federal award or Federal awarding agency regulations as program income (2 CFR 200.307(c)).

7. *Q: Do FHWA administered regulations, policies or laws prohibit local governments from placing speed safety cameras on Federal-aid highways?*

A: No. As with locally administered transportation projects, it is the decision of the State DOT to allow local projects such as the installation of speed safety cameras on Federal-aid

highways. The State DOT is responsible and accountable for Local Public Agency compliance with all applicable Federal laws and requirements (23 CFR 635.105(a); 2 CFR 200.332).

8. *Q: Is placing speed safety cameras within the right-of-way of Federal-aid highways and interstate highways, considered an alternate use of the highway right of way?*

A: No. Speed safety cameras are a FHWA proven safety countermeasure for speed management and, as such, can be considered an integral part of highway operations and safety. Therefore, speed safety cameras are considered as having a highway purpose and would not be deemed an alternate use of right of way (23 CFR 1.23).

9. *Q: What is the relationship between speed safety cameras and infrastructure improvements?*

A: Speed safety cameras are often used as a short or medium-term solution to address speeding as part of a jurisdiction's broader speed management safety plan. Some communities may lack resources and infrastructure designed to self-enforce safe speeds. These communities can prioritize longer-term infrastructure solutions while speed safety cameras are used to address immediate safety concerns.

10. *Q: What should agencies consider in evaluating their speed safety camera program?*

A: On-going monitoring of a program helps agencies use available resources efficiently and maintain public confidence that speed safety cameras are operated to benefit safety. Evaluation may result in a change in where the units are deployed, enforcement speed thresholds, hours of enforcement, or type of speed enforcement conducted. Evaluating the equity impact of a speed safety camera program by disaggregating citation data along demographic and social categories can determine if underserved communities are disproportionately impacted by speed safety camera penalties and fines or excessive surveillance. Making meaningful changes based on this evaluation can increase public trust in the fairness of the program.

11. *Q: What other considerations did agencies take into account when developing their programs and what are some noteworthy practices that have been successfully implemented into SSC programs to address those considerations?*

A: Jurisdictions with successful SSC programs, those that are supported by their community and sustainable, recognized SSCs are not a standalone tool to address speeding related problems. They utilize SSCs to address safety problems within their jurisdiction where crashes cannot be addressed at the moment more effectively with other countermeasures, such as public outreach, engineering, and traditional enforcement, often deploying SSCs as a short or midterm solution while longer-term engineering solutions can be implemented.

The motivation for successful SSC programs must be on safety for all road users, using data-driven approaches, without the consideration of revenue. SSC programs can generate revenue; however, programs should be transparent about the use of fine revenue. Revenue generated from SSCs in many jurisdictions are put back into traffic safety and educational programs rather than financing other unrelated expenses for the jurisdiction.

Many successful jurisdictions ensure that the placement of SSCs and the fines assessed are done so in an equitable manner. To address equity, successful jurisdictions incorporate equity considerations in all aspects of their SSC programs, including planning, design, operations, community outreach, and ongoing program evaluation.

12. Q: *Where can we find additional information, examples, and guidance related to planning and operating a speed safety camera program?*

A: In 2023, FHWA and NHTSA published the updated [Speed Safety Camera Program and Operations Guide](#) (Guide). The Guide incorporates updated research and practices from the United States and from international jurisdictions, including information on new technologies such as point-to-point (average speed-over-distance) systems and equity issues related to the deployment of speed safety cameras. The Guide emphasizes speed safety cameras as one component of a comprehensive speed management program to be carefully considered. In addition, the Guide provides four new case studies on how five different jurisdictions in the United States have implemented or taken steps toward implementing speed safety camera programs. FHWA also provides information on speed safety cameras as one of its [28 Proven Safety Countermeasures](#). NHTSA includes speed safety cameras in its publication of [Countermeasures That Work; A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices](#).