

# NEBRASKA

## Occupant Protection Program Assessment

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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Transportation Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) is to reduce the State's traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities on its roads through leadership, innovation, facilitation, and program support in partnership with other public and private organizations. The Occupant Protection Assessment Team framed their recommendations to be consistent with the accomplishment of this mission.

In 2018, 165 motor vehicle occupants died in traffic crashes in Nebraska. Of those who died, 116 or 69.1 percent were reported as not wearing their seat belt, and 59 or 26.7 percent were wearing their seat belt. In 2018, eight child occupants between the ages of 0 and 14 were killed on Nebraska's roads. Of these eight children, three were reported as not restrained.

In 2017, it is estimated that 72 people aged five and older were saved by wearing seat belts in Nebraska. If everyone in Nebraska wore their seat belt in 2017, it is estimated 23 of the 171 occupants who died in 2017 could have been saved. Of those who died in motor vehicle crashes in 2017, 73 were killed at night (i.e., 6 pm – 6 am). Most of those killed at night were not wearing their seat belt (59, 80 percent).

Nebraska's observed seat belt use rate was 79.9 percent in 2019, which dropped from 85.5 percent in 2018. There were several changes in methodology from 2018 to 2019 including changes in sample, observation schedule, time of year, and observer staff. These changes could have contributed to the measured difference in observed seat belt use.

Nebraska continues to utilize *Click It or Ticket (CIOT)* messaging for its seat belt campaigns. During 2019, the State conducted *CIOT* mobilizations twice during the year: May 21 - June 3 and November 27 - December 1, 2019. Nebraska also participated in National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week and Seat Check Saturday September 15 - 21, 2019.

Nebraska's seat belt law permits secondary enforcement only. Law enforcement officers may issue a ticket for not wearing a seat belt only when there is another citable traffic infraction. This limitation and other weaknesses in the law, including a low fine (\$25) and absence of court costs, have contributed to relatively low levels of enforcement activity. Law enforcement across the State of Nebraska reported 1,216 seat belt citations for grant-funded selective overtime in 2019. For *CIOT* in May of 2019, law enforcement reported a total of 6,457 citations and 14,092.60 hours of selective overtime enforcement, which is a rate of 1 citation per 2.18 hours of enforcement. Law enforcement reported 3,368 speeding, 350 seat belt, and 90 CPS citations for this mobilization. When looking specifically at occupant protection citations, law enforcement issued one seat belt citation per 40 hours of overtime and one CPS citation per 157 hours.

For *CIOT* in November of 2019, law enforcement reported a total of 384 citations and 1,713.35 hours of selective overtime enforcement, which is a rate of one citation per 4.46 hours of enforcement. Law enforcement reported 110 speeding, 24 seat belt, and three CPS citations during this mobilization. When looking specifically at occupant protection citations, law enforcement issued one seat belt citation for every 71 hours of overtime and one CPS citation for every 571 hours.

The NDOT-HSO conducted a public awareness survey in April 2019. Using a random sample of landline and cellphones, the NDOT-HSO surveyed 900 Nebraskans regarding self-reported traffic safety behaviors and attitudes. Of those sampled, 76 percent reported always wearing their seat belt. Fifty-four percent reported it was unlikely they would receive a ticket for not wearing their belt. Only 28 percent reported hearing about seat belt enforcement activity, 41 percent of the *CIOT* message, and 34 percent of a CPS message in the 60 days prior to being surveyed. The low reported exposure may be related to limited programming in the 60 days prior to the survey. Fifty-two percent of those surveyed reported they were in support of a primary seat belt law.

The child restraint provisions require child restraint use only up to age eight, after which children may legally use the vehicle seat belts. For children above age eight, the enforcement provision is secondary, thus restricting officers' ability to ensure child passenger safety on Nebraska's roadways. Law enforcement reported 90 child passenger safety restraint citations for May *CIOT* 2018. For May *CIOT* 2019 law enforcement reported three child passenger safety restraint citations which was a 97 percent decrease.

With support and coordination from NDOT-HSO, certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) and Instructors (CPSIs) in the State collaborate with and support one another to teach certification courses, share program resources, and support CPSTs throughout the State. The NDOT-HSO worked to recertify 113 CPSTs in 2019 (67.7 percent recertification rate). There were 18 inspection stations, reportedly covering 61 of the 93 counties in the State (34.4 percent of counties not covered).

Using a seat belt or child restraint is the single most effective behavior that Nebraska roadway users can adopt to protect themselves in a crash. Therefore, the strongest defense to preventable death and injury is a robust occupant protection program that strategically uses a combination of strong laws, enforcement, communication, education, and data and evaluation to increase seat belt and child restraint use.

Using the fundamental elements of the *Uniform Guidelines for State Highway Safety Programs for Occupant Protection*, this assessment report identifies strengths and challenges of Nebraska's occupant protection program and provides recommendations for each of the following areas: program management; legislation, regulation, and policy; law enforcement; communication; occupant protection for children; outreach; and data and evaluation.

The highlighted key recommendations in this report are recommendations the assessment team found to be the most crucial for improving the State's occupant protection program. While Nebraska has initiatives in place to improve its program, there is opportunity to extend the impact using available resources. The recommendations presented in this report are intended to help increase occupant restraint use and decrease unrestrained fatalities and injuries in Nebraska.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The assessment team would like to acknowledge Mark Segerstrom, Highway Safety Administrator; William Kovarik, Traffic Safety Specialist Supervisor; and Simera Reynolds, Traffic Safety Specialist in the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office.

The team would also like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of all those individuals who made time to share their knowledge and expertise during the assessment.

This assessment benefitted from the guidance of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regional and headquarters staff: Sherri Cannon and Mary Byrd, and support from their respective supervisors, Regional Administrator Susan DeCourcy and Occupant Protection Division Chief Marietta Bowen.

Special recognition and appreciation also goes to Ashley Bieski for her able assistance throughout the assessment process and in producing this report.

Each member of the team appreciates the opportunity to have served on this assessment and hopes that consideration and implementation of the proposed recommendations will enable Nebraska to continue to improve its occupant protection program.

### Notes:

The information included in this document has been collected from a variety of sources including interviews, official documents, websites, and other materials. Sources may not be consistent. Some copyrighted material has been used under the “Fair Use” Doctrine of the US copyright statute.

## ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Occupant Protection Program Assessment is to provide the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) with a review of the State's occupant protection program through the identification of the program's strengths and accomplishments, the identification of challenging areas, and the provision of recommendations for improvement. The assessment can be used as a tool for occupant protection program planning purposes, for deciding how to allocate existing and new resources, and for determining programmatic focus.

The assessment process provides an organized approach for measuring program progress by following the format of the *Uniform Guidelines for State Highway Safety Programs, Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 20, Occupant Protection* (November 2006). The guideline that precedes each section of this report is taken from this document. The U.S. Department of Transportation developed the *Uniform Guidelines for State Highway Safety Programs* in collaboration with the states.

The Occupant Protection Program Assessment examined significant components of the State's occupant protection program. All states, in cooperation with their political subdivisions, should have a comprehensive occupant protection program that educates and motivates its citizens to use available motor vehicle occupant protection systems. A combination of strong laws, enforcement, public information, and education is necessary to achieve significant, lasting increases in seat belt and child restraint use, which will reduce fatalities and decrease the number and severity of injuries.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) headquarters and regional office staff facilitated the Occupant Protection Program Assessment. Working with NDOT-HSO, NHTSA recommended a team of five individuals with demonstrated expertise in various aspects of occupant protection program development, implementation, and evaluation.

The assessment consisted of a thorough review of State-provided occupant protection program briefing materials and interviews with state and community level program directors, coordinators, advocates, traffic safety partners, law enforcement personnel, and NDOT-HSO staff. The conclusions drawn by the assessment team were based upon, and limited by, the facts and information provided in the briefing materials and by the various experts who made presentations to the team.

Following the completion of the presentations, the team convened to review and analyze the information presented. The team noted the occupant protection program's strengths and challenges as well as recommendations for improvement. On the final day of the on-site assessment, the team briefed the NDOT-HSO on the results of the assessment and discussed major points and recommendations.

The assessment team noted that many occupant protection and general traffic safety activities are conducted throughout the state of Nebraska. It is not the intent of this report to thoroughly document all of these successes, nor to give credit to the large number of individuals at all levels who are dedicated to traffic safety. By its very nature, the report focuses on areas that need improvement. This should not be viewed as criticism. Instead, it is an attempt to provide assistance to all levels for improvement, which is consistent with the overall goals of these types of assessments.

This report is a consensus report. The recommendations provided are based on the unique characteristics of the State and what the assessment team members believe the State, its political subdivisions, and partners could do to improve the reach and effectiveness of its occupant protection program.

This assessment report is not a NHTSA document; it belongs to the State. The State may use the report as the basis for planning occupant protection program improvements, assessing legislative priorities, providing for additional training, evaluating funding priorities, or other purposes.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop and implement a process to incorporate a Grant Advisory Committee to assist the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff in determining funding for potential grantees. In addition, implementing a grants training workshop for potential grantees would provide staff the opportunity to discuss problem identification, project development, evaluation, as well as best practices with a pool of potential grant recipients.**
- **Encourage the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff to participate in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration program management training to learn skills needed to fully evaluate the impact programs are having on the State's occupant protection goals.**
- **Develop and implement a Law Enforcement Liaison program designed to allow the small Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff to fully maximize relationships with key law enforcement partners and fully engage them in opportunities to improve occupant protection statewide.**
- **Empower and encourage *Drive Smart Nebraska* to strategize about the most effective approach to advocate for legislative enhancements. It was noted during the assessment that legislative enhancement's impacts to families has been the most effective strategy in lobbying for traffic safety legislation, so *Drive Smart Nebraska* should determine the most effective tactics to use this to their advantage in lobbying for specific occupant protection legislation.**
- **Pursue legislative enhancements to the seat belt law for primary enforcement, to include seat belt use in the rear seat. Consider increasing the fine to approximately \$50 plus court costs and points on the license, with escalating penalties for subsequent violations. Finally, allow officers to issue multiple violations if more than one person in the vehicle is found to be unbelted.**
- **Conduct a survey of law enforcement partners, ensuring representation from state and local agencies, to identify concerns related to occupant protection enforcement and why traffic enforcement is on a decline.**
- **Develop and promote training materials and/or online training courses utilizing portions of the *Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)/Operation Kids: the Next Generation* curriculums to educate law enforcement and thereby encouraging the enforcement of occupant protection laws. This information could also be incorporated into brief roll call videos.**



