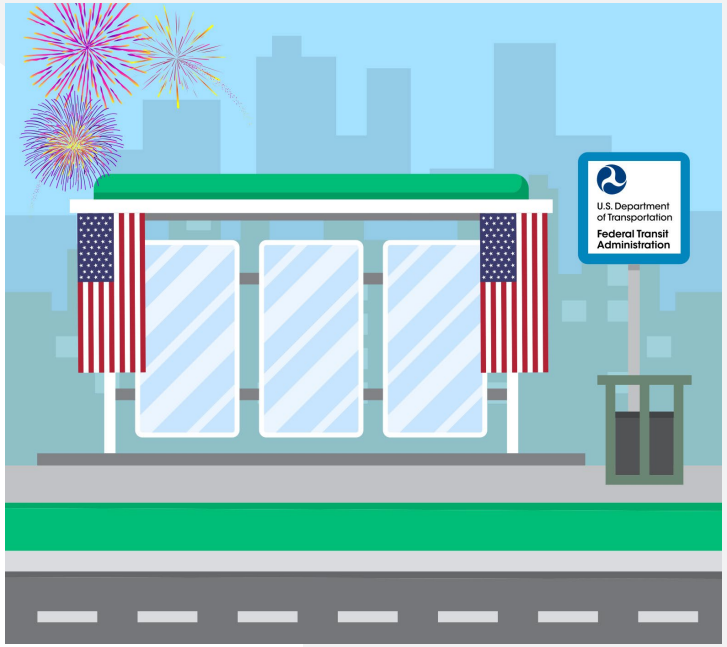
Effective Practices for Grants Development and Management

Presented at CALACT Spring Conference

April 2026

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Effective Practices for Grants Development and Management



FTA Region 9

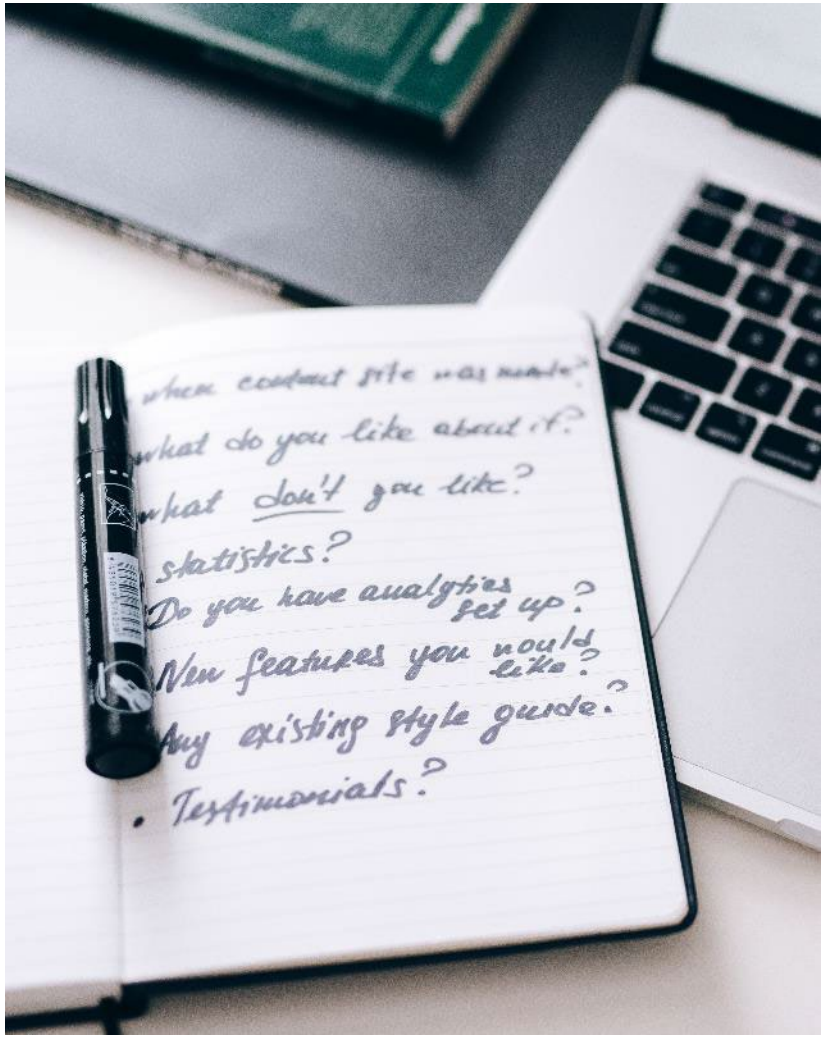
Mary Nguyen, Director, Office of Planning and Program Development
mary.nguyen@dot.gov

