

National Law Enforcement Challenge

Ten Tips for Jumpstarting Your Application

1) Have all of the information prepared ahead of time.

It's easier to organize and put together your attachments if you have all of the information ready to go. Gather information on the initiatives your agency conducted throughout the Challenge year for each category. You can use the How-To Guide available on the NLEC website (www.theiacp.org/NLEC) for suggestions as to what kind of material on traffic safety initiatives the evaluators are looking for.

2) Identify which, if any, Special Awards your agency will apply for.

The Special Award categories are another way for your agency to win an NLEC award. If you know ahead of time which award(s) you will apply for (besides Occupant Protection, Speed Awareness, and Impaired Driving), make sure to have the information necessary for its own attachment. If your State/Local Issue is your Special Award application, check the box on the Content & Materials PDF. Remember, in order to be considered for a Special Award, you must submit an application for the entire Challenge.

3) Aim for quality over quantity.

When you are putting together your National Law Enforcement Challenge (NLEC) application, "longer" does not always mean you will get more points. This applies to both the narrative text boxes and the attachments. The narrative summaries have a minimum of 500 characters and a maximum of 2,000 (every letter, number, symbol, and space being a character). Don't feel the need to reach the 2,000 characters cap if you write the narrative summary in 1,500; likewise, if an attachment can be completed in 8 pages instead of 10, don't find filler information for the last 2 pages.

4) Look at the sample winning applications for guidance.

Several of our winning agencies from previous years have agreed to let the IACP use their applications on the NLEC website so applicants, whether it's their first, second, or twentieth time, can look over them and see if they can glean any ideas or inspiration.

In order to be considered for a Special Award, you must submit an application for the entire National Law Enforcement Challenge.

5) Make sure the information in the narrative summaries supports its corresponding attachments (and vice versa).

The narrative summaries are there to provide evaluators an abstract of what to look for in your attachments for each category. If the summaries support the attachments and vice versa, it will make your application more organized and easier to follow.

6) **Enforcement statistics aren't outcomes.**

The Outcomes criterion provide agencies the opportunity to elaborate on the impact of the targeted enforcement on their communities. The enforcement output statistics alone from the previous section are not enough to account for both sections. Instead, ask questions such as: In what specific areas did your initiatives affect your community? Did your community feel the impact of your efforts? If so, what feedback did they provide (if any)? Are traffic violations in this category reduced?

7) **You don't have to address every example and prompt on the How-To Guide.**

The How-To Guide is an extremely useful resource for shaping your submissions into one winning application. When working through the seven criteria for each category, however, the prompts in the How-To Guide are not required questions. Instead, use them as suggestions and examples of the type of information that evaluators are looking for. Not every suggestion may apply to your agency's efforts and initiatives, so don't feel the need to address every single question. It will make your application more cluttered and harder to evaluate.

8) **Find out who your point-of-contact is for NLEC questions.**

The NLEC has designated coordinators for each state association that takes part in the Challenge at the national level. A full list of these coordinators can be found on the website. You can also contact IACP project staff at nlec@theiacp.org.

9) **Only submit the number of attachments required, within the size requirements and in the accepted file types.**

Additional attachments that go beyond the requirements for your agency's application will not be reviewed by the evaluators, and no points will be awarded. Your application should include:

- Content & Materials Fillable PDF
- One attachment for each category that includes Problem Identification, Planning, Training, Public Information and Education, Enforcement and Outcomes
- One attachment for each category for policies
- One attachment for each additional Special Award category besides Speed Awareness, Occupant Protection, Impaired Driving, and your State/Local Issue (if your State/Local Issue is a Special Award category)

Consider having another member of your agency review your application to look for consistency and clarity.

Each attachment should be no more than 10 pages/10 MB. The accepted file types are: Word (.docx), PDF (.pdf), and PowerPoint (.pptx). Be judicious and conservative in the use of photos, as some high-quality photos may push your attachments over 10 MB and make submissions difficult.

10) **First impressions count... make sure your attachments are clean and well-organized.**

A neat, clean application will make information in your attachments easier for the evaluators to look at and award points. Consider having another member of your agency review your application to look for consistency, clarity, grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.