- **Encourage law enforcement administrators to focus on the importance of highway safety initiatives to detect and combat more serious crimes and suggest they integrate a traffic safety workshop at their Nebraska Joint Law Enforcement Conference.**
- **Provide recognition and rewards at the state level for those officers who go above the norm with enforcement initiatives.**
- **Increase the number of law enforcement agencies with officers certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians, in general. Increase the number of crash reconstructionists and Public Information Officers who are certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians.**
- **Implement the Law Enforcement Liaison Program in order to garner support for the law enforcement community in the furtherance of highway safety initiatives.**
- **Conduct post-campaign media surveys to gauge the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office campaign effectiveness, specifically to determine if the target audiences heard/saw *Click it or Ticket* messaging and whether perception of risk for receiving a citation was increased.**
- **Review the existing grantees, during the time left on the current marketing contract, and how they share in media messaging. Evaluate the need for a single marketing contractor or coordinator to oversee the State's media placements, maintain social media, and coordinate communication across the State.**
- **Require activity data from funded child passenger safety inspection stations. Use the gathered data to evaluate the Child Passenger Safety Program and its effectiveness. Encourage local observational studies for correct seat selection.**
- **Require, collect, and analyze inspection station data, specifically regarding incorrect child restraint choices and misuse. Utilize the information to create a focused, data-driven approach to structuring the needs of the statewide program.**
- **Create and conduct short comprehensive awareness trainings to law enforcement officers to enhance their understanding of the necessity for much more vigorous enforcement. Alternatively use the existing *Operation Kids: the Next Generation*.**
- **Explore alternative timeframes to deliver and complete the National Child Passenger Safety Training Curriculum that will be practical and appealing to increase law enforcement agency participation and certification through the technician trainings.**
- **Increase the membership of the *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition to include local advocates and law enforcement from across the State.**

- Use the existing *Drive Smart Nebraska* website as the Nebraska source of all things traffic safety. Link messaging, partner activities, Child Passenger Safety information, and enforcement activities to resources on the website.
- Conduct a focused review of the observational seat belt survey methodologies to identify areas for improvement and consider recommendations from the 2019 report (e.g. more training, unannounced monitoring).
- Revise and add questions to the *Nebraska Annual Traffic Safety Study* related to seat belt use and child passenger safety.
- Support the deployment of electronic crash and citation systems, as well as online query systems for the Department of Health and Human Services and the Nebraska Traffic Information Portal.

# 1. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

## *GUIDELINE:*

*Each state should have centralized program planning, implementation and coordination to achieve and sustain high rates of seat belt use. Evaluation is also important for determining progress and ultimate success of occupant protection programs.*

- *Provide leadership, training and technical assistance to other State agencies and local occupant protection programs and projects;*
- *Establish and convene an occupant protection advisory task force or coalition to organize and generate broad-based support for programs. The coalition should include agencies and organizations that are representative of the State's demographic composition and critical to the implementation of occupant protection initiatives;*
- *Integrate occupant protection programs into community/corridor traffic safety and other injury prevention programs; and*
- *Evaluate the effectiveness of the State's occupant protection program.*

## 1A. STRENGTHS

- The Nebraska Highway Safety Office (HSO) is a section within the Traffic Engineering Division of the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT). The Director of the HSO is well supported by the NDOT leadership and has tremendous partnerships with other traffic safety leaders within the Department. In addition, the NDOT Director serves as the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety, further enhancing the support the HSO receives from the leadership of the Department.
- The Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) is an active and integral member of the Nebraska Interagency Safety Committee (IASC) and assisted in the development and preparation of the 2017-2021 Strategic Highway Safety Plan. After reviewing crash trend data and surveying safety stakeholders, as well as identifying advances in safety technology, the Committee identified occupant protection (OP) as one of five Critical Emphasis Areas (CEAs) to concentrate valuable resources.
- The NDOT-HSO Director serves in an advisory capacity in the development of the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) plan as well as the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) plan to assist in coordinating and maintaining continuity to align plan targets with the Highway Safety Plan (HSP).

- The NDOT-HSO organizational structure is designed to maximize personnel resources and ensure that staff has the means and ability to develop and implement effective strategies to reduce the State's traffic injuries and fatalities as well as reduce crash and injury rates. The State's OP Coordinator is responsible for the management of all grant projects that receive occupant protection funds, as well as for the development and strategic implementation of the State's efforts to increase seat belt use and the correct and consistent use of child restraint systems.
- The NDOT-HSO office staff conducts monthly monitoring of all grant projects, including review of spending and progress toward achieving goals outlined in the project proposal. The staff are committed to following up, evaluating, and adjusting plans throughout the fiscal year to address any concerns noted during the monitoring efforts. In addition to desk monitoring, the staff will visit grantees at least once a year for an on-site monitoring visit.
- The NDOT-HSO prepares and utilizes a very comprehensive Grant Contract Proposal Guide to provide assistance to potential grantees in the preparation of a project proposal for submission to the NDOT-HSO. The Guide includes exactly what needs to be included in the proposal and provides all the policies and procedures up front for partners to review prior to submission of the proposal. The document also includes the Certifications and Assurances that must be signed, as well as a sample grant proposal for partners to review while preparing their application for submittal.
- All partners that submit grant proposals are required to submit a Cost Assumption Plan to detail how project activity will continue after the NDOT-HSO funding assistance ends.
- *Drive Smart Nebraska* is a multi-faceted coalition with more than 30 public and private partnerships aimed at increasing safe driving throughout Nebraska. The coalition develops consistent traffic safety messaging to increase seat belt use, secures funding to carry out evidence-based programming, and identifies potential policy champions to impact traffic safety.
- Tribal nations within Nebraska are able to create primary enforcement seat belt laws that are enforceable on tribal lands.

## **1B. CHALLENGES**

- Despite having a large community of supportive and engaged traffic safety partners, all decisions regarding funding for project proposals received are made internally by the NDOT-HSO staff.
- The NDOT-HSO hasn't yet implemented an electronic grant system in order to streamline the grant application process for partners and improve grant review and monitoring processes for staff.

- The longest serving NDOT-HSO staff member has been with the agency just six years. With two long time staff members retiring in the last year and a half, the NDOT-HSO is adjusting to a new Director in the last year and is relying on fairly new staff members to manage a very robust highway safety program with intricate and detailed federal funding requirements. In addition, the OP Coordinator is also responsible for the public information and education for additional priority areas beyond OP.
- While the NDOT-HSO performs robust monthly monitoring for all grantees, it isn't clear they are evaluating the extent to which a given program or project is impacting the ability of the State to achieve a lower seat belt use rate or the correct and consistent use of child restraint systems.
- Despite putting a significant amount of resources into child passenger safety efforts, the NDOT-HSO has not established a performance measure against which to evaluate the impact of these efforts.
- As of this report there is no Law Enforcement Liaison program within the State of Nebraska, which doesn't allow the small NDOT-HSO staff to fully maximize relationships with key traffic safety partners like law enforcement, nor fully engage them in opportunities to improve OP statewide.
- While the *Drive Smart Nebraska* coalition has a great deal of support and participation from traffic safety stakeholders, the group's structure doesn't support the development of work groups specifically dedicated to a single priority area like OP.

## 1C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop and implement a process to incorporate a Grant Advisory Committee to assist the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff in determining funding for potential grantees. In addition, implementing a grants training workshop for potential grantees would provide staff the opportunity to discuss problem identification, project development, evaluation, as well as best practices with a pool of potential grant recipients.**
- Establish a child passenger safety performance measure against which to evaluate the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office Child Passenger Safety Programming efforts.
- Finalize plans for the development and implementation of an electronic grants management system to reduce grant preparation time for partners, improve quality of applications submitted, streamline the process for the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff, and improve efficiency of the grant review and approval process.

- Consider working with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to develop work groups under the *Drive Smart Nebraska* umbrella to concentrate valuable resources on specific priority areas, including occupant protection. There may be some value in regionalizing the coalition to address specific occupant protection concerns in specific areas of the State.
- **Encourage the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff to participate in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration program management training to learn skills needed to fully evaluate the impact programs are having on the State's occupant protection goals.**
- **Develop and implement a Law Enforcement Liaison program designed to allow the small Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office staff to fully maximize relationships with key law enforcement partners and fully engage them in opportunities to improve occupant protection statewide.**

## 2. LEGISLATION/REGULATION AND POLICY

### GUIDELINE:

*Each state should enact and vigorously enforce primary enforcement occupant protection use laws. Each state should develop public information programs to provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning motor vehicle occupant protection systems. This legal framework should include:*

- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires all motor vehicle occupants to use systems provided by the vehicle manufacturer;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in an appropriate child restraint system (i.e., certified by the manufacturer to meet all applicable Federal safety standards) or seat belt;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires children under 13 years old to be properly restrained in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children);*
- *Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws that include three stages of licensure, and that place restrictions and sanctions on high-risk driving situations for novice drivers (i.e., nighttime driving restrictions, passenger restrictions, zero tolerance, required seat belt use);*
- *Regulations requiring employees and contractors at all levels of government to wear seat belts when traveling on official business;*
- *Official policies requiring that organizations receiving Federal highway safety program grant funds develop and enforce an employee seat belt use policy; and*
- *Outreach to state insurance commissioners to encourage them to persuade insurers to offer incentives to policyholders who use seat belts and child restraints. Insurance commissioners are likely to have significant influence with insurers that write policies in their states.*

### 2A. STRENGTHS

- Nebraska's seat belt law includes the following components:
  - The driver and all front seat passengers are required to wear properly adjusted and fastened occupant protection systems.
  - The fine for violating the seat belt law is \$25. There are no additional court costs and there are no points added to the violator's license.
  - The seat belt law is subject to secondary enforcement only.

- Nebraska's child passenger restraint system law includes the following components:
  - Drivers are required to restrain children up to age eight in a child passenger safety restraint system that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.
  - All children up to the age of two are required to use a rear-facing child passenger restraint system until the child outgrows the manufacturer's maximum allowable height or weight.
  - Children ages eight up to the age of eighteen are required to be restrained in a child passenger restraint system or seat belt.
  - The fine for violating the child passenger restraint system law is \$25, plus court costs and one point on the driver's license.
  - The Nebraska Department of Transportation is responsible for developing and implementing a public information and education program of child passenger restraint systems and occupant protection systems, plus a distribution and discount program for child passenger restraint systems.
  - The child passenger restraint system law provides for primary enforcement up to age eight and secondary enforcement for ages eight and above, unless a child is riding in a vehicle in an area not designated for passengers.
  