Rusty Whisman, Team Leader, Southern California Office
rusty.whisman@dot.gov

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Session

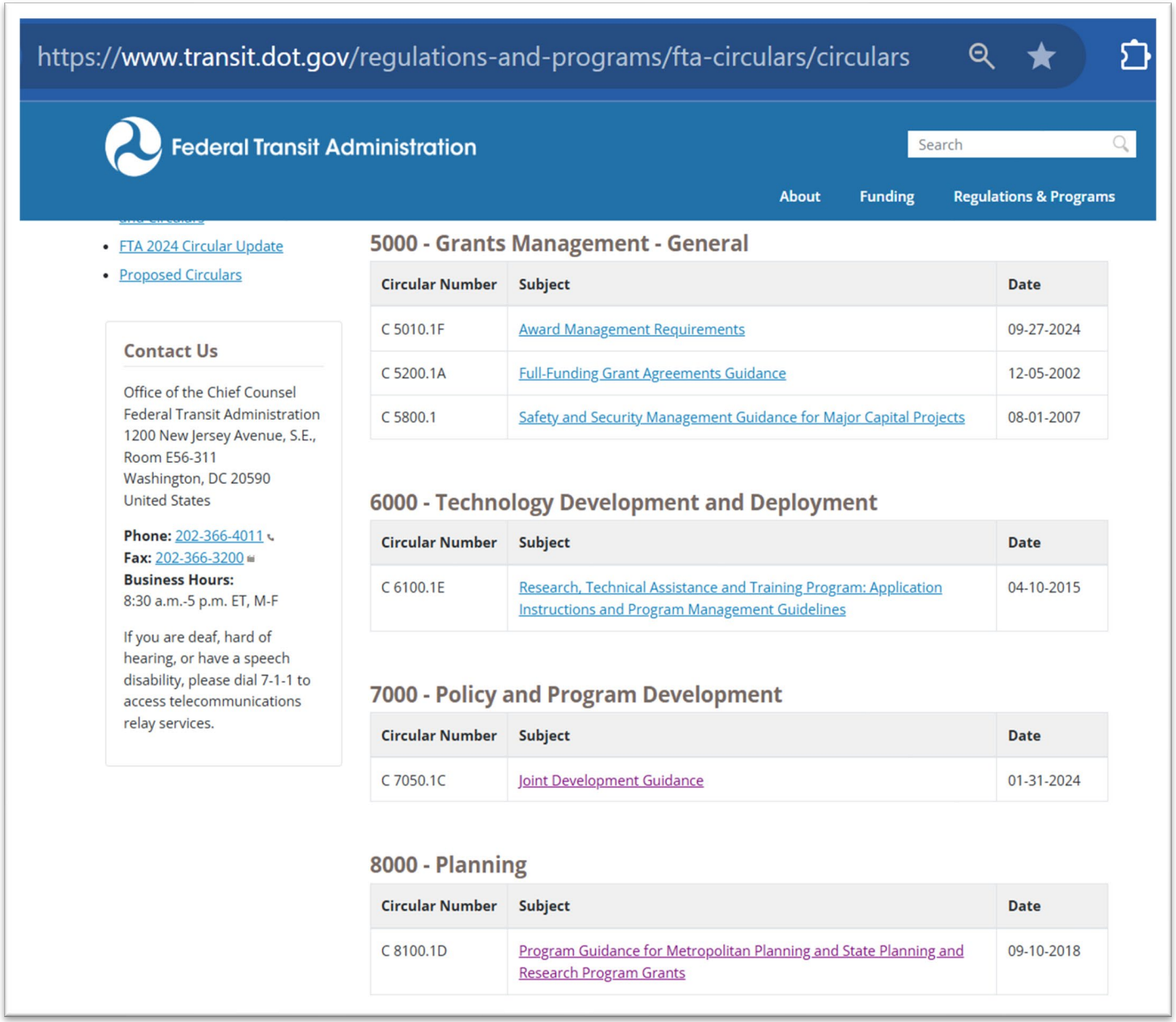
1. Updates
    - Regulatory Updates
    - TrAMS Updates
2. Grant Development
    - Planning for your grant application
    - FTA CE Worksheet
    - FTA Recipient Toolkit
3. Grant Management
    - Period of Performance
    - Progress Reporting
    - Budget Revisions and Amendments



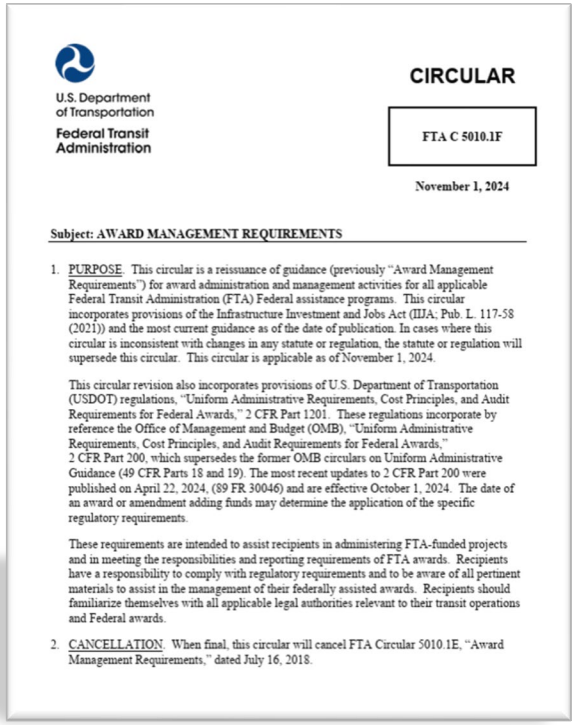
FTA Circulars

FTA Circulars provide grantees with directions on comprehensive and program-specific issues and are a resource for grantees on how to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements.

