

Questions and Answers Regarding Ferry Boat Program (FBP)

Ferry Boat Program (FBP) Formula Program Questions and Answers

Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the State in any way. This document is intended only to provide information regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

General Questions

Question: How does a new ferry boat line in California get started to be added to the FBP?

A: Active ferry line, owned by local agency, and completing the biannual census.

Question: What is classified as Operating Costs?

A: From Implementation Guidance for the Ferry Boat Program from FHWA. Operating costs are costs associated with continuous performance of the ferry boat and terminal facility. Examples include staffing, fuel, inspections, certifications and permits, labor cost, administrative costs, utility cost, rent, replacing defective equipment, and purchasing supplies. In order for operating costs to be eligible for FBP funds, cost must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable per 2 CFR 200 and, when a ferry boat or ferry terminal is constructed in conjunction with other uses (cost objectives), such as cruise ships, general marina, museum, and port management facilities, 2 CFR Part 200 requires that costs be allocated to the various benefiting uses (See Section H.).

Question: How does a project get programed in the FSTIP?

A: Once funds are transferred to FTA, RTPA or MPO does it.

Question: Are private ferry boat operators eligible for the FBP program.

A: No, only public ferry boat operators.

Question: How is it determined how much funding each ferry line in the FBP receives?

A: The FBP distribution formula is based on three elements: the number of ferry passengers (35%), number of vehicles carried (35%), and the total route nautical miles (30%). The FY 2023 distribution amounts were calculated with the data contained in the 2020 NCFO. States with at least one eligible entity that meets FBP requirements will receive at least \$100,000 for each fiscal year, per 23 U.S.C. 147(f).

Question: What percentage of eligible work is covered by the FBP program?

A: In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 147(b), the maximum Federal share for a project in any State or Puerto Rico under this program is 80%. In the case of a project to replace or retrofit a diesel fuel ferry vessel that provides substantial emissions reductions, the Federal share of the cost of the project may be up to 85 percent, as determined by the State (BIL Section 11117(b)(1)). The provision for increased Federal share to replace or retrofit a diesel fuel ferry vessel terminates on September 30, 2025 (BIL Section 11117(b)(2)). The maximum share in U.S. Territories is 100%.

Question: Once funds are available to FB operators, how long do they have to use the funds?

A: FBP funds are available to eligible entities for three fiscal years following the fiscal year in which the funds were initially made available for allocation. FBP funds initially distributed in FY 2020 must be obligated by the end of FY 2023, and any unobligated funds remaining at the end of FY 2023 will be withdrawn and redistributed in FY 2024.

Question: What happens with expired funds?

A: FBP funds (HTF and general funds) distributed for FY 2023 that remain unobligated on September 30, 2026, will be withdrawn and redistributed in FY 2027 to eligible entities from which no funds were withdrawn. To minimize redistribution amounts the funds for each FY will be distributed in the following order: 1) FY 2019 and older redistributed funds, 2) HTF contract authority funds, and 3) GF ABA funds.

Question: When is the next FB census?

A: Filling out the FB census is vital in receiving FBP funds. Filling out the census is required every two years. The previous census opened 04/01/2023, the next census opens/opened 04/01/2025.

Question: Where can I get more information on the census?

A: National Census of Ferry

ferry@dot.gov

800-853-1351

NCFO will be an online data collection

Contact Us:

National Census of Ferry
Operators
BTS Office of Survey Programs
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590
United States

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ferry@dot.gov

Phone: [800-853-1351](tel:800-853-1351)

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Business Hours:

8:30am-5:00pm ET, M-F

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