- Nebraska's Graduated Driver License (GDL) law includes the following components:
  - There are four GDL levels in Nebraska, as follows:
    - School Learner's Permit (LPE)
      - This permit is intended to prepare the applicant for the School Permit (SCP) phase.
      - The teen must be accompanied by a licensed driver who is 21 years of age or older.
      - Teens 15 younger than 16, but at least 14 years of age are eligible for the LPE.
    - School Permit (SCP)
      - A teen may drive to and from school unsupervised or anytime when accompanied by a licensed driver who is 21 years of age or older.
      - Teens at least 14 years and two months are eligible to apply and must either provide proof of driver's education or have 50 hours of supervised driving.
    - Learner's Permit (LPD)
      - Teens at least 15 years of age that pass a written and vision test are eligible to apply for the LPD.
      - The LPD is valid for one year and the teen must be accompanied by a licensed driver who is 21 years of age or older.
    - Provisional Operator's Permit (POP)
      - Teens at least 16 years of age are eligible to apply and must either provide proof of driver's education or have 50 hours of supervised driving.
      - Teens may drive unsupervised with a POP.
      - Driving is prohibited between 12am and 6am unless coming from school activities or employment.
      - Teens are prohibited from having more than one passenger younger than 19 who is not a family member during the first six months of driving with a POP.



- A driver must have held a LPE, LPD, or SCP for at least 6 months prior to applying for a POP.
  - Teens are not allowed to use any wireless devices while driving. The fine is \$200 for the first offense, plus points are assessed on the driver's license.
  - All occupants, plus the teen driver, are required to wear a seat belt. The citation is issued to the GDL permit holder.
- The State of Nebraska employees are required to wear a seat belt when traveling in a State-owned fleet vehicle.
- All grantees that contract with the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) must have an approved seat belt use policy for all employees and staff. Further, the policy must be enforced, and a copy of the policy must be provided with the grant contract proposal.
- Two of the tribal reservations in Nebraska have adopted primary seat belt laws.

## **2B. CHALLENGES**

- Nebraska traffic safety partners and stakeholders have advocated numerous times in the recent past to encourage the legislature to consider enhancing the seat belt law to allow for primary enforcement. To date, these advocates have been unsuccessful in convincing the legislative leadership to allow the bill to pass out of Committee and move to the Senate floor for a vote.
- Local jurisdictions are unable to pass primary seat belt legislation for enforcement within the limits of the town or municipality.
- Nebraska's seat belt law doesn't include a provision requiring seat belt use in rear seating positions.
- Nebraska's seat belt law allows for three exemptions, as outlined below:
  - Persons possessing written verification from a physician that an occupant protection system cannot be worn for medical reasons;
  - Rural letter carriers with the United States Postal Service; and
  - Emergency Medical Service providers while involved in patient care.
- A violation of the seat belt law is a \$25 fine. No court costs are added to the fine, nor are points added to the violator's driver license. The fine is lower than several state seat belt laws across the country and may be contributing to the apathy of the remaining approximately 20 percent of Nebraskans that aren't buckling up. In addition, there is no provision for escalating penalties for subsequent violations of the seat belt law. Finally, a driver that allows multiple passengers to ride unbuckled is only at risk of getting one seat belt violation despite all passengers in the vehicle being unbuckled.

- Nebraska’s child passenger restraint system law includes several components that diminish the law’s ability to best protect children traveling on Nebraska’s roads, as follows:
  - The law provides for primary enforcement up to age eight and secondary enforcement for ages eight and above, unless a child is riding in a vehicle in an area not designated for passengers.
  - The law does not require children under the age of 13 to sit in the rear seat of the vehicle.
  - There is no provision for escalating penalties for subsequent violations of the child passenger restraint system law.
  - The driver is only issued one citation in a situation when more than one child is riding unrestrained.
  - There is no provision to allow the use of child passenger restraint system law violation fines to support education, instruction, training, or low-income programs to encourage the public to obtain and correctly use a child passenger restraint system.
  - The law allows for the following exemptions:
    - Operators of taxicabs;
    - Vehicles manufactured before 1963 that weren’t required to have occupant protection systems;
    - Drivers in possession of a note from a licensed physician that the use of a child passenger restraint system would be harmful to the child;
    - Drivers of emergency vehicles when operating authorized emergency vehicles; and,
    - Drivers of vehicles in parades.
  
- Nebraska’s GDL law, while well intentioned, is difficult to understand, follow, and explain to teens and their parents. Four levels of permits with differing content and requirements could equate to a teen population that is unable to grasp the prerequisites and parents that become deaf to the urgency of their role in creating safer drivers because of the complicated verbiage.
  
- The GDL law also includes several components that diminish the law’s ability to best protect teens traveling on Nebraska’s roads. Three of the four permit options can be issued to teens younger than 16 years of age. Important driving restrictions are inconsistent from permit to permit, including nighttime driving, supervised driving, passenger restrictions, and consequences for violating the GDL law. Finally, the State’s GDL law is subject to secondary enforcement.

## 2C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Empower and encourage *Drive Smart Nebraska* to strategize about the most effective approach to advocate for legislative enhancements. It was noted during the assessment that legislative enhancement’s impacts to families has been the most effective strategy in lobbying for traffic safety legislation, so *Drive Smart Nebraska* should determine the most effective tactics to use this to their advantage in lobbying for specific occupant protection legislation.**

- **Pursue legislative enhancements to the seat belt law for primary enforcement, to include seat belt use in the rear seat. Consider increasing the fine to approximately \$50 plus court costs and points on the license, with escalating penalties for subsequent violations. Finally, allow officers to issue multiple violations if more than one person in the vehicle is found to be unbelted.**
- Enhance Nebraska's child passenger restraint system law by implementing the following components:
  - Allow for primary enforcement of the child passenger restraint system law.
  - Require children under the age of 13 to sit in the rear seat of the vehicle when rear seating positions are available.
  - Amend the law to allow for escalating penalties for subsequent child passenger restraint system law violations.
  - Remove the exclusions to the child passenger restraint system law.
  - Add a component to the law to allow the use of child passenger restraint system law violation fines to support education, instruction, training, or low-income programs to encourage the public to obtain and correctly use a child passenger restraint system.
- Consider restructuring the Nebraska Graduated Driver License law to be more in line with model Graduated Driver License law legislation, to include the following:
  - Allow for primary enforcement.
  - Restructure the permit stages as follows:
    - Learner Stage: supervised driving, cumulating with a driving test;
    - Intermediate Stage: limiting unsupervised driving in high risk situations; and,
    - Full Privilege Stage: a standard driver's license.
  - Ensure nighttime driving restrictions are imposed, typically 10pm-6am.
  - Limit teen passengers.
- Implement a provision to extend their Graduated Driver License upon conviction of a moving violation.

### 3. LAW ENFORCEMENT

#### GUIDELINE:

*Each State should conduct frequent, high-visibility law enforcement efforts, coupled with communication strategies, to increase seat belt and child safety seat use. Essential components of a law enforcement program should include:*

- *Written, enforced seat belt use policies for law enforcement agencies with sanctions for noncompliance to protect law enforcement officers from harm and for officers to serve as role models for the motoring public;*
- *Vigorous enforcement of seat belt and child safety seat laws, including citations and warnings;*
- *Accurate reporting of occupant protection system information on police accident report forms, including seat belt and child safety seat use or non-use, restraint type, and airbag presence and deployment;*
- *Communication campaigns to inform the public about occupant protection laws and related enforcement activities;*
- *Routine monitoring of citation rates for non-use of seat belts and child safety seats;*
- *Use of National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) for law enforcement officers;*
- *Utilization of Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs), for activities such as promotion of national and local mobilizations and increasing law enforcement participation in such mobilizations and collaboration with local chapters of police groups and associations that represent diverse groups (e.g., NOBLE, HAPCOA) to gain support for enforcement efforts.*

#### 3A. STRENGTHS

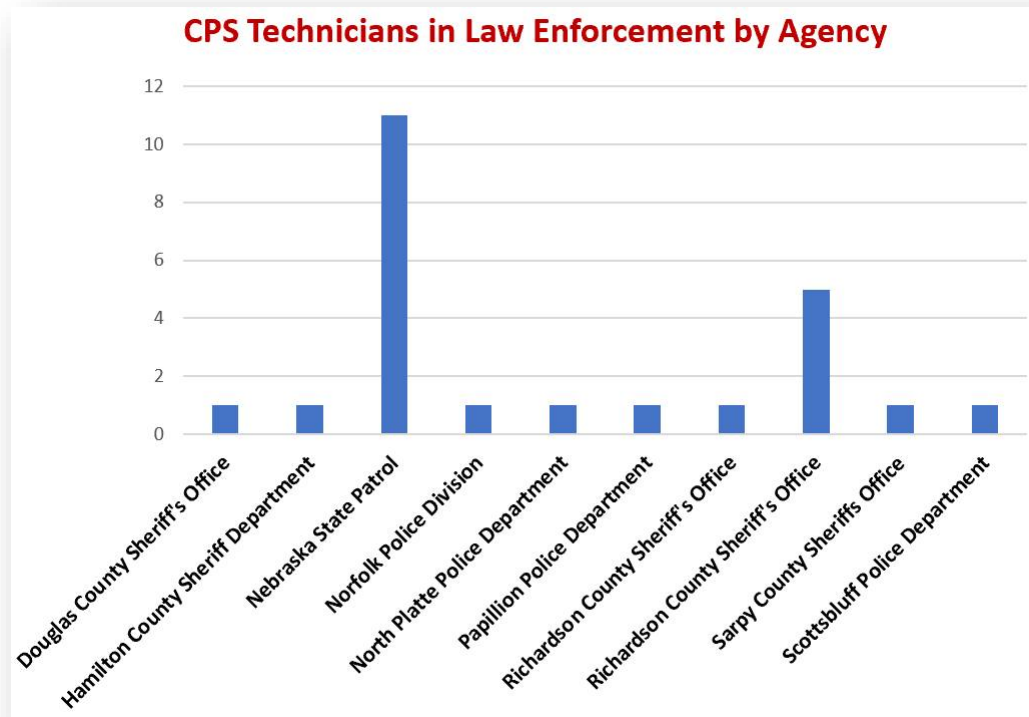
- All law enforcement grantees and mini-grantees are required to have written policies requiring all employees to use seat belts while operating agency vehicles.
- The State of Nebraska has made available to the State Patrol a Seat Belt Convincer, a Rollover Simulator, a driving simulator and a Persuader to educate the public on the importance of occupant protection usage.
- The law enforcement community in Nebraska works well together as a whole and has built strong collaborative partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries and with other stakeholders in the area of occupant protection. During the two *Click It or Ticket (CIOT)* Mobilization periods and *Child Passenger Safety Week* they work together to get press releases out with the unified message of Buckling Up. Local law enforcement will ask the Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) to assist in enforcement at times because they have more resources.