FTA Circulars:
https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/fta-circulars/circulars



Updated Circulars and Guidance



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

CIRCULAR

FTA C 5010.1F

November 1, 2024

Subject: AWARD MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. PURPOSE. This circular is a reissuance of guidance (previously "Award Management Requirements") for award administration and management activities for all applicable Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Federal assistance programs. This circular incorporates provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; Pub. L. 117-58 (2021)) and the most current guidance as of the date of publication. In cases where this circular is inconsistent with changes in any statute or regulation, the statute or regulation will supersede this circular. This circular is applicable as of November 1, 2024.

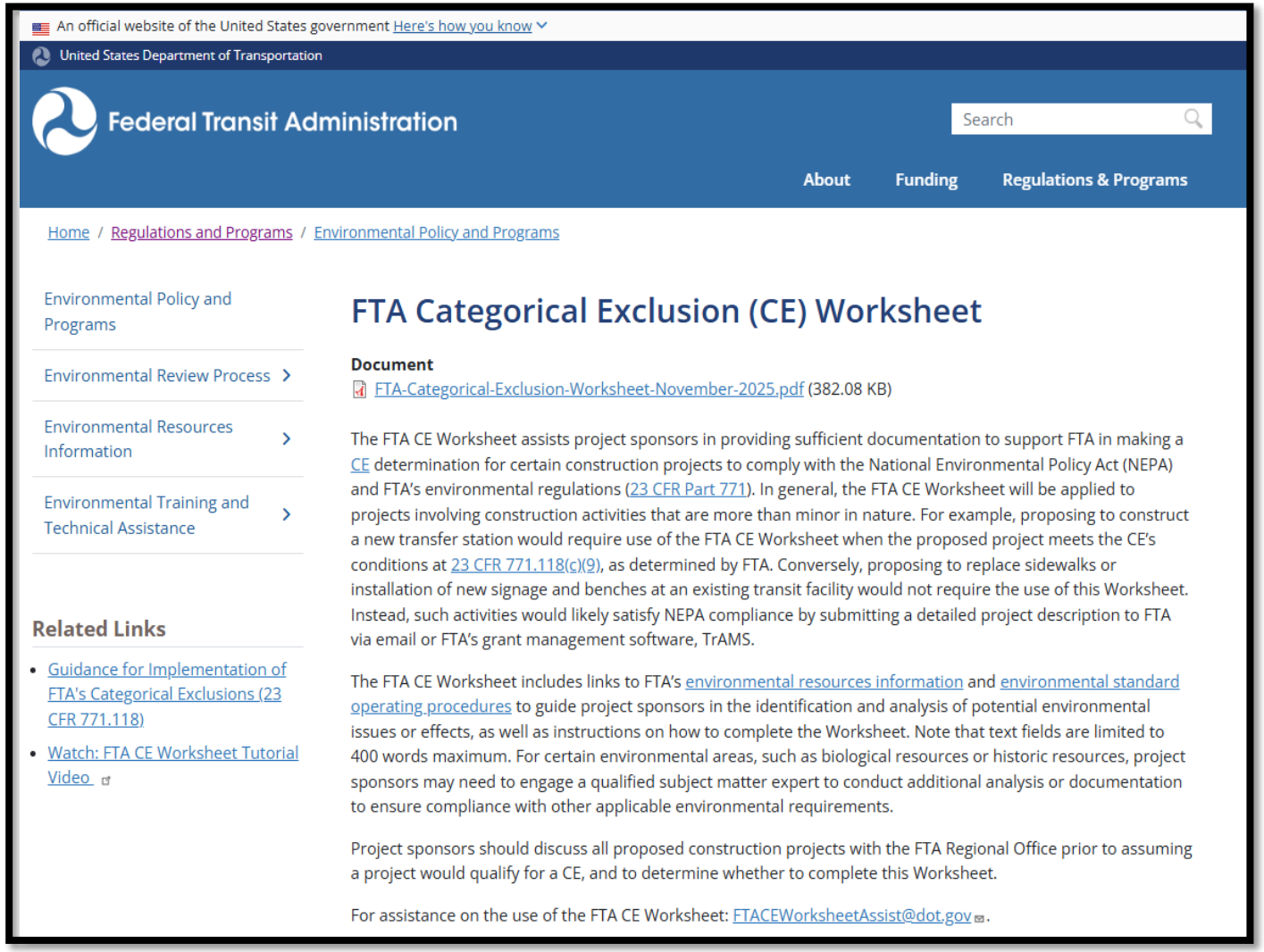
   This circular revision also incorporates provisions of U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) regulations, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," 2 CFR Part 1201. These regulations incorporate by reference the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," 2 CFR Part 200, which supersedes the former OMB circulars on Uniform Administrative Guidance (49 CFR Parts 18 and 19). The most recent updates to 2 CFR Part 200 were published on April 22, 2024, (89 FR 30046) and are effective October 1, 2024. The date of an award or amendment adding funds may determine the application of the specific regulatory requirements.

