



Understanding the Agency Safety Plan Review, Approval, and Certification Process¹

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan \(PTASP\)](#) regulation (49 CFR Part 673) establishes requirements for Agency Safety Plans (ASP), including the requirements for review, approval, and certification. The information provided in this article can support transit agencies and State Departments of Transportation as they prepare for each review, approval, and certification step ahead of the compliance deadline.²

Please note, due to the extraordinary challenges posed by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), FTA has issued a [Notice of Enforcement Discretion](#), effectively extending the compliance deadline to **December 31, 2020**. For more information, see FTA's [COVID-19 FAQs page](#).

Plan Review and Approval

The first step in the ASP review and approval process is to obtain the Accountable Executive's signature and approval of the ASP by the transit agency's Board of Directors or an equivalent authority (§ 673.11(a)(1)). The Accountable Executive is ultimately responsible for carrying out the ASP and the Transit Asset Management Plan (§ 673.5 and § 673.23(d)(1)). The Board of Directors' or Equivalent Authority's approval of the ASP affirms that the ASP complies with the PTASP regulation and will effectively guide the transit agency with the management of safety risk.

For small public transportation providers, the State is responsible for drafting the ASP under its jurisdiction unless the provider voluntarily opts out of the State's ASP (§ 673.11(d)). In all cases, the provider's Accountable Executive must sign the ASP and the provider's Board of Directors or Equivalent Authority must approve the ASP.

Next, transit agencies must establish a process and a timeline for conducting an annual ASP review and update (§ 673.11(a)(5)). Transit agencies could consider the following three questions when reviewing their ASP to determine whether the contents require revisions:

ASP Review Requests

Did you know that FTA's [PTASP Technical Assistance Center \(TAC\)](#) offers voluntary reviews of draft ASPs? Submit your ASP by **November 13, 2020**, to guarantee review by PTASP TAC specialists.

¹ This is an updated version of the article by the same name that appeared in the [February–March 2020 Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight](#).

² The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Grantees and subgrantees should refer to FTA's statutes and regulations for applicable requirements.



- Does our ASP address all relevant requirements in the PTASP regulation?
- Does our ASP reflect our organization and transit system as it operates today?
- Are the activities and processes described in our ASP suitable to manage safety at our transit agency?

Process and Timeline

To meet PTASP certification requirements, applicable States and transit agencies must certify compliance with the PTASP regulation on or before **December 31, 2020**. Both States and transit agencies must complete this certification annually as part of the certifications and assurances process. In the future, agencies applying for Section 5307 funding and rail transit agencies subject to the State Safety Oversight Program must certify their compliance with PTASP requirements to be eligible for FTA grant assistance.

This year, States and transit agencies can complete their other certifications at any time appropriate to their funding cycles. However, they can and must complete the PTASP certification prior to the deadline. This may mean that some agencies will complete different sections of their certifications at different times.

Voluntary ASP Reviews

The deadline for developing and certifying ASPs is fast approaching. FTA anticipates that hundreds of agencies will request a review of their ASP over the next few months. The PTASP TAC aims to review each ASP and provide comments within three weeks of the ASP submission. Review times depend on the size and complexity of the ASP. To ensure you have time to make any necessary revisions before the compliance deadline, FTA encourages you to submit your ASP for review as soon as possible.

To request a review of your ASP, simply contact the PTASP TAC by email, at PTASP-TAC@dot.gov. A PTASP TAC specialist will follow up with you regarding a submission method and review schedule. The PTASP TAC will review your ASP and provide feedback and ongoing technical assistance, as needed, to help your agency meet the compliance deadline. If you have questions regarding your ASP you can reach the PTASP TAC via email or phone at 1-877-PTASP-AID (1-877-827-7243). The deadline to submit your ASP for review is **November 13, 2020**.

FTA held a webinar on the ASP review, approval, and certification process. The webinar [slides](#) are available on the PTASP website. To learn more about the PTASP TAC ASP review process, reference FTA's "ASP Review: What to Expect" document for [bus](#) or [rail](#) agencies.



PTASP Technical Assistance Available Now

- Access one-on-one Agency Safety Plan support
- Learn and share through the PTASP Community of Practice
- Explore the PTASP Resource Library

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/PTASP-TAC>