- Since their 2017 Assessment, Nebraska has strengthened their Occupant Protection for Children Statutes to include children to be rear-facing up to age two and requiring child restraint systems to be utilized up to age eight. It is a primary violation, court costs are assessed, along with points to the driver, therefore, officers are more likely to enforce those statutes.
- Nebraska law enforcement agencies can obtain real time crash data, specific to their agency.
- The Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) manages *Drive Smart Nebraska* and works on growing partnerships with occupant protection stakeholders, including some law enforcement.

### 3B. CHALLENGES

- Nebraska's seat belt law permits secondary enforcement only. Law enforcement officers may issue a ticket for not wearing a seat belt only when there is another citable traffic infraction. This limitation and other weaknesses in the law, including a low fine (\$25) and absence of court costs, have contributed to relatively low levels of enforcement activity.
- Law enforcement across the State of Nebraska reported 1,216 seat belt citations for grant-funded selective overtime in 2019. For *CIOT* in May of 2019, law enforcement reported a rate of 1 citation per 2.18 hours of enforcement, of which 350 were seat belt and 90 were CPS citations. For *CIOT* in November of 2019, law enforcement reported a rate of one citation per 4.46 hours of enforcement, of which 24 were seat belt and three were CPS citations.
- When looking specifically at occupant protection citations for November 2019 *CIOT* law enforcement issued one seat belt citation for every 71 hours of overtime and one CPS citation for every 571 hours.
- Enforcement of the Nebraska occupant protection statutes is not a high priority among law enforcement. Approximately 45 out of the 204 law enforcement agencies in Nebraska participate in the various OP enforcement efforts during the two Mobilization overtime efforts. To further complicate matters, the agencies receiving funds must be from one of the 23 priority counties.
- Evidence presented during this assessment suggests year-round enforcement of the OP laws is almost non-existent. There is no clear effort to ensure regular year-round enforcement of these laws exists and since enforcement data are not easily obtained by the Nebraska Crime Commission, there is no monitoring by anyone.

- In general Nebraska law enforcement does not enforce the State OP statutes, even during Mobilization periods, where overtime is provided. From 2013 until 2018 the numbers of arrests/citations/convictions for traffic safety (i.e., speeding, impaired driving, seat belt and Child Passenger Safety (CPS)) have significantly declined. Seat belt and CPS citations/convictions in 2018 were less than half of what was recorded in 2013.
- Nebraska does not have a central repository for citations. All citations written by law enforcement are submitted to the Nebraska Crime Commission and the data are not readily available to the officer or their agency.
- Occupant protection education and the necessity for enforcing the law as a means of educating the public is not consistently provided to Nebraska law enforcement during their basic academy training. There is no additional training provided on OP to existing officers unless it involves an OP statute change.
- The Nebraska Law Enforcement Joint Conference, encompassing the Nebraska Sheriffs Association (NSA), the Police Officers Association of Nebraska (POAN), and Jail Administrators, host a three-day conference every year, with no traffic safety seminars, only the NDOT-HSO provides one of the conference luncheons to invited guests and provides a brief overview of their role.
- There is no statewide Highway Safety Conference for law enforcement, nor any type of recognition for those officers who conduct exemplary enforcement.
- There is limited participation by law enforcement to become a Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST), currently there are only 24. Most crash reconstructionists and Public Information Officers are not currently certified or have never taken the training.



- At present, there are no Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) in Nebraska.
- The State statute requires all operators involved in a crash to submit a form to Nebraska Department of Transportation to self-report their involvement in a crash, even after a crash report has been completed by a law enforcement officer, or else face the penalty of a driver's license suspension.

### 3C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enact a primary seat belt law for all occupants in the vehicle, regardless of age and for all seating positions.
- **Conduct a survey of law enforcement partners, ensuring representation from state and local agencies, to identify concerns related to occupant protection enforcement and why traffic enforcement is on a decline.**
- Mandate law enforcement grantees they must take a *Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)* course if they wish to work the *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization/mini-grant overtime.

- Develop a statewide citation repository or request the Nebraska Crime Commission to implement a citation database which could be queried by any law enforcement officer to obtain real-time enforcement data.
- Encourage the Nebraska State Patrol Academy and the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center to provide a basic occupant protection education training at their sites for all new hires, utilizing the *Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)* modules.
- Encourage the Nebraska State Patrol Academy and the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center Administrators to integrate into their curriculum calendar, programs such as: *Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)* Training and *Operation Kids: the Next Generation*, for officers who wish to obtain more education on Occupant Protection, but who don't wish to become Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians.
- **Develop and promote training materials and/or online training courses utilizing portions of the *Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)*/*Operation Kids: the Next Generation* curriculums to educate law enforcement and thereby encouraging the enforcement of occupant protection laws. This information could also be incorporated into brief roll call videos.**
- **Encourage law enforcement administrators to focus on the importance of highway safety initiatives to detect and combat more serious crimes and suggest they integrate a traffic safety workshop at their Nebraska Joint Law Enforcement Conference.**
- Establish a Highway Safety Conference for Nebraska Law Enforcement focusing on impaired driving, occupant protection for both adults and children, and other pertinent traffic safety topics. Incorporate a recognition and awards event to recognize officers for their outstanding dedication to and enforcement efforts in the area of impaired driving and occupant protection respectively.
- **Provide recognition and rewards at the state level for those officers who go above the norm with enforcement initiatives.**
- Initiate a Nebraska Law Enforcement Challenge by using the established model created by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to promote highway safety. The International Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Challenge focused on impaired driving and occupant protection initiatives by local law enforcement.
- **Increase the number of law enforcement agencies with officers certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians, in general. Increase the number of crash reconstructionists and Public Information Officers who are certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians.**
- **Implement the Law Enforcement Liaison Program in order to garner support for the law enforcement community in the furtherance of highway safety initiatives.**



- Enact legislation to change the statute whereby if a crash report is filed by a law enforcement officer, no other self-reporting crash report is necessary.

## 4. COMMUNICATION

### GUIDELINE:

*As part of each State's communication program, the State should enlist the support of a variety of media, including mass media, to improve public awareness and knowledge and to support enforcement efforts to about seat belts, air bags, and child safety seats. To sustain or increase rates of seat belt and child safety seat use, a well-organized effectively managed communication program should:*

- *Identify specific audiences (e.g., low belt use, high-risk motorists) and develop messages appropriate for these audiences;*
- *Address the enforcement of the State's seat belt and child passenger safety laws; the safety benefits of regular, correct seat belt (both manual and automatic) and child safety seat use; and the additional protection provided by air bags;*
- *Continue programs and activities to increase the use of booster seats by children who have outgrown their toddler seats but who are still too small to safely use the adult seat belts;*
- *Capitalize on special events, such as nationally recognized safety and injury prevention weeks and local enforcement campaigns;*
- *Provide materials and media campaigns in more than one language as necessary;*
- *Use national themes and materials;*
- *Participate in national programs to increase seat belt and child safety seat use and use law enforcement as the State's contribution to obtaining national public awareness through concentrated, simultaneous activity;*
- *Utilize paid media, as appropriate;*
- *Publicize seat belt use surveys and other relevant statistics;*
- *Encourage news media to report seat belt use and non-use in motor vehicle crashes;*
- *Involve media representatives in planning and disseminating communication campaigns;*
- *Encourage private sector groups to incorporate seat belt use messages into their media campaigns;*
- *Utilize and involve all media outlets: television, radio, print, signs, billboards, theaters, sports events, health fairs;*
- *Evaluate all communication campaign efforts.*

### 4A. STRENGTHS

- The Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) utilizes paid marketing/messaging opportunities targeting 18 to 34-year-old males including radio, movie screens, pump top/handle, billboards, high school and collegiate sports marketing, social, and print media.
- The NDOT-HSO maintains paid media marketing and messaging during the national *Click it or Ticket (CIOT)* Mobilization.

- During special enforcement crackdowns and designated traffic safety weeks, the NDOT-HSO contributes traffic safety message copy for the State’s roadway electronic message boards.
- The NDOT-HSO requires, as a condition of their traffic safety grants, recipients must hold a local news conference and/or issue a news release regarding the grant award and the related grant activity.
- Social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) were used to target Child Passenger Safety month messaging including graphics to share with coalition members and media placement.
- Web banner ads and toolkit materials have been developed to share with the *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition and other highway safety partners, employers, schools, law enforcement, hospitals, and local health districts for use with local marketing.
- The NDOT-HSO capitalizes on special events, such as *Child Passenger Safety Week*, *100 Days of Summer*, and *Drive Safely to Work Week*.
- Use of social and online media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are incorporated into media buys.
- The *Drive Smart Nebraska* website contains media toolkits for traffic safety advocates.
- The news media reports seat belt use and non-use in motor vehicle crashes.
- Nebraska traffic safety advocates are responsive and supportive to the NDOT-HSO campaigns and activities being promoted.

#### **4B. CHALLENGES**

- A majority (54 percent) of the respondents on the *Annual Traffic Safety Study* do not believe they will receive a ticket for not wearing their seat belt.
- Less than half of the respondents (41 percent) of the *Annual Traffic Safety Study* have heard *Click it or Ticket (CIOT)* messages.
- The rural nature of the State presents unique marketing challenges such as being outside the major media markets and limited internet access.
- The NDOT-HSO has four years left with Learfield IMG College contract which was signed by previous administration.
- The NDOT-HSO has not developed a consistent brand/logo to distribute their messaging across the State.

- The Nebraska Department of Transportation does not allow the Highway Safety Office to develop their own logo/branding.
- The NDOT-HSO does not conduct media campaign surveys following campaigns to measure awareness, tag lines, enforcement, and the perception of risk of driving unbuckled in various geographic locations like targeted counties before and after the campaigns.
- The NDOT-HSO has several grantee's providing media/messaging on occupant protection which delivers an inconsistent look and feel which can cause confusion to the public.
- Although the NDOT-HSO has targeted 23 counties as high-risk they have not delved into the data to identify high-risk populations with low belt use to develop and direct messaging.
- Outside of the *CIOT* campaign enforcement, messaging with strong enforcement content is not used.
- The *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition does not have representation from local advocates and law enforcement across the State.