   These requirements are intended to assist recipients in administering FTA-funded projects and in meeting the responsibilities and reporting requirements of FTA awards. Recipients have a responsibility to comply with regulatory requirements and to be aware of all pertinent materials to assist in the management of their federally assisted awards. Recipients should familiarize themselves with all applicable legal authorities relevant to their transit operations and Federal awards.

2. CANCELLATION. When final, this circular will cancel FTA Circular 5010.1E, "Award Management Requirements," dated July 16, 2018.

- **4220.1G:** Third Party Contracting Guidance (Jan. 2025)
- **5010.1F:** Award Management Requirements (Sept. 2024)
- **9040.1H:** Rural Areas Formula Grants Program Guidance (Sept. 2024)
- **9050.1A:** Urbanized Areas Formula Grant Programs Guidance (Sept. 2024)
- **9070.1H:** Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Guidance (Sept. 2024)

FTA Categorical Exclusion Worksheet

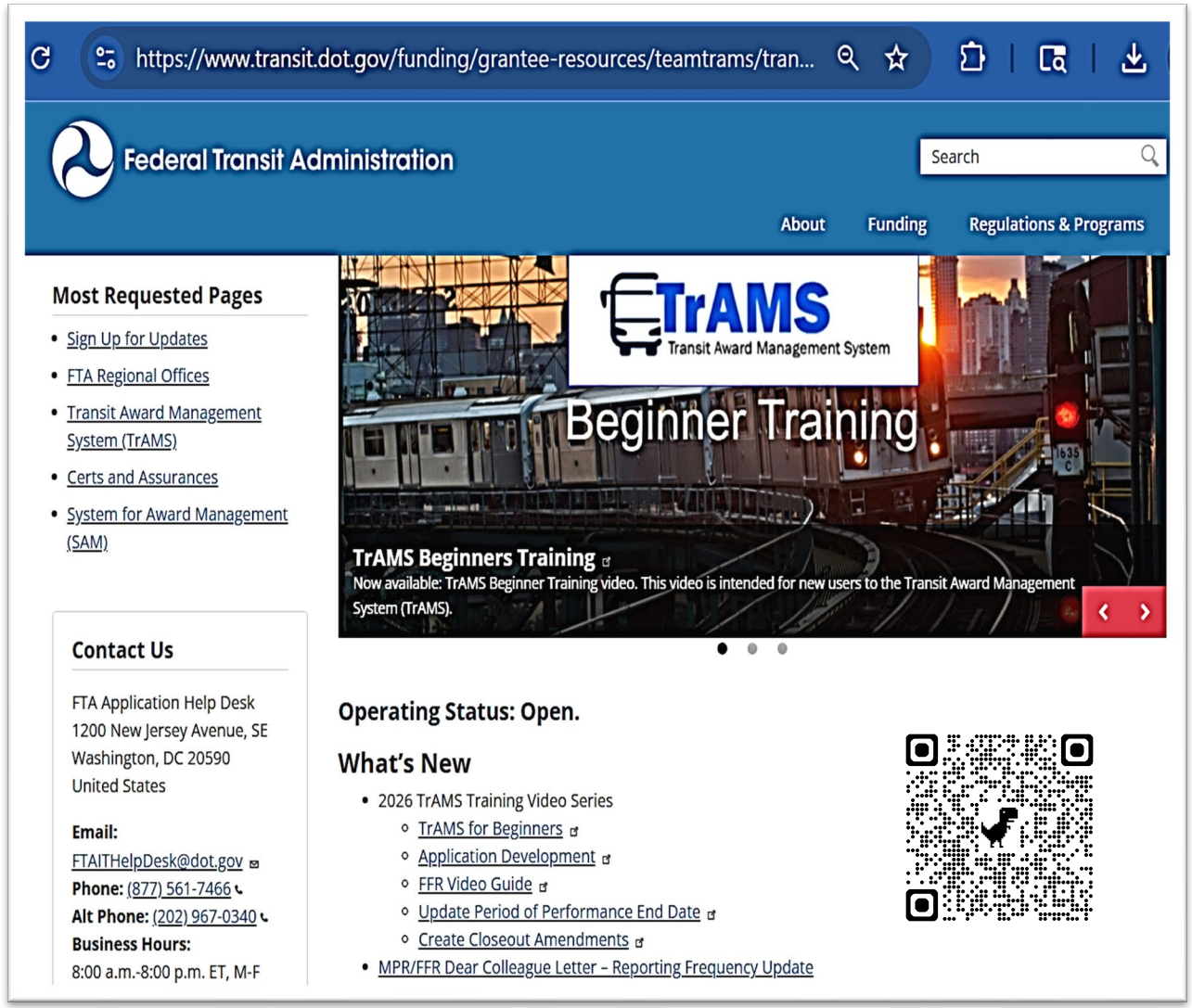


- CE worksheet published on FTA website in November 2025
- Webpage includes a link to a training video

https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/environmental-policy-and-programs/fta-categorical-exclusion-ce-worksheet

