**Procedures and Guidelines for Review of Final Reports   
for Research Projects**

The following procedures and guidelines are provided to inform research principal investigators (PIs) of the expectations of the TDOT Research Office in submitting final reports for research projects. Procedures and guidelines from several other state DOTs were reviewed as the Research Office developed their own procedures and guidelines.

**Submission of Draft Final Report:**

Prior to submission of a Final Report, the research PI is required to submit a draft final report for review. This draft should be sent to the TDOT Research Office and the TDOT Lead Staff for review prior to **120 days before** the project completion date of the research project. The draft should well-written with no grammatical errors, should be publication ready, and should be formatted according to the guidelines covered later in this document or should be written utilizing the TDOT Final Report Template.

**Review of Draft Final Report:**

As with quarterly invoices and progress reports, the TDOT Lead Staff and the TDOT Research Office review the draft final report.

The TDOT Lead Staff will conduct a technical review of the draft to ensure that the draft covers all requirements of the research project covered in the initial contract and correctly explains all technical research of the project in the manner needed from the lead staff.

The Research Office will conduct an editorial review of the draft to ensure that it meets style guidelines and is written utilizing the TDOT Final Report Template.

Once both reviews are completed, the research PI will be given a list of technical and editorial corrections required. All corrections must be made to the final report within three weeks. When the final report is submitted, the Research Office will check the final report to ensure that all corrections have been made. If all corrections have not been made, the Research Office will return the final report to the research PI for additional revision. ***Failure to complete all corrections to the final report will prevent project closure and payment of the final invoice until all changes are made.***

**Guidelines for Final Report:**

Below are formatting guidelines for the final report as well as a description of required sections of the report and optional sections of the report.

The TDOT Final Report Template will follow all formatting guidelines and will include all required sections of the report. Utilization of this template is an easy way for the research PI to ensure compliance of all guidelines. The TDOT Final Report Template directly follows these procedures and guidelines.

**Formatting Guidelines:**

* If final reports are larger than 10 MB in Word format (.docx), please send an email to [TDOT.Research@tn.gov](mailto:TDOT.Research@tn.gov) before sending the report. Either Dropbox or ownCloud, a file sharing service used by Tennessee state government, will need to be used to send reports larger than 10 MB.
* Please use 1” margins on all pages of the final report.
* Please use a font size no smaller than 11-point.
* Please use single line spacing throughout the report.
* Please use double spacing between all paragraphs throughout the report.
* Please number all interior pages.
* Please place all figures and tables in sequence with written text and number and link them appropriately in a list of figures and list of tables section.
* For those works cited in the manuscript, please include them on the reference list. Please follow APA style for the references. Refer to the Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 6th edition, or www.apastyle.org for examples and detailed information.
* Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
* Ensure Table of Contents and List of Tables/Figures match the pages in the report
* Please number each section and subsection in the report. Use 1, 2, 3, … to number the sections and 1.1, 1.2, 1.3…to number the subsections.

**Template Guidelines:**

Research PIs should use the official TDOT Final Report Template containing the following sections in the order given below. To receive copies of templates, please contact the Research Office at [TDOT.Research@tn.gov](mailto:TDOT.Research@tn.gov):

* Cover Page – Please include a clear and concise title, author(s), research agency, report date, scheduled project completion date, and sponsoring agencies.
* **TDOT Disclaimer for Final Report** – Please use proper disclaimer language in the final report. This disclaimer should include the RES number given by TDOT and the title of the research project.
* **Form DOT F 1700.7 (8-72)** – Please include this required Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Technical Report Documentation Page directly after the Cover Page.
* Acknowledgements Page (Optional) – Please include a formal acknowledgement in any presentations made on TDOT sponsored projects and notify TDOT of any publications, papers, or media attention related to a TDOT sponsored project.
* Executive Summary – Please clearly summarize and state the purpose of the research, areas evaluated, conclusions, benefits, and implementation.
* List of Acronyms – Please identify all acronyms in the final report.
* Table of Contents – Please include and properly link the table of contents to the major sections of the report.
* List of Tables – Please include if there are multiple tables in the report. Link each table to the list.
* List of Figures – Please include if there are multiple figures in the report. Link each figure to the list.
* Introduction – Please properly introduce and clearly state the purpose of the research.
* Objectives/Scope of Work – Please clearly state and define the objectives of the research and the scope of work covered with the research.
* Literature Review – Please thoroughly report findings from literature as it pertains to the research.
* Methodology/Data Analysis – Please clearly describe the research methodology used and the data analyzed.
* Findings/Deliverables – Please clearly define the deliverables of the research and the findings from the methodology/data analysis.
* Benefits to TDOT – Please thoroughly list and describe every benefit to TDOT from the research.
* Implementation – Please clearly describe how this research can be implemented to a wider group if applicable.
* Conclusion/Recommendations – Please clearly describe how the conclusions are justified from the data presented and analyzed. Please clearly state the recommendations of the research.
* References – Please completely and accurately cite all sources.
* Appendices – Please include a glossary and list of acronyms, abbreviations, and symbols in this section along with appropriate appendices that will make the final report easier to read.

***VERY IMPORTANT:***

* Please include a formal acknowledgement in any presentations made on TDOT sponsored projects and notify TDOT of any publications, papers, or media attention related to a TDOT sponsored project. The acknowledgement should state the research project has been done in conjunction with TDOT. When an article or a story appears in the media, TDOT’s Office of Customer Relations and Information often receives inquiries. It helps to let them know in advance so that they are not caught off guard and are prepared to respond.
* The quality of your report is important since it will be reviewed by FWHA professionals. Please treat your submission of the final report the same as a submission to TRB or other top peer-reviewed journals.
* Please submit your first final report draft 120 days prior to project end date.