

# Uniform Guidelines *for* State Highway Safety Programs



November 2006

## Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 14

# Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Each State, in cooperation with its political subdivisions, tribal governments, and other parties as appropriate, should develop and implement a comprehensive highway safety program, reflective of State demographics, to achieve a significant reduction in traffic crashes, fatalities, and injuries on public roads. The highway safety program should include a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle safety program that promotes safe pedestrian and bicycle practices, educates drivers to share the road safely with other road users, and provides safe facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists through a combination of policy, enforcement, communication, education, incentive, and engineering strategies. This guideline describes the components that a State pedestrian and bicycle safety program should include and the criteria that the program components should meet. Given the multidisciplinary nature of the highway safety problem, implementation of a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle safety program requires coordination among several State agencies.

## I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Each State should have centralized program planning, implementation, and coordination to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety program issues as part of a comprehensive highway safety program. Evaluation should be used to revise existing programs, develop new programs, and determine progress and success of pedestrian and bicycle safety programs. The State Highway Safety Office should:

- Train program staff to effectively coordinate the implementation of recommended activities;
- Provide leadership, training, and technical assistance to other State agencies and local pedestrian and bicycle safety programs and projects;
- Conduct regular problem identification and evaluation activities to determine pedestrian and bicyclist fatality, injury, and crash trends and to provide guidance in development and implementation of countermeasures;
- Promote proper and legal riding practices and the proper use of bicycle helmets as a primary measures to reduce death and injury among bicyclists;
- Coordinate with the State Department of Transportation to ensure provision of a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists through engineering measures such as sidewalks and bicycle facilities in the planning and design of all highway projects;

- Support the enforcement by local enforcement agencies of State laws affecting pedestrians and bicyclists; and
- Develop safety initiatives to reduce fatalities and injuries among high-risk groups as indicated by crash and injury data trends, including children, older adults, and alcohol-impaired pedestrians and bicyclists.

## **II. MULTIDISCIPLINARY INVOLVEMENT**

Pedestrian and bicyclist safety requires the support and coordinated activity of multidisciplinary agencies, at both the State and local levels. At a minimum, the following communities should be involved:

- State Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinators;
- Law Enforcement and Public Safety;
- Education;
- Public Health and Medicine;
- Driver Education and Licensing;
- Transportation—Engineering, Planning, Local Transit;
- Media and Communications;
- Community Safety Organizations; and
- Nonprofit Organizations.

## **III. LEGISLATION, REGULATION AND POLICY**

Each State should enact and enforce traffic laws and regulations, including laws that contribute to the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. This includes laws that require the proper use of bicycle helmets and laws that require bicyclists to follow the same rules of the road as motorists. States should develop and enforce appropriate sanctions that compel compliance with laws and regulations. Specific policies should be developed to encourage coordination with appropriate public and private agencies in the development of regulations and laws to promote pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

## **IV. LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Each State should ensure that State and community pedestrian and bicycle programs include a law enforcement component. Each State should strongly emphasize the role played by law enforcement personnel in pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Essential components of that role include:

- Developing knowledge of pedestrian and bicyclist crash situations, investigating crashes, and maintaining a reporting system that documents crash activity and supports problem identification and evaluation activities;
- Providing communication and education support;
- Ensuring adequate training to law enforcement personnel on effective measures to reduce crashes among pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Establishing agency policies to support pedestrian and bicycle safety;

- Enforcing pedestrian and bicycle laws, and all laws that affect the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, including those aimed at aggressive drivers;
- Coordinating with and supporting education and engineering activities; and
- Suggesting creative strategies to promote safe pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist behaviors (e.g., citation diversion classes for violators).

## **V. HIGHWAY AND TRAFFIC ENGINEERING**

Highway and traffic engineering is a critical element of any motor vehicle crash reduction program, but is especially important for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists. States should utilize national guidelines for constructing safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities in all new transportation projects, and are required to follow all Federal regulations on accessibility.