Transit Award Management System

- TrAMS is a web-based tool for recipients to apply for federal funds, manage programs according to federal requirements, and allow FTA to review, approve, control, and oversee grants.
- Webpage includes links to training videos



https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/transit-award-management-system-trams

FTA Recipient Award Toolkit

This toolkit helps grantees with decisions on developing applications for award in the Transit Award Management System (TrAMS). It includes information for recipients on application development, consistent with FTA Circulars and other information materials.

FTA Recipient Award Toolkit:
https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/fta-recipient-award-toolkit

FTA Recipient Award Toolkit

- This toolkit may be consulted to help developing applications for award in the TrAMS, including:
- Preliminary work for application development
- Key elements of an application
  - information on developing the executive summary
  - projects within the application
  - budget descriptions

☑	Pre-Work Checklist
☐	Confirm active System for Award Management (SAM) Unique Entity ID (UEI) status. If SAM is inactive, please work with the SAM Federal Service Desk to resolve this issue, as FTA is unable to award funding with an expired SAM status.
☐	Complete planning activities applicable to your funding programs and projects. Recipients must ensure that the project(s) they intend to apply for are included in the required planning program(s) (e.g., Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)).[1]
☐	Confirm that contact information is updated in TrAMS.
☐	Confirm all required recipient documents (e.g., opinion of counsel, authorizing resolution, designated recipient documentation), are current and uploaded to recipient organization level in TrAMS.
☐	Confirm Certifications & Assurances are provided for the current Fiscal Year.[2]
☐	Confirm compliance with any relevant civil rights requirements.[3]
☐	Contact regional representative to begin the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process, if applicable.[4]
☐	Confirm fleet status is updated, if applicable.

Programming Requirements in TrAMS

Designated Recipient/Direct Recipient

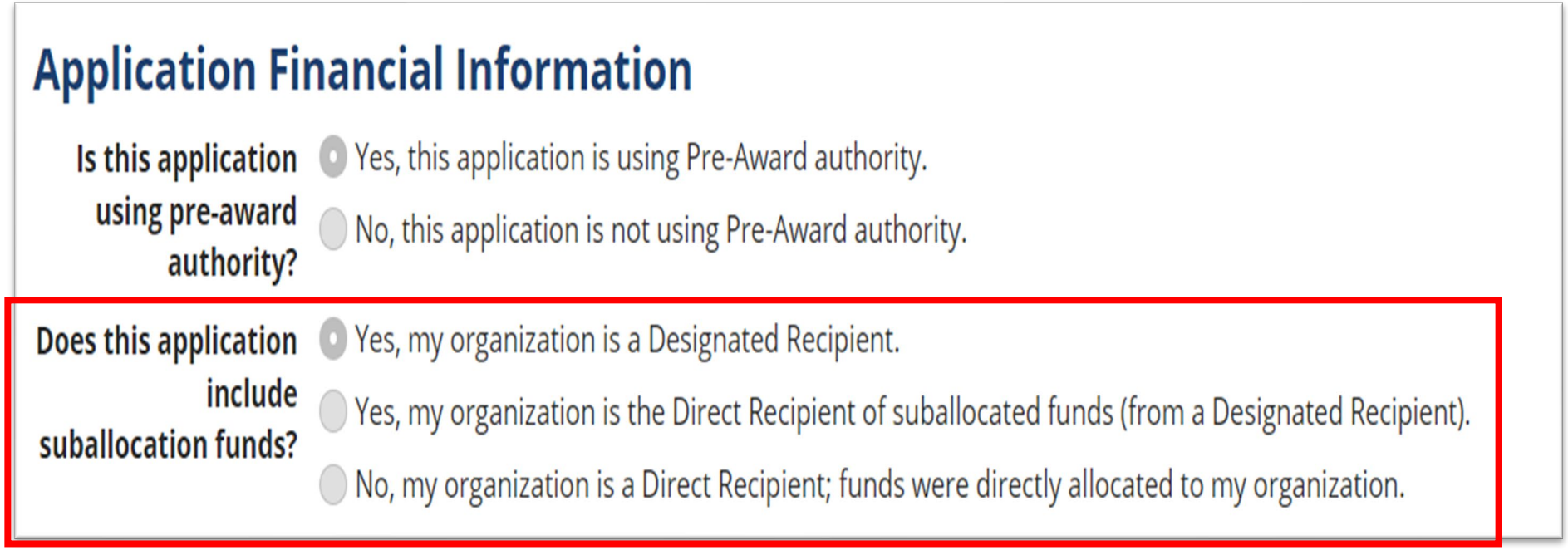
Circular 5010.1F (p. I-8)

(41) Designated Recipient: An entity designated, in accordance with the planning process under 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304, by the governor of a State, responsible local officials, and publicly owned operators of public transportation to receive and apportion amounts under 49 U.S.C. 5336 to UZAs of 200,000 or more in population; or a State or regional authority, if the authority is responsible under the laws of a State for a capital project and for financing and directly providing public transportation. See 49 U.S.C. 5302(5).

