

Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund

Funding and Reporting Webinar

Questions and Answers

The questions and answers below are from the STIF Funding and Reporting Webinar held on Monday, July 15, 2019 from 8:45 AM – 11:45 AM.

STIF Formula Reporting Requirements Overview

- 1. If our student transportation outcome is not measured by number of students served by demand response or bus passes, will we have an "other" option?**

Answer: There is a section available in the STIF Periodic Report (SPR) to enter other outcome measures. In the SPR there will be a text box where Qualified Entities (QEs) can report an other type of outcome. However, other outcome measures will need to have been identified in the STIF Plan for reporting purposes. A provider may include an outcome measure that was not anticipated when submitting its STIF Plan. However, adding new outcome measures does not preclude the QE from providing updates on all the other benefits identified in their STIF Plan.

- 2. If nothing was spent in Fiscal Year 2019 (or not enough was spent), do the remaining dollars flow over into 2020 or are they lost until the next STIF Plan is developed?**

Answer: Any funds that are disbursed to a QE are allowed to flow from one fiscal year to the next within a STIF Plan period. If a QE has remaining funds at the end of the STIF Plan period then these funds will be carried forward into the next STIF Plan.

- 3. Is there a difference between the SPR asset report and Agency Periodic Report (APR) asset report?**

Answer: Reporting on the condition of an asset, such as mileage and conditions, is done through the APR in OPTIS. The purchase of STIF-funded assets is reported in the SPR.

STIF Periodic Report Demonstration

- 4. Do you do complete an OPTIS report for each project?**

Answer: One SPR report containing all projects and tasks must be completed each quarter. In the SPR reporting template, each "sub document" is a separate project.

- 5. Can you remind us if the funds are reimbursement-based? Or do QEs receive the funds prospectively at the start of each quarter?**

Answer: STIF formula funds are disbursed at the beginning of each quarter to QEs with approved STIF Plans. The only exception is in the first biennium where pre-award authority was given. If a QE chose to spend Formula funds prior to approval of its STIF plan, the QE may reimburse themselves for spending on approved STIF tasks.

- 6. Do we need to complete the APR before we complete the SPR?**

Answer: No. They may be completed in either order.

7. When will new OPTIS users be granted access to reporting system?

Answer: New users can create their own account now and OPTIS has a feature to create agencies if needed. See webpage <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/RPTD/Pages/OPTIS.aspx> for user guide and (dated) training videos with instructions on creating an account. However, the SPR reporting template is in the test environment and ODOT will provide further notice on the go live date.

8. Will the completeness of projects in the SPR dive down into the task level (as in, multiple ALLs) or are the projects themselves the smallest reporting units?

Answer: The SPR will be at the task level. Each project task will need to be reported on.

9. Why is the SPR not requesting the number of students in grades 9-12 served by fixed route and is only requesting the number of students in grades 9-12 served by demand response?

Answer: ODOT is requesting the student outcome for fixed route and the appropriate metrics per the providers preferred accurate method. The reason fixed route is not included as this was not a required outcome measure identified in the SPR.

10. For capital purchases is 'currently in procurement process' an appropriate response for the first quarter?

Answer: Yes. Entering currently in procurement process is appropriate.

11. How does a QE delegate projects to a private nonprofit contractor for the purposes of reporting?

Answer: Private nonprofit contractors are currently not entered in OPTIS for SPR purposes. ODOT can add a non-profit to the SPR but the QE must request this action.

12. If a project is forwarded from the QE to a PTSP in the first quarter, will it be pre-populated in that PTSP SPR for subsequent quarters? Or does the QE need to forward each individual project each quarter?

Answer: The QE will need to forward each individual project in each quarter.

13. If a vehicle has been ordered and received and the project is complete, do you have to continue reporting on this or, once expended, you don't have to put anything further in?

Answer: Once the project deliverable has been completed the project will no longer be prompted to be reported on in the SPR.

14. When will this reporting process be available in OPTIS for people to go in and play with?

Answer: There is not a definitive go live date as our developer OGMA is working on making adjustments. However, ODOT will send out an email notification when the SPR reporting template is ready. Providers will be instructed to use the train environment to test this new reporting template. Also, Operations Support Analysts and David Graf will be able to assist with

SPR questions. ODOT recommends all providers double check the SPR reporting template for their QE's STIF Plan accuracy as ODOT will be entering information from all STIF Plans.

15. Might there be extensions if we haven't reached proficiency with the new software yet? The SPR reporting timeline is very tight this first round. Plus, the SPR OPTIS tool is still in beta. Will ODOT consider some leniency in the 45 day timeline?

Answer: Yes. ODOT will evaluate whether to grant extensions to the Aug. 21 reporting deadline on a case-by-case basis, depending on the volume and complexity of technical and other issues. Extension requests should be submitted to Lynda.Viray@odot.state.or.us and your regional transit coordinator.

16. As a PTSP coordinating for multiple providers, can the PTSP start the SPR process in OPTIS for each QE or does it need to always start at the QE level? In other words, can the QE delegate the SPR preparation in total?

Answer: The QE is responsible for starting the SPR and once the SPR has been created then the QE can delegate to their PTSPs. ODOT recommends the QE start the SPR early and delegate in advance to their PTSPs.

17. Can we create all of our SPRs at one time so they are available for subrecipients to begin reporting whenever they have data? Can more than one person work in the SPR at a time?

Answer: Only one SPR can be in process at a time. Each project can be worked on by a single user concurrently.

18. How do sub-recipients account for STIF Debt payments in OPTIS SPR? Is there a form or should it be entered into prescribed fields? When should debt payments be reported?