#### 4C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conduct post-campaign media surveys to gauge the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office campaign effectiveness, specifically to determine if the target audiences heard/saw *Click it or Ticket* messaging and whether perception of risk for receiving a citation was increased.**
- Use available data and resources to identify populations (i.e. rural motorists, pickup truck drivers and passengers, nighttime motorists, city drivers, and minority populations) with low seat belt use rates and work to create effective messaging designed to convert the number of non-users.
- Evaluate the need for branding campaigns with a common message (e.g. *Drive Smart Nebraska*) which can act as an overall theme for the State's various traffic safety initiatives. Branding can improve collaboration, strengthen the program, and improve message recognition.
- **Review the existing grantees, during the time left on the current marketing contract, and how they share in media messaging. Evaluate the need for a single marketing contractor or coordinator to oversee the State's media placements, maintain social media, and coordinate communication across the State.**

## 5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

### GUIDELINE:

*Each State should enact occupant protection laws that require the correct restraint of all children, in all seating positions and in every vehicle. Regulations and policies should exist that provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning occupant protection for children. Each State should require that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in the appropriate child restraint system or seat belt. Gaps in State child passenger safety and seat belt laws should be closed to ensure that all children are covered in all seating positions, with requirements for age-appropriate child restraint use. Key provisions of the law should include: driver responsibility for ensuring that children are properly restrained; proper restraint of children under 13 years of age in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children); a ban of passengers from the cargo areas of light trucks; and a limit on the number of passengers based on the number of available seat belts in the vehicle. To achieve these objectives, State occupant protection programs for children should:*

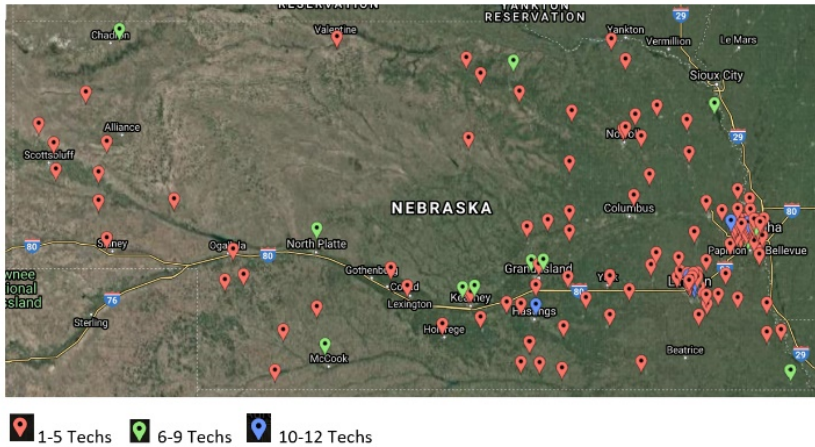
- *Collect and analyze key data elements in order to evaluate the program progress;*
- *Assure that adequate and accurate training is provided to the professionals who deliver and enforce the occupant protection programs for parents and caregivers;*
- *Assure that the capability exists to train and retain nationally certified child passenger safety technicians to address attrition of trainers or changing public demographics;*
- *Promote the use of child restraints and assure that a plan has been developed to provide an adequate number of inspection stations and clinics, which meet minimum quality criteria;*
- *Maintain a strong law enforcement program that includes vigorous enforcement of the child occupant protection laws;*
- *Enlist the support of the media to increase public awareness about child occupant protection laws and the use of child restraints. Strong efforts should be made to reach underserved populations;*
- *Assure that the child occupant protection programs at the local level are periodically assessed and that programs are designed to meet the unique demographic needs of the community;*
- *Establish the infrastructure to systematically coordinate the array of child occupant protection program components;*
- *Encourage law enforcement participation in the National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) training for law enforcement officers.*

### 5A. STRENGTHS

- There is a Child Passenger Safety Law (Nebraska Revised Statute §§ 60-6,267) that is a primary offense. The provisions of the law require children under age two to remain rear-facing and children up to age eight to be restrained in a child restraint system that is used according to the child restraint manufacturer's instructions that conform to U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Requirements.

- Children eight to eighteen years of age are addressed in Nebraska Revised Statute §§60-6,267(2) as a secondary violation and requires the child to be correctly restrained in an occupant protection system (child restraint system) or three-point seat belt.
- Children under the age of eighteen years are prohibited from riding in or on any portion of the vehicle not designed or intended for the use of passengers when the vehicle is in motion.
- Nebraska Revised Statute §§60-6,267(7) requires that the Nebraska Department of Transportation develop and implement an ongoing statewide public information and education program regarding the use of child passenger restraint systems and occupant protection systems and the availability of distribution and discount programs for child passenger restraint systems.
- There is support for the Child Passenger Safety Program (CPS) by the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO). Approximately \$169,000 is allocated toward funding of CPS grants and mini-grants including child restraint systems for distribution.
- Mini-grant applications for CPS programs are easily accessible online on the Nebraska Department of Transportation website. The application process is clearly defined. Applications can be submitted for a variety of programs including purchases of child restraint systems, outreach and educational programs, and creative new initiatives.
- Abbreviated courses were conducted to Child Care Centers in accordance with licensure requirements in *Health and Human Services 391 Nebraska Administrative Code (NAC) 3*. The pre- and post-testing shows clear evidence that shortened courses which are targeted toward special interest groups is beneficial in enhancing comprehension of choosing and using appropriate child restraint systems correctly based on the child's age, weight, and physical and mental development.
- There are currently 19 Child Passenger Safety Inspection Stations in Nebraska. All are staffed with currently certified CPS Technicians.
- The inspection stations have clearly written guidelines which comply with the NDOT-HSO guidelines within which they are required to operate. Each inspection station is required to purchase their own child restraint systems and are subsequently reimbursed by the NDOT-HSO. The inspection stations are not allowed to accept donations for the child restraint systems they distribute. Inspection stations give child restraint systems away without charge. Preapproval for reimbursement is required prior to purchase and guidelines from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's *Buy America Act* are strictly followed.

- There are currently 379 Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians in Nebraska. Twenty of the CPS Technicians are currently certified as Instructors and 14



are authorized as Technician Proxies to assist with recertification requirements for all CPS Technicians. The technicians and instructors are well dispersed throughout the State with the ability to serve nearly 90 percent of the State’s population. Additionally, 52 CPS

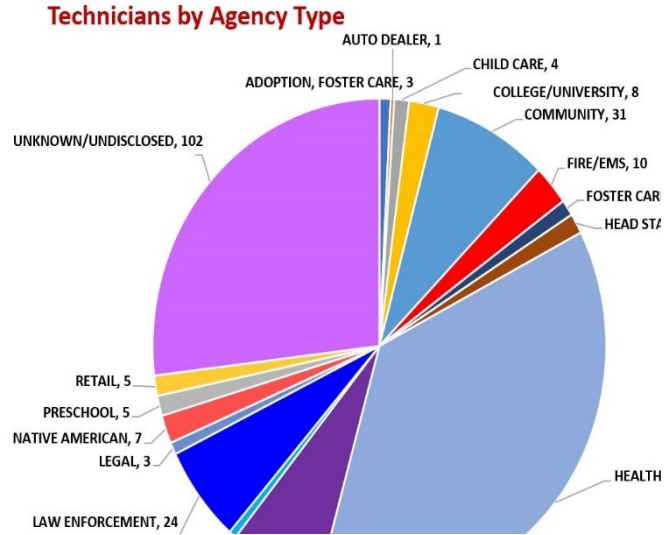
Technicians and Instructors have completed training in the *Safe Travel for All Children* course to assist with children who have special healthcare needs and disabilities.

- The Nebraska Child Passenger Safety Program shows an exemplary rate of recertification for eligible certified technicians. Nebraska holds an annual, well-attended, Continuing Education Conference. All technicians are invited for the educational and networking opportunity.

Year	Nebraska Recertification Rate (%)	National Recertification Average (%)	Nebraska Comparison to National Rate (%)
2017	64.7	58.4	+6.3
2018	55.8	55.3	+0.3
2019	66.3	55.3	+11

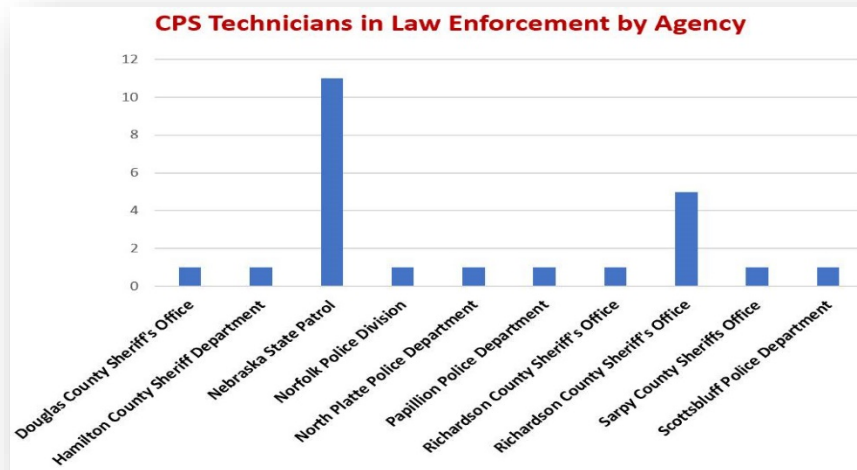
- The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is actively involved with the State CPS Program by housing many of the inspection stations and devoting a significant amount of resources to communication with stakeholder groups and technicians. Policies, data, public information, and many other pieces of the program are contributed to the Nebraska Child Passenger Safety program. The health and hospital systems have a strong infrastructure to assure American Academy of Pediatrics discharge policies are being followed for newborns.

- There is vast diversity in the technician pool with a considerably higher than average number of volunteers for the program.
- The Nebraska State Safe Kids is beginning to promote the National Digital Check Form as a method of obtaining critical data for child restraint misuse.
- The media is supportive of reporting seat belt and child restraint use in crashes.



## 5B. CHALLENGES

- Nebraska Revised Statute §§ 60-6,267(3) exempts taxis and does not clearly define limousines and rideshare vehicles as non-exempt from the law. This section applies to autocycles which are classified by the Federal Highway Administration as a Class 1 vehicle; however, child restraint systems are regulated by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213 for Class 2 and 3 vehicles.
- The current fine for child restraint violations is one \$25.00 fine for each vehicle, regardless of the number of children within the vehicle that are improperly restrained.



- According to the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, there are currently 204 law enforcement agencies in the State. Currently, there are 24 certified CPS Technicians within ten of these agencies. (Reference: [https://ncc.nebraska.gov/sites/ncc.nebraska.gov/files/doc/Employment\\_Data\\_Report\\_2018.pdf](https://ncc.nebraska.gov/sites/ncc.nebraska.gov/files/doc/Employment_Data_Report_2018.pdf)).