(43) Direct Recipient: An entity that receives funding directly from FTA.

Circular 5010.1F: https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/fta-circulars/award-management-requirements-circular

Designated Recipient/Direct Recipient in TrAMS



Split Letters

- Circular 9050.1A (p. II-6)

> The Designated Recipient must inform FTA of the arrangement in a Split Letter, which establishes the allocation of Section 5307, 5337, and/or 5339(a) funds in a large UZA. States must inform FTA of such arrangements in an annual apportionment letter for funds attributable to small UZAs. Once an agency has been authorized to apply to FTA as a Direct Recipient, it is not necessary to repeat this authorization upon each future allocation of program funds.

Circular 9050.1A: https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/fta-circulars/urbanized-areas-formula-grant-programs-guidance

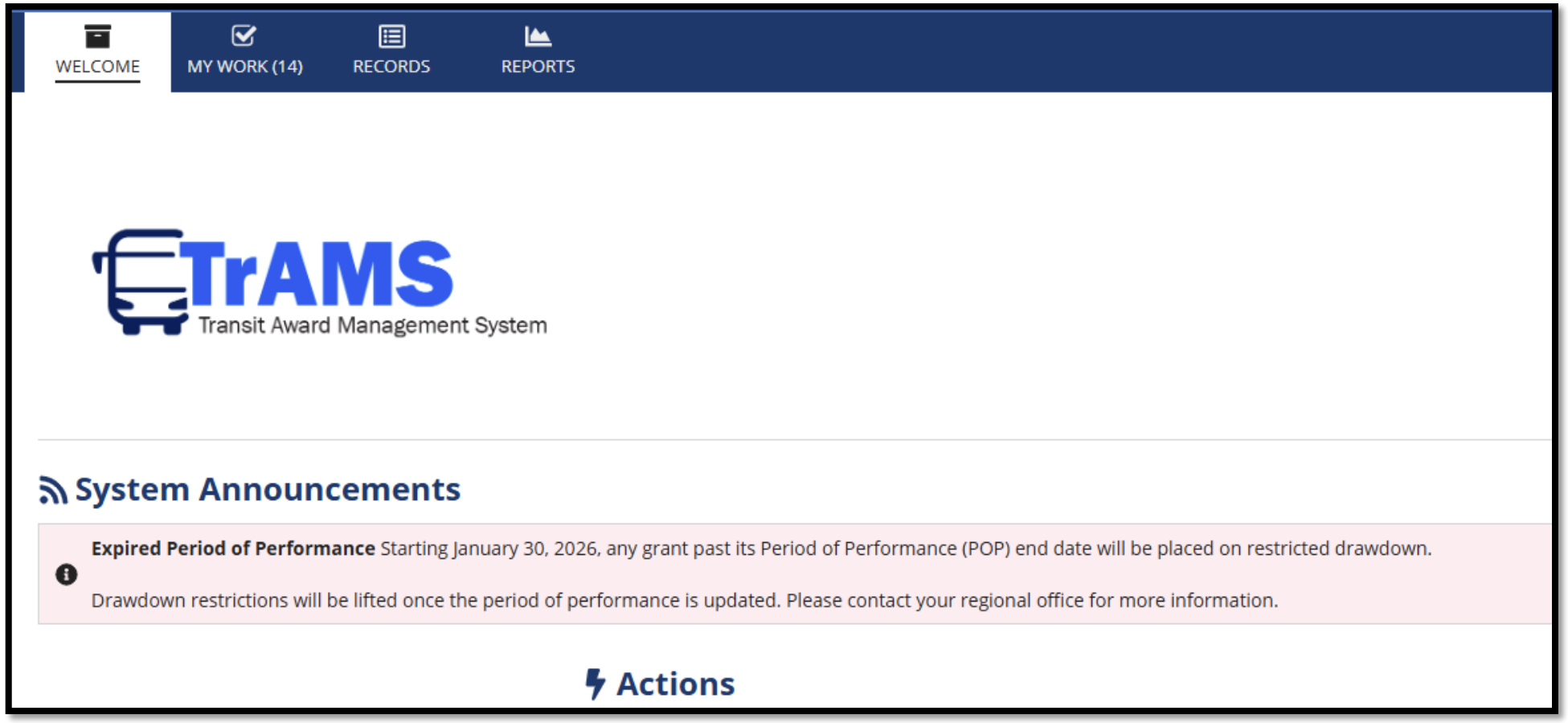
Section 5307: 0.75% Safety Requirement

Circular 9050.1A (p. V-16)