Answer: This should be entered into expenditure field(s) at the project task level. Debt payments should be reported in the quarter in which they occurred.

19. Could you provide screenshots of the STIF Periodic Report?

Answer: Yes. This will be available once the SPR reporting template is finalized.

20. Could you provide more clear instructions and training on OPTIS STIF reporting as the demonstration was fast, short, and appeared to be incomplete? Providers will likely need help to facilitate completion of the first report. Will there be an SPR guidebook document similar to APR Quarterly Report sheet that was used in past?

Answer: Yes. ODOT will work on additional instructions and trainings. The purpose of the demonstration was to show how the reporting template is being developed and what to expect. ODOT will create future guidance once the reporting template is complete.

21. My agency has not been granted access to OPTIS. How do I set-up an account?

Answer: The agency can go directly to the OPTIS website and click on Provider Registration: http://wpdotqvm005/optis/open_grants.dll/welcome. Follow the instructions provided and also refer to the [OPTIS user guide](#).

STIF Low-Income Mitigation Report

22. How might the mitigation report work for jurisdictions where there are no PTSPs (just private nonprofit and other contract providers)?

Answer: QE will need to submit a low-income mitigation report as they have a fiduciary and oversight responsibility. Also, the QE has a policy and programmatic requirement and will need to describe what they have done and how they have chosen to implement low-income mitigations through their private and non-profit operators. In summary, a QE will still need to state what actions have been taken.

23. Why are we having to explain how we've identified low income communities when we've already explained it in our plans and bylaws? Seems duplicative.

Answer: Yes, it's requirement of low-income mitigation report to be completed per OAR 732-0040-0025(1): "A report on any actions taken by any Public Transportation Service Provider located within the area of the Qualified Entity to mitigate the impact of the STIF tax on passengers who reside in low-income communities. The report must explain how it defines and identifies passengers in low-income communities." This is required because there are some PTSPs that are required to complete this report because they are receiving STIF discretionary funds and are not receiving formula funds. This report would be their only opportunity to provide this definition as it pertains to them.

24. Please describe/share examples of "actions" to mitigate the tax for low-income people?

Answer: An example is a low-income fare program with a reduced fare or no fare for people earning a low-income. There are QEs where the entire county meets the low-income definition.

25. FYI, the mitigation cover letter specifies "(non-formula PTSP)" should this read "non-formula funded PTSP"?

Answer: Yes. ODOT will make this adjustment before finalizing the cover letter.

26. Can the low-income templates be found on STIF webpage?

Answer: Not yet. ODOT will has a draft version available and will finalize the templates shortly. PTSPs will be notified when the template is available.

STIF Annual Financial Audits

27. Is it true that QEs that deliver services through contractors (nonprofit and otherwise) are subject to Agreed-Upon Audit Procedures but not the actual recipients they fund?

Answer: Yes. The QE will need to do their regular audit and include the audit procedures. STIF funds for contractor expenses are not viewed as recipients from an accounting perspective.

28. When will these annual audits be due?

Answer: The audit reports are due to ODOT 30 days after the completion of the full audit report. There is no specific due date on when the audit must be completed. This will likely vary based on the structure of the organization and how long their procedure will take. Email a pdf of the audit report to ODOTPTDreporting@odot.state.or.us.

29. Does ODOT want budgets in a PDF or a link to them?

Answer: ODOT prefers a pdf of the budget emailed to ODOTPTDreporting@odot.state.or.us. If a PDF is not available a link will be acceptable.

STIF Plan Consistency and FAQ

30. If I had a project on my STIF Plan that I transferred funds from to another project, would I mark the project that the funds came from as complete on my SPR?

Answer: ODOT is assuming that funds will be transferred only if project deliverables have been or are anticipated to be completed under budget. The provider should only indicate that deliverables are completed when they are actually done.

31. When making budget documents after receiving permission from ODOT for the changes, do we report this in the SPR and then attach the approval that was given to transfer the funds?

Answer: Yes. This can be included in the attachment section at the project level and a QE can enter what changes occurred in the available text box.

32. Does 'Admin' include staff like supervisors and program leads? Does it cover call centers? Where does program administration (e.g. Supervisor) fall - under Admin or Operations?

Answer: It depends on the organization. If a supervisor level is advising under a single specific program then they can be considered operations. If a supervisor is providing oversight in multiple programs, then they can be considered administration. Overall, the appropriate category has to be based on the activities. Other examples include if a staff person is reviewing the call center then this can be considered mobility management and if a staff person is reporting documents then this can be considered administration.

Compliance Overview

33. For small urbans, will ODOT be doing ADA, Civil Rights, Procurement review at all with STIF projects? If not, what are you reviewing?

Answer: For Urban and Small Urban reviews there will be a presumption of compliance in the areas of Financial Management, ADA, Civil Rights and Procurement pending a review of your most recent FTA Triennial review and last 3 single audits. If a review of those documents conducted during the desk review process raises no red flags in those areas we will not review those areas while on-site. For a complete scope of the Urban / Small Urban review please refer to the Urban / Small Urban Field Guide found on the [RPTD website](#). That document lists all the topical areas and potential questions that could be asked during the on-site review.

34. Is there an additional 15 days for reporting for Q4?

Answer: Slide 75 has been corrected as it originally had 60 days and there is not an additional 15 days.

35. Where will we be submitting our audits and budgets to for both Compliance and STIF audit procedures?

Answer: Compliance review documents will be uploaded to a secure website. The third party consultant will provide instructions to providers on this process in advance. Audits and budgets should be submitted via email at ODOTPTDreporting@odot.state.or.us.