- Traffic citations for seat belt and child restraint violations are reported to the Nebraska Crime Commission. The data are compiled and stored but not easily accessible via the current system. Statewide citation data were not available to the assessment panel.
- At the time of the Occupant Protection Program Assessment, the preliminary report of child passenger safety violations issued during the 2019 Summer *Click It or Ticket* was six resulting from 1,400 total contacts. This shows a significant decline (93 percent) in written citations from 2018 where 90 child restraint violations were issued during the same mobilization.
- The Nebraska State Patrol reported a total of 163 child restraint violations issued in 2019. There has been a notable decline in citations for the past three years ranging from 234 in 2017 to 185 in 2018.
- In 2018, there were eight recorded fatalities involving child occupants birth to 14 years old. An additional 1,321 injuries were reported. It was not possible for the assessment team to determine the severity of the injuries since the State’s data processing does not include clinically-based severity metrics by age group.
- The reported injuries show a dramatic rise to the number of injuries sustained by children riding in the vehicle as they are getting older.

Age Range	Number of Injuries
0 – 4 years	328
5 – 9 years	380
10 – 14 years	613

- There is a 61 percent increase in injuries sustained by children who are ten to fourteen years old from the five to nine year-old age group. It is unclear if elementary school and intermediate school education is routinely conducted to reinforce the importance of booster seat and seat belt use beyond age eight.
- The assessment team was informed on several occasions by various panels interviewed that law enforcement officers receive a very limited amount of training regarding child passenger safety correct restraint selection and use. Many of the law enforcement representatives reported a need for furthering awareness through education. Many departments reported a lack of personnel and funding to be able to send an agency representative to a three or four-day training.
- According to the 2018 Census, Nebraska population includes 11.2 percent Hispanic, 2.7 percent Asian, and 1.5 percent American Indian and Alaska Native. There appears to be very limited targeted communication and outreach to these groups through print and media.

- The NDOT-HSO does not require data reporting and analysis from inspection stations regarding misuses and details for child restraint system distributions.
- There are very few workshops available for expectant parents and grandparents. It is unclear if the inspection stations are viewed as locations where assistance and education are the primary goal or if they are considered by the public as merely a location where free child restraints are to be obtained.

## 5C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enhance the Child Passenger Safety Law to include mandated appropriate child restraint systems for children. A well-crafted child passenger safety law should include the following elements:
  - Children should be correctly restrained in a child restraint system appropriate for their age, weight, and height until age eighteen.
  - Children should remain in rear-facing child restraints, used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible and to the uppermost weight and height limits of the child restraint, but to a minimum of age two.
  - Children should remain in child restraint systems with a harness and used according to manufacturer instructions, for as long as possible, but to a minimum of age four.
  - Children should remain in a booster seat or child restraint system until they are tall enough to fit into vehicle seat belt systems according to vehicle manufacturer instructions.
  - Children should be correctly restrained in appropriate child restraint systems in the rear seat of vehicles until age thirteen if enough seating positions are available.
  - The number of child passengers should be limited to the number of seating positions with seat belts.
  - No exemption for trucks or vans that exceed 6,500 pounds gross vehicle weight.
  - No exemptions for childcare providers and childcare centers, school systems, church vehicles, private buses, or any other non-commercial vehicles.
  - No exemptions for any vehicles for hire including rideshares, taxis and all other passenger Class 2 and 3 vehicles for hire.
  - This law should not be applicable to motorcycles.
- Require that one citation be issued to the driver for each child that is not correctly restrained in the vehicle.
- Implement an increased or graduated fine structure for Child Restraint Law violations.
- **Require activity data from funded child passenger safety inspection stations. Use the gathered data to evaluate the Child Passenger Safety Program and its effectiveness. Encourage local observational studies for correct seat selection.**

- **Require, collect, and analyze inspection station data, specifically regarding incorrect child restraint choices and misuse. Utilize the information to create a focused, data-driven approach to structuring the needs of the statewide program.**
- **Create and conduct short comprehensive awareness trainings to law enforcement officers to enhance their understanding of the necessity for much more vigorous enforcement. Alternatively use the existing *Operation Kids: the Next Generation*.**
- **Explore alternative timeframes to deliver and complete the National Child Passenger Safety Training Curriculum that will be practical and appealing to increase law enforcement agency participation and certification through the technician trainings.**
- Increase comprehensive education regarding the importance of seat belt and booster seat use for children in the elementary and intermediate schools.

## 6. OUTREACH PROGRAM

### *GUIDELINE:*

*Each state should encourage extensive statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education by involving individuals and organizations outside the traditional highway safety community. Representation from health, business, education, and diverse cultures of the community are encouraged, among others. Community involvement broadens public support for the state's programs and can increase a state's ability to deliver highway safety education programs. To encourage statewide and community involvement, States should:*

- *Establish a coalition or task force of individuals and organizations to actively promote use of occupant protection systems;*
- *Create an effective communications network among coalition members to keep members informed about issues;*
- *Provide culturally relevant materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward young people, in local settings;*
- *Provide materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward specific cultural or otherwise diverse populations represented in the State and in its political subdivisions.*

*States should undertake a variety of outreach programs to achieve statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education, as described below. Programs should include outreach to diverse populations, health and medical communities, schools and employers.*

#### ***a. Diverse Populations***

*Each State should work closely with individuals and organizations that represent the various ethnic and cultural populations reflected in State demographics. Individuals from these groups might not be reached through traditional communication markets. Community leaders and representatives from the various ethnic and cultural groups and organizations will help States to increase the use of child safety seats and seat belts. The State should:*

- *Evaluate the need for, and provide, if necessary, materials and resources in multiple languages;*
- *Collect and analyze data on fatalities and injuries in diverse communities;*
- *Ensure representation of diverse groups on State occupant protection coalitions and other work groups;*
- *Provide guidance to grantees on conducting outreach in diverse communities;*
- *Utilize leaders from diverse communities as spokespeople to promote seat belt use and child safety seat;*
- *Conduct outreach efforts to diverse organizations and populations during law enforcement mobilization periods.*

### **b. Health and Medical Communities**

*Each State should integrate occupant protection into health programs. The failure of drivers and passengers to use occupant protection systems is a major public health problem that must be recognized by the medical and health care communities. The SHSO, the State Health Department and other State or local medical organizations should collaborate in developing programs that:*

- *Integrate occupant protection into professional health training curricula and comprehensive public health planning;*
- *Promote occupant protection systems as a health promotion/injury prevention measure;*
- *Require public health and medical personnel to use available motor vehicle occupant protection systems during work hours;*
- *Provide technical assistance and education about the importance of motor vehicle occupant protection to primary caregivers (e.g., doctors, nurses, clinic staff);*
- *Include questions about seat belt use in health risk appraisals;*
- *Utilize health care providers as visible public spokespeople for seat belt and child safety seat use;*
- *Provide information about the availability of child safety seats at, and integrate child safety seat inspections into, maternity hospitals and other prenatal and natal care centers;*
- *Collect, analyze and publicize data on additional injuries and medical expenses resulting from non-use of occupant protection devices.*

### **c. Schools**

*Each State should encourage local school boards and educators to incorporate occupant protection education into school curricula. The SHSO in cooperation with the State Department of Education should:*

- *Ensure that highway safety and traffic-related injury control, in general, and occupant protection, in particular, are included in the State-approved K-12 health and safety education curricula and textbooks;*
- *Establish and enforce written policies requiring that school employees use seat belts when operating a motor vehicle on the job; and*
- *Encourage active promotion of regular seat belt use through classroom and extracurricular activities as well as in school-based health clinics; and*
- *Work with School Resource Officers (SROs) to promote seat belt use among high school students;*
- *Establish and enforce written school policies that require students driving to and from school to wear seat belts. Violation of these policies should result in revocation of parking or other campus privileges for a stated period of time.*

#### **d. Employers**

*Each State and local subdivision should encourage all employers to require seat belt use on the job as a condition of employment. Private sector employers should follow the lead of Federal and State government employers and comply with Executive Order 13043, “Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States” as well as all applicable Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Regulations or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations requiring private business employees to use seat belts on the job. All employers should:*

- *Establish and enforce a seat belt use policy with sanctions for non-use;*
- *Conduct occupant protection education programs for employees on their seat belt use policies and the safety benefits of motor vehicle occupant protection devices.*

#### **6A. STRENGTHS**

- The Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) partners and collaborates with the members of the *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition.
- Child Passenger Safety is promoted through the NDOT-HSO grantees and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).
- Grantees and partners take advantage of occupant protection educational materials produced by the NDOT-HSO.
- The NDOT-HSO supports *Teens in the Driver Seat* program in 38 schools across Nebraska.
- The NDOT-HSO has developed a website, *Drive Smart Nebraska* to provide education, resources, and information to the general public, grantees, and advocates.
- The NDOT-HSO supports public outreach through several grantees including Four Corners Health Department, DHHS, Safe Kids, area National Safety Councils, Nebraska State Patrol, and Brain Injury Alliance.

#### **6B. CHALLENGES**

- Traffic safety advocates, grantees, and law enforcement do not have an opportunity to come together to network or receive specialized traffic safety training or recognition for exceptional work because funding can be challenging.
- Nebraska is 77,421 square miles.
- A majority (54 percent) of the respondents on the *Annual Traffic Safety Study* do not believe they will receive a ticket for not wearing their seat belt.

- Less than half of the respondents (41 percent) of the *Annual Traffic Safety Study* have heard *Click it or Ticket* messages.
- The *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition does not have participation from local law enforcement, organizations, and advocates from the western part of the State.
- While there are many organizations in the State that have traffic safety as part of their overall missions, currently there is no organized method to engage those organizations in supporting specific NDOT-HSO emphasis areas through routine statewide sharing of best practices, programs, or materials across organizations or throughout the State.
- Nebraska citizens and advocates currently must go to several different websites and organizations for traffic safety resources.