e. Safety Set-Aside. Recipients of Section 5307 funds that serve large UZAs, and that are subject to the PTASP requirements, must use not less than 0.75 percent of their Section 5307 funds for safety-related projects (49 U.S.C. 5329(d)), referred to by 49 CFR Part 673 as a "safety set-aside." Unlike the requirement that Designated Recipients of UZAs set aside at least one percent of their Section 5307 funds for security-related projects unless they certify that funds are not needed for that purpose, there are no exemptions from this requirement via certification. Further, the safety set-aside applies to each recipient within a large UZA and cannot be satisfied as a total expenditure for the large UZA as a whole. In their Section 5307 grant applications, recipients should provide a short narrative noting how the safety set-aside is used in the given fiscal year. This requirement is effective for grants obligated on or after October 1, 2021, regardless of year of apportionment. However, this requirement does not apply to individual subrecipients. If a grant includes multiple sub-recipients, this requirement may be met collectively for the grant as a whole.

Circular 9050.1A: https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/fta-circulars/urbanized-areas-formula-grant-programs-guidance

Period of Performance

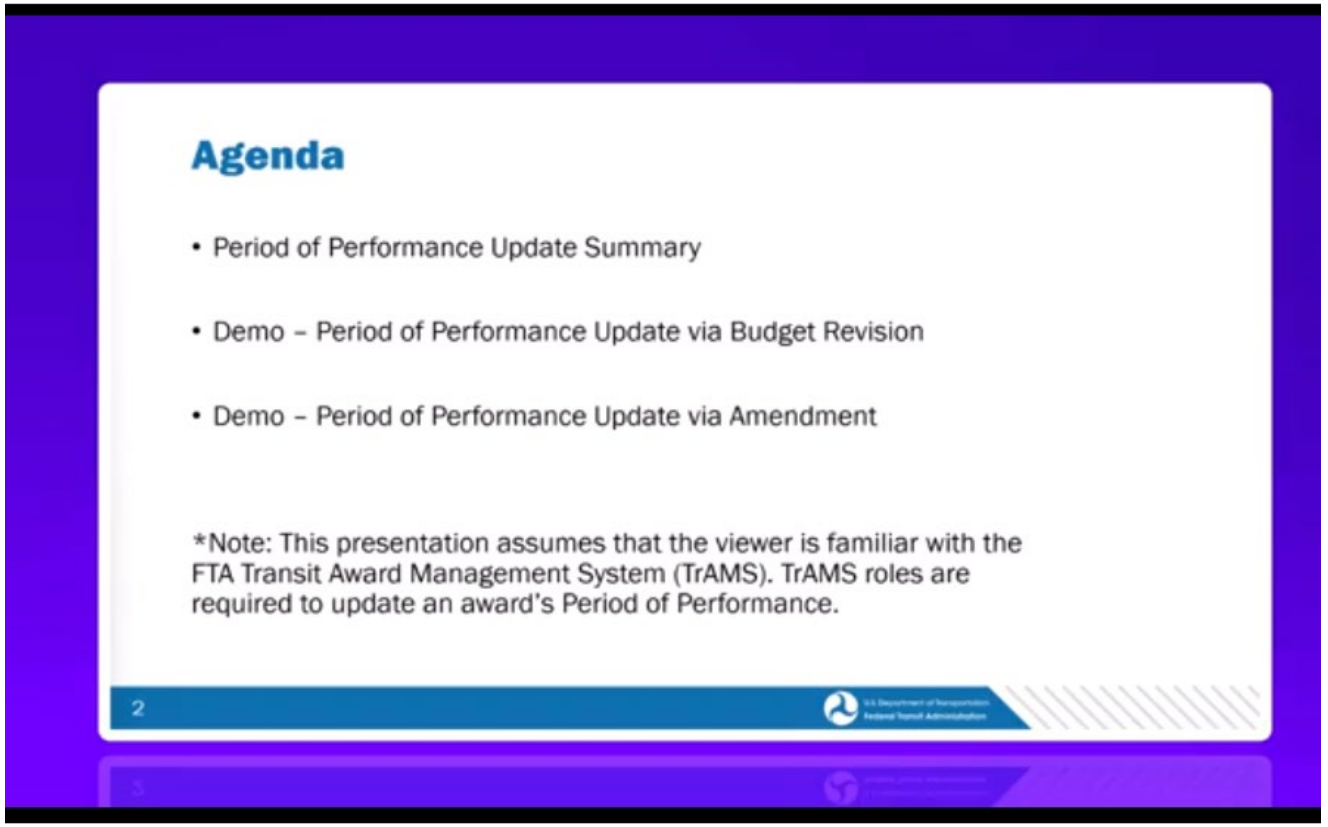


Period of Performance Expired: The Current Period of Performance End Date (9/24/2022) is expired. Please reach out to the FTA Post-Award Manager if assistance is needed.

Period of Performance

FTA Training Video regarding updating period of performance for grants, including a demo in TrAMS.