Each State should ensure that State and community pedestrian and bicycle programs include a highway and traffic engineering component that is coordinated with enforcement and educational efforts. This engineering component should improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists through the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of engineering measures such as:

- Pedestrian, bicycle, and school bus loading zone signals, signs and markings;
- Parking regulations;
- Traffic-calming or other approaches for slowing traffic and improving safety;
- On-road facilities (e.g., signed routes, marked lanes, wide curb lanes, paved shoulders);
- Sidewalk design;
- Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, and paths;
- Off-road bicycle facilities (trails and paths); and
- Accommodations for people with disabilities.

## **VI. COMMUNICATION PROGRAM**

Each State should ensure that State and community pedestrian and bicycle programs contain a comprehensive communication component to support program and policy efforts. This component should address coordination with traffic engineering and law enforcement efforts, school-based education programs, communication and awareness campaigns, and other focused educational programs such as those for seniors and other identified high-risk populations. The State should enlist the support of a variety of media, including mass media, to improve public awareness of pedestrian and bicyclist crash problems and programs directed at preventing them. Communication programs and materials should be culturally relevant and multilingual as appropriate, and should address issues such as:

- Visibility, or conspicuity, in the traffic system;
- Correct use of facilities and accommodations;
- Law enforcement initiatives;

- Proper street-crossing behavior;
- Safe practices near school buses, including loading and unloading practices;
- The nature and extent of traffic-related pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and injuries;
- Driver training regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety;
- Rules of the road;
- Proper selection, use, fit, and maintenance of bicycles and bicycle helmets;
- Skills training of bicyclists;
- Sharing the road safely among motorists and bicyclists; and
- The dangers that aggressive driving, including speeding, pose for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## **VII. OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Each State should encourage extensive community involvement in pedestrian and bicycle safety education by involving individuals and organizations outside the traditional highway safety community. Outreach efforts should include a focus on reaching vulnerable road users, such as older pedestrians, young children, and new immigrant populations. States should also incorporate pedestrian and bicycle safety education and skills training into school physical education/health curricula. To encourage community and school involvement, States should:

- Establish and convene a pedestrian and bicycle safety advisory task force or coalition to organize and generate broad-based support for pedestrian and bicycle programs;
- Create an effective communications network among coalition members to keep members informed and to coordinate efforts;
- Integrate culturally relevant pedestrian and bicycle safety programs into local traffic safety injury prevention initiatives and local transportation plans;
- Provide culturally relevant materials and resources to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety education programs;
- Ensure that highway safety in general, and pedestrian and bicycle safety in particular, are included in the State-approved K-12 health and safety education curricula and textbooks, and in material for preschool age children and their caregivers;
- Encourage the promotion of safe pedestrian and bicyclist practices (including practices near school buses) through classroom and extracurricular activities; and
- Establish and enforce written policies requiring safe pedestrian and bicyclist practices to and from school, including proper use of bicycle helmets on school property.

## **VIII. DRIVER EDUCATION AND LICENSING**

Each State should address pedestrian and bicycle safety in State driver education training, materials and licensing programs in the classroom and behind the wheel, including strategies for motorists and bicyclists on safely sharing the road.

## **IX. EVALUATION PROGRAM**

Both problem identification and evaluation of pedestrian and bicycle crashes require effective record keeping by State and local government representatives. The State should identify the frequency and type of pedestrian and bicycle crashes to inform selection, implementation, and evaluation of appropriate countermeasures. The State should promote effective program evaluation by:

- Supporting detailed analyses of police accident reports involving pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Encouraging, supporting, and training localities in process, impact, and outcome evaluation of local programs;
- Conducting and publicizing statewide surveys of public knowledge and attitudes about pedestrian and bicyclist safety;
- Maintaining awareness of trends in pedestrian and bicyclist crashes at the national level and how this might influence activities statewide;
- Evaluating the use of program resources and the effectiveness of existing countermeasures for the general public and high-risk populations; and
- Ensuring that evaluation results are used to identify problems, plan new programs, and improve existing programs.