## 6C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increase the membership of the *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition to include local advocates and law enforcement from across the State.**
- Work with local champions to develop and promote standardized and comprehensive messaging/programs/presentations that target grade school children, high schools, colleges, employers, and all identified low-belt use populations. Development of standardized messaging, programs, and presentations ensures the Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office branding and consistent information is being distributed across the State. Ensure the programs include:
  - Evaluation tools;
  - Efforts to obtain earned media through state and local outlets;
  - Seat belt use policies that include penalties for violating the policy;
  - Support of enforcement mobilizations and other State campaigns; and,
  - The ability to tailor the program to meet the needs of the community.
- Seek out advocate organizations (e.g., Police Chiefs Association and Nebraska Sheriff's Association) and deliver information/presentations at their conferences and meetings on the importance of seat belt use which will initiate discussion within each organization.
- Develop an award program to recognize law enforcement, Child Passenger Safety Technicians, and traffic safety advocates who go above and beyond to encourage or enforce seat belt use.
- **Use the existing *Drive Smart Nebraska* website as the Nebraska source of all things traffic safety. Link messaging, partner activities, Child Passenger Safety information, and enforcement activities to resources on the website.**

## 7. DATA AND EVALUATION

### GUIDELINE:

*Each State should access and analyze reliable data sources for problem identification and program planning. Each State should conduct several different types of evaluation to effectively measure progress and to plan and implement new program strategies. Program management should:*

- *Conduct and publicize at least one statewide observational survey of seat belt and child safety seat use annually, making every effort to ensure that it meets current, applicable Federal guidelines;*
- *Maintain trend data on child safety seat use, seat belt use and air bag deployment in fatal crashes;*
- *Identify high-risk populations through observational usage surveys and crash statistics;*
- *Conduct and publicize statewide surveys of public knowledge and attitudes about occupant protection laws and systems;*
- *Obtain monthly or quarterly data from law enforcement agencies on the number of seat belt and child passenger safety citations and convictions;*
- *Evaluate the use of program resources and the effectiveness of existing general communication as well as special/high-risk population education programs;*
- *Obtain data on morbidity, as well as the estimated cost of crashes, and determine the relation of injury to seat belt use and non-use;*
- *Ensure that evaluation results are an integral part of new program planning and problem identification.*

### 7A. STRENGTHS

- Significant upgrades are underway within several traffic data systems in the State:
  - The electronic crash reporting system improved to 99 percent compliance with the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) guidelines and was released on January 1, 2020;
  - An electronic citation reporting system that includes warnings and equipment repair orders was released and all agencies that report more than 500 citations per year are required to submit electronically as of January 1, 2021;
  - The Nebraska Traffic Information Portal is an online data query system undergoing final approvals that will include crash and roadway data and allow for tabular and geospatial summary outputs; and,
  - The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is developing an online data query system using Logi Analytics software with plans to include vital statistics, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, and Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) datasets.



- The Nebraska Department of Transportation - Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) provided grant funding to the University of Nebraska - Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research (BOSR) to collect observational seat belt survey data and the Iowa State University Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (CSSM) to conduct the final analysis of that information for the annual statewide seat belt observation survey.
- The NDOT-HSO provided funding to Health Education, Inc. to conduct an annual child restraint systems observational survey. These studies included non-invasive observations that identify the existence and type of child restraint systems.
- In addition to information available through the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), the NDOT-HSO maintains data tables for fatal crashes on its website and that information is updated daily.
- The NDOT provides crash data summarized by age, sex, and location to assist with the identification of high-risk groups based on demographics, urban/rural areas, and regions of the State.
- The CODES program has developed and publicly shared a plethora of analytical products related to occupant protection, including summary tables, factsheets, and interactive mapping query systems.
- The DHHS Division of Public Health Injury Prevention Program uses information from the CODES program to enhance problem identification analyses, including a review of any correlations between behaviors (e.g. unrestrained, impaired drivers). The DHHS also manages the *Teens in the Driver Seat* program, originally developed by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, that promotes peer-to-peer education and outreach. That program includes seat belt observation and teen driver experience surveys, which are compiled into summary reports by the DHHS and used to evaluate the program.
- A multi-disciplinary workgroup in South Omaha is focused on occupant protection safety outreach in the Hispanic community and includes state and local partners. Similar efforts in Hispanic communities across the State are led by OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc.
- Research Associates is funded by the NDOT-HSO to administer an annual statewide attitudinal survey, the *Nebraska Annual Traffic Safety Study*, that addresses the State's major traffic safety program areas, including occupant protection. It is administered through a random sample of 900 telephone numbers (landline and cellular) in April.
- All citations issued during NDOT-HSO funded overtime hours are reported on project quarterly reports. Convictions posted to the driver history record are also reviewed annually and summaries provided on the NDOT-HSO website.

- Program evaluation has been conducted at the NDOT-HSO in several ways, including media campaign proof of performance (contacts and impressions), behavioral and observational surveys, and crash data analyses.
- The State has utilized estimated costs of traffic crashes from the National Safety Council in the past and hospital charges are available through 2018 from the CODES program.
- Every project funded by the NDOT-HSO must include an evaluation plan and provide process and outcome evaluation metrics in quarterly reports.
- The *Drive Smart Nebraska* Coalition is a diverse, functional, dedicated group of safety partners that works statewide. Initiated by the NDOT-HSO, it aims to use evidence-based programs and be data-driven and effective.
- Occupant protection is a Critical Emphasis Area in the statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

## **7B. CHALLENGES**

- The NDOT-HSO problem identification process identifies 23 priority counties in which to focus most of the program funding. Partners in the other 70 counties may participate in statewide campaigns and apply for mini-grants but are not directly solicited.
- Several issues arose during the 2019 annual seat belt observational study, which will allow the NDOT-HSO to troubleshoot and improve the process. Consistency in training site observers and quality control monitors and lack of detailed information about site locations and survey times have been identified. The survey does not identify pickup truck occupants separately from passenger cars, while a difference in seat belt use has been noted using crash report data.
- The locations and timing for conducting the child restraint systems observation study are potentially out-of-date because the sample was drawn from the 1998 seat belt observation sites. The survey also focuses on children up to age six, which does not equate to the current law update. Although these studies included non-invasive observations that identify the existence and type of child restraint systems, proper usage of the restraint was not identified.
- The *Nebraska Annual Traffic Safety Study* contains seven questions related to seat belt use and one for child passenger safety. While surveys should be concise, more questions related to child passenger safety would support evaluation of the program especially awareness of the laws and available resources.

- As the data system improvements are being implemented, data capture, access, and quality remain challenging.
  - Race and ethnicity are not captured in most data systems and are rarely used in analyses when available.
  - The Nebraska Crime Commission receives information on all citations issued, but those data are not readily accessible to the NDOT-HSO, law enforcement, or other safety partners.
  - The CODES project has not incorporated trauma registry data and does not translate International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes to the Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS). AIS provides an injury severity metric that is not included in the ICD structure; AIS is included in all trauma registry records, but not hospital data systems.
- Data summaries provided on the NDOT websites are stratified by age, but those groups do not align with the current child passenger safety law, to include up to age eight separately from those age eight and over.
- The problem identification and program evaluation processes conducted by the NDOT-HSO rely heavily on fatal crash information and are conducted by staff without formal analytical or statistical training. Additional resources are available through the DHHS if requested.
- The statewide SHSP is not clearly or regularly evaluated and the executive-level steering committee does not consistently review evaluation metrics at the quarterly meetings.

## 7C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conduct a focused review of the observational seat belt survey methodologies to identify areas for improvement and consider recommendations from the 2019 report (e.g. more training, unannounced monitoring).**
- Expand the observational seat belt survey to distinguish pickup trucks from other passenger vehicles.
- Select new locations at which to conduct child restraint systems observations using statistical sampling methods.
- Adjust all child passenger safety analyses and observational surveys to comply with the age ranges in the new law (include ages six to eight).
- **Revise and add questions to the *Nebraska Annual Traffic Safety Study* related to seat belt use and child passenger safety.**
- Pursue regular access to and sharing of all traffic citations from the Nebraska Crime Commission.

- Enforce the requirement that all grant-funded traffic safety programs collect data for process and outcome evaluations.
- Incorporate hospital charge data from the Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System program into economic cost estimates for adult and child restraint misuse or non-use.
- **Support the deployment of electronic crash and citation systems, as well as online query systems for the Department of Health and Human Services and the Nebraska Traffic Information Portal.**
- Utilize trained data analysts or epidemiologists for statewide problem identification and program evaluation efforts.
- Conduct annual evaluations of the statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan to include metrics for each action step and strategy.

# ASSESSMENT AGENDA

## 2020 Nebraska Occupant Protection Assessment Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln, NE

### Sunday, March 1, 2020

Evening – Joint Meeting/Reception Assessment Team  
Simera Reynolds & Sherri Cannon

### Monday, March 2, 2020

*8:00 AM - Breakfast*

#### **9:00 am – 10:00 am – Session 1**

##### **Introductions and Program Management**

Mark Sergerstrom	Highway Safety Administrator, NDOT-HSO
William Kovarik	Highway Safety Office Supervisor, NDOT-HSO
Simera Reynolds	Occupant Protection Coordinator, NDOT-HSO

*10:00 am – 10:15 am - Break*

#### **10:15 am – 12:15 pm – Session II**

##### **Legislation, Regulation, and Policy**

Peg Ogea-Ginsburg	Injury Prevention Program Manager, DHHS
Lisa Henning	Executive Director, Nebraska Safety Council
Eric Koepp	President/CEO, National Safety Council Nebraska
Rose White	Public Affairs Director, Cornhusker AAA
Laura Osborne	Child Passenger Safety Technician, Instructor
Simera Reynolds	Occupant Protection Coordinator, NDOT-HSO

*12:15 pm – 1:15 pm – Lunch*

#### **1:15 pm – 2:15 pm – Session III**

##### **Enforcement**

Sergeant Mike Muff	Traffic Unit, Lincoln Police Department
Sergeant Jason Menning	Project Night Life, Omaha Police Department
Sheriff Kevin Stukenholtz	Saunders County Sheriff's Office
Sergeant Brian Stolley	La Vista Police Department
Major Brenda Konfrst	Nebraska State Patrol
Captain Jason Scott	Nebraska State Patrol

*2:15 pm – 2:30 pm – Break*

**2:30 pm – 5:00 pm – Session III**  
**Enforcement, Continued**

Sergeant Derek Horalek	Lancaster County Sheriff's Office
Major Brenda Konfrst	Nebraska State Patrol
Captain Jason Scott	Nebraska State Patrol
Major Mike Jahnke	Nebraska State Patrol
Sergeant Brian Stolley	La Vista Police Department

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020**

***8:00 AM - Breakfast***

**9:00 am – 10:30 am – Session IV**  
**Communications Program**

Chase Craddock	Red Thread, Account Executive
Simera Reynolds	Occupant Protection Coordinator, NDOT-HSO
Jeanne Bietz	Community Health Educator, DHHS
Mark Sergerstrom	Highway Safety Administrator, NDOT-HSO