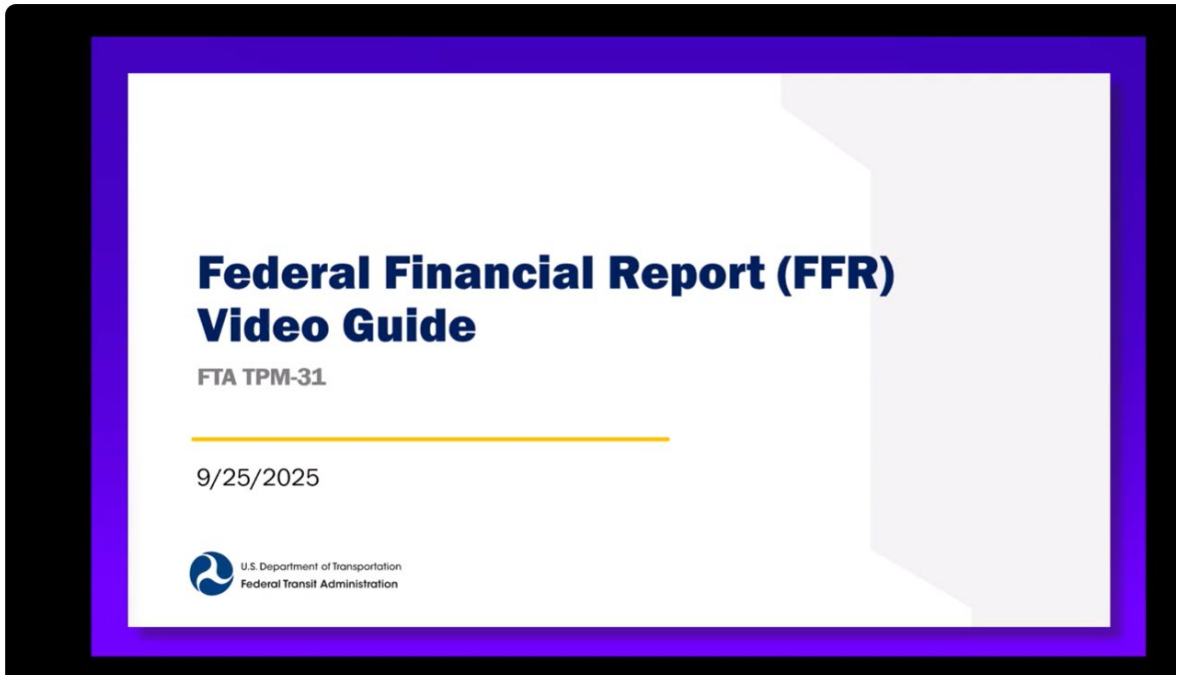
https://youtu.be/5GdZ9ch7I_4?si=vm4_uEIFN_Gxat-Z



TrAMS Period of Performance Update Training

Progress Reporting

- FTA Circular 5010.1F (pg. III-24) identifies 12 items for Milestone Progress Reports:
  - Status of milestones
  - Explanation of why milestone not met and revised milestone dates
  - Expected impacts and schedule recovery efforts
  - Discussion of budget/schedule changes
  - Claims/change orders greater than $100k
- Due Dates: January 30, April 30, July 30, and October 30



FFR Video Guide: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtUwKrmLNLo

Federal Financial Report in TrAMS

Calculations

Note: The below information is captured to ensure consistency with Standard Form (SF) 425 as provided by OMB.

Federal Cash

Transactions	Previous	This Period	Cumulative
A. Federal Cash on Hand at Beginning of Period *Note: Typically $0, If not please describe in Submission Remarks*	**$0**	$0	**$0**
B. Federal Cash Receipts	**$0**	$0	**$0**
C. Federal Cash Disbursements	**$0**	$0	**$0**
D. Federal Cash on Hand at End of Period *Line A plus Line B minus Line C*	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
E. Total Federal Funds Authorized			**$1,000**

Award Modifications

Award Actions	Description	Purpose
Create a New Award	Development of a new award.	• Obligation of funding for a new project, a project that is unique or has a detailed scope of work, or for new funding sources.
Create an Award Amendment	Significant modification of an existing award.	• Modification of an award that includes a significant change in scope of work and/or change in Federal assistance, as approved by FTA.[5]
Budget Revision	Minor modification of an existing award.	• Any change of budget allocations within the award and the overall award budget that has minor impact on the budget allocations of the original award.[6]

FTA Recipient Award Toolkit:
https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/fta-recipient-award-toolkit

FTA Mission, Vision, Values

Mission

Improve America's Communities through Public Transportation

Vision

A Better Quality of Life for All Built on Public Transportation Excellence

Values

Service	Provide reliable, transparent, responsive, and anticipatory services to meet stakeholder needs
Integrity	Commitment to the highest professional and ethical standards
Innovation	Foster new ideas, concepts, and solutions for improved outcomes
Resiliency	Optimize decisions, resources, and systems to make long-term positive impacts on the environment, infrastructure, and safety