***10:30 am – 10:45 am – Break***

**10:45 am – 11:15 am – Session IV**  
**Communications Program, Continued**

**11:15 am – 12:15 pm – Session V**  
**Data and Evaluation**

William Kovarik	Traffic Records Coordinator, NDOT-HSO
Celeste Illian	Epidemiology Surveillance Coordinator, DHHS
Lindsey Witt-Swanson	Bureau of Sociological Research, UNL
Jeanne Bietz	Community Health Educator, DHHS
Celeste Laird	Forensic Lab Manager, State Patrol Toxicology Lab

***12:15 pm – 1:15 pm – Lunch***

**1:15 pm – 2:15 pm – Session VI**  
**Occupant Protection for Children**

Jason Kerkman	Safe Kids Nebraska, DHHS
Amanda Ablott, RN	Safe Kids South Central, Mary Lanning Hospital
Julie Anderson	Safe Kids, Lincoln/Lancaster County
Jason Klipfel	Lincoln Fire & Rescue

***2:15 pm – 2:30 pm - Break***

**2:30 pm – 4:30 pm – Session VI**

**Occupant Protection for Children, Continued**

Sergeant Tim Pickering	CPSTI, Nebraska State Patrol
Jason Kerkman	Safe Kids Nebraska, DHHS
Jeanne Bietz	Community Health Educator, DHHS
Simera Reynolds	Occupant Protection Coordinator, NDOT-HSO

**Wednesday, March 4, 2020**

***8:00 AM - Breakfast***

**9:00 am – 11:00 am – Session VII**

**Outreach Programs**

Chris Blanke, RN	Four Corners Health Department, Community Educator
Jeanne Bietz	Teens in the Drive Seat, DHHS
Jeanne Tortorilla	Health Educator, National Safety Council, Nebraska
Trooper Okamoto	Community Service Outreach, NSP
Elle Stecher	Brain Injury Alliance
Simera Reynolds	Occupant Protection Coordinator, NDOT-HSO

***11:00 am – 11:15 am – Break***

**11:15 am - 12:00 pm – Wrap-up with State of Nebraska**

***12:00 pm – 1:00 pm – Lunch***

**1:00 pm - Until**

Team member Discussion, Deliberation and Report Preparation

**Thursday, March 16, 2017**

***7:00 AM - Breakfast***

Team Member Discussion, Deliberation and Report Preparation

**Friday, March 17, 2017**

***7:15 AM - Breakfast***

**8:15 am – Final Report Out** (*early report out due to flights for some team members*)

## **ASSESSMENT TEAM CREDENTIALS**

### **MARIAN ADAMS**

Marian Adams graduated from the Pennsylvania State Police Academy in 1986 as a Trooper. After patrol assignments she became the Federal Grants Manager in 1995. During her 11 years in this position, she managed the Occupant Protection (Click It or Ticket/Buckle Up waves), Speed Enforcement, DUI Enforcement and Construction Zone Management Programs.

In 1995, she was trained in Operation Kids, a child passenger safety course dedicated for law enforcement officers. In 1996, she implemented the PA State Police Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Program, the first for a State Police agency. In 1997, she participated in the first NHTSA Standardized Child Passenger Safety Pilot Program and began teaching the NHTSA Standardized CPS Course in 1998 which she continues to this day.

In 2000, NHTSA Region 3 asked her to implement Child Passenger Safety Fitting Stations throughout the Commonwealth, and those commenced in February 2001, during National Child Passenger Safety Week. This was the first Fitting Station Program by a police agency and is ongoing. Marian trained thousands of individuals in child passenger safety all across Pennsylvania and the U.S. She has presented seminars at several local, state and national conferences and she also served on the National Child Passenger Safety Board for one term as the CPS Advocate and was the Chair of the Curriculum Resources Committee.

Marian received her Bachelor of Science degree from the Pennsylvania State University. She was awarded two Governor's Highway Safety Awards for her work in child passenger safety. Also, her Department won multiple IACP Chief's law enforcement Challenge awards due to her work in organizing this document. She has received numerous certifications and recognition for her work in law enforcement. She has taught many courses including: Standardized Field Sobriety (SFST), TASER, First-Aid, CPR/AED, Aerial Reconnaissance and TraCS.

After her retirement of over 26 years with the PA State Police, she worked as a college administrator for three years before becoming a Child Passenger Safety Consultant. She volunteers her time as an American Red Cross Disaster Team member, the Pennsylvania State Police museum docent, and for two Safe Kids chapters.



## **CYNTHIA BURCH**

Cynthia (Cindy) Burch, MS MPH CAISS RSP1 began her career as a research analyst at the National Study Center for Trauma & EMS (NSC) in 2001 and went on to serve as epidemiologist/traffic records coordinator for the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety in 2004. There she continued working with traffic records and statewide data projects. In late 2005, she returned to the NSC and served as a senior epidemiologist and project manager. In July 2018, Cindy moved to the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the Baltimore region metropolitan planning organization, to support the development and implementation of Local Strategic Highway Safety Plans in the region's seven jurisdictions.

Cindy worked on the Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) and the Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN) projects funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). At the NSC, she worked closely with the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) on data analyses and traffic records, facilitated the State Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC), served as the data coordinator for the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan, conducted and analyzed the observational seat belt studies, and answered data requests from state and local agencies as well as the public at large. She continues to work closely with the MHSO now from the BMC to support all local efforts in planning, data analysis, and evaluation. She is also an assessor for Traffic Records Assessments at Traffic Safety Analysis Systems & Services; team member for impaired driving, occupant protection, and pedestrian/bicycle safety assessments; peer reviewer for the Transportation Research Record and Traffic Injury Prevention journals; and at-large member of the Abbreviated Injury Scale Certification Board for the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM).

## **VERA FULLAWAY**

### **EXPERIENCE**

Traffic Safety Education, NA, Denver, CO

Executive Director & Consultant: Program Development and Improvement to Occupant Protection Programs on an organizational through statewide level

Safe Traffic System, Inc., Chicago, IL

Technical Consultant in Global Regulatory Compliance, Child Passenger Safety Product Development and Improvement, Account and Customer Support, Global Representative

RECARO Child Safety, Auburn Hills, MI

Training Specialist & Consultant for USA, Canada and Mexico

Sky Ridge Medical Center & North Suburban Medical Center Fitting Station Co-Coordinator  
Child Passenger Safety Consultant / Co-Owner Child Safety Solutions, LLC / Colorado

Clek, Inc., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Child Passenger Safety Consultant and CPS Advocate

Combi USA, Charlotte NC

CPS Advocate, New Product Development and Support Team Car Seats & Strollers

Colorado State Patrol: Statewide CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator  
State CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator

Columbine Ambulance Service Illness & Injury Prevention Foundation  
Director of Education Programs

TerraSciences/ICS, Lakewood, CO

Maintenance Programmer, Computer Information Systems

Denver General Ambulance and various privately owned Emergency Ambulance  
Services as Paramedic

### **EDUCATION**

Colorado State University [Physics/Microbiology]

Aimes Community College [Emergency Medical Technician]

St Anthony's Hospital Institute of Pre-Hospital Care [Emergency Paramedic]

Denver Technical College [Computer Information Systems / Programming]

## **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- National Child Passenger Safety Board Emeritus (NCPSB)
- Recipient of the NHTSA Public Service Award
- NCPSB National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Curriculum Committee
- National Standardized CPS Course Technician Instructor /Trainer /Mentor
- Certified Safe Kids Worldwide CPS Technician Instructor since 1998
- Certification: Transporting Children with Special Healthcare Needs
- Certification: Transporting Children in the Emergency Medical Services Setting
- Colorado Statewide CPS Program Technical Training Coordinator
- Child Passenger Safety Team Colorado State Advisory Board Cochair
- Author / Editor of CPS Tech Update Publications (Colorado CPS Tech Update Monthly Publication, Safe Ride News, CPS Express for Safe Kids Worldwide, Internet Articles, various National, State and Regional CPS Programs)
- Author of numerous state standardized training curricula [professional & community programs]
- Statewide and Community CPS Program Development
- Institutional and Organizational CPS Program Development
- K-12 Injury Prevention Program Development
- Young Driver Program Development
- Child Restraint Manufacturer CPS Advocate
- Child Restraint Manufacturer Regulatory Compliance, Development and Improvement
- Technical Writing: Instruction Manuals for Child Restraint Systems
- Website Development
- USDOT, NHTSA, Technical Assistance Team, Occupant Protection Program, Team Member, States of Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Ohio, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia and West Virginia.

## **JANA SIMPLER**

Jana Simpler serves as the Director of the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles within the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). Prior to accepting the DMV Director position in September 2018, Ms. Simpler held a number of roles within the Delaware Office of Highway Safety. After joining the office in 1997, she served as the Occupant Protection Coordinator, Speed Management Coordinator and the Traffic Records Coordinator while serving as the Division's Deputy Director and chief policy advisor. In 2010, she became the Director of the Office and was responsible for the management, direction, and operations of the Division and worked with the staff to create innovative and engaging outreach and enforcement initiatives designed to change driver behavior and reduce crashes and deaths on Delaware roadways.

While serving as the Director of the Office of Highway Safety, Ms. Simpler held a number of leadership roles with the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), the membership association for all the state highway safety offices across the nation. She served as the Region 3 representative to the Board, chaired the Federal Relations Committee, served as the Board's Secretary and served as the Chair for three years prior to leaving the Office of Highway Safety for her current position at DMV in 2018.

## **NORRAINE WINGFIELD**

Norraine Wingfield, retired director of Traffic Safety for DCCCA and managed the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office and the Oklahoma SAFE Program along with managing marketing and social media for the KDOT Bureau of Traffic Safety and Technology. She is a graduate of the University of Kansas, Child Passenger Safety Instructor and Technician, State Child Passenger Safety Coordinator, AAA and AARP Driver Safety Program Instructor and former member of the National Child Passenger Safety Board and the National AARP Driver Safety Advisory Committee.

She currently is a member of the Kansas Department of Transportation Executive Safety Council, Occupant Protection and Older Driver Emphasis Area Team.

Norraine has been a speaker for various traffic safety topics at Lifesavers, Kids in Motion, , GHSA, Nebraska, Michigan and Missouri Transportation Conferences and has assisted in the development of the following nationally recognized programs: Child Passenger Safety Instructor Development Course, SAFE- Seat belts Are for Everyone, Booster to Belts and Safety Break!

She is the 2016 Kansas People Saving People Award and the first civilian to receive the Order of Distinguished Member of the Garrison for her traffic safety work with Fort Riley.