



Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

Region 6



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Objectives

- Introductions and Overview
 - Regional staff versus Headquarters
 - Purpose and priorities of the AFG program
 - What's Hot, What's New
- Learn how to apply for AFG program funding
- Understand the AFG award process
- Improve awareness of FEMA's tools and resources for AFG applicants



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Common Application Mistakes

- **DID NOT READ THE NOFO! H priority items for H priority need!**
- Incomplete application submittal (placeholder laden)
- DUNS not registered in SAM.gov
- Equipment/Vehicles requested that do not meet the NFPA standards
- Non-compliant communication equipment request
- Excessive SCBA and PPE request
- Failing to list entire PPE inventory or the age of PPE
- Requesting items personnel are not trained to use and for which no training is requested with project
- Individual applications by regional partners duplicate the regional request
- 50% of orgs didn't ask for right items
- Over 80% of apps are started and finished in last couple of hours given almost 45 days to fill out point value of same questions could vary from year



FEMA Regions



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Our Role – Regional Grants Division

- Primary advisor to R6 leadership regarding grants management practices
- Provide technical assistance and training
- Perform program management for Preparedness grant programs
- Perform financial monitoring for all grants/grantees within the FEMA Region 6 geographical boundaries
- Work all Single Audit findings to resolution



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Your AFG Team

Regional Program Analyst

- Program technical assistance, programmatic reporting, programmatic monitoring, recommend/not recommend amendments
- Cathy Severs, cathy.severs@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 297-0210
- Andrea R. Selmon, andrea.selmon@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 222-0909
- Roberto E. Ramirez, Roberto.Ramirez@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 383-7329

HQ Program Analyst

- Programmatic authority/approval
- Monique Jones, monique.d.jones@fema.dhs.gov; (202) 212-3117

HQ Grants Management Specialist

- Financial POC, SF-425, financial monitoring, payments
- Dee Myerly, Edith.Myerly@fema.dhs.gov; (202) 786-9786



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AFG Overview



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AFG Purpose & Priorities

- The purpose of the AFG Program:
 - Enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards.
 - Competitive grant program awarded annually
 - 51,033 fire stations
 - In FY18:
 - 10,042 applications for \$310M
 - Avg application awarded is \$175-200k
 - 2500-2700 awards total average



AFG Performance Metrics

- Percentage of AFG PPE recipients who **equipped 100 percent of on-duty active members with PPE** in compliance with applicable NFPA and OSHA standards
- Percentage of AFG equipment recipients who reported that the AFG grant **brought them into compliance** with either state, local, NFPA, or OSHA standards
- Percentage of AFG award recipients who reported having successfully **replaced their fire vehicles 25 years old or older** in accordance with industry standards



FY 19 Appropriations



\$ 315,000,000



\$350,000,000



\$35,000,000



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Allocation of Funds – Statutory Requirements

Total Appropriation		315,000,000
AFG Career Fire	25.00%	78,750,000
AFG Volunteer	25.00%	78,750,000
AFG Combination	25.00%	78,750,000
AFG Open Competition	10.00%	31,500,000
FP&S	10.00%	31,500,000
M&A	5.00%	15,750,000
	100.00%	315,000,000
		-
Total Available AFG Funds		283,500,000
Vehicle	25.00%	70,875,000
Non Affiliated EMS	2.00%	5,670,000
Non Affiliated EMS-Vehicles		1,417,500
SFTAs		500,000
Total Set-Asides		78,462,500
Remaining after Set-Asides		205,037,500

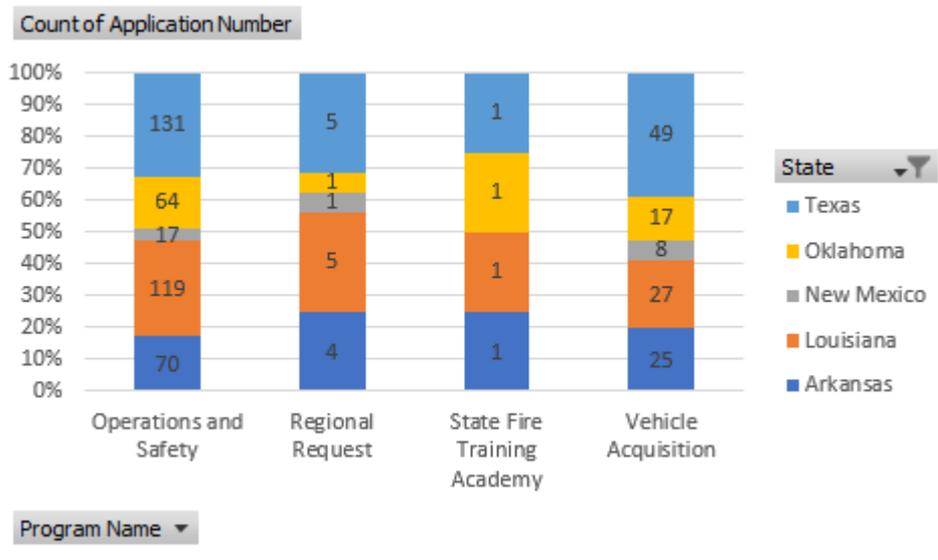
**Regional vehicles come out of the pot of money based on the HOST applicants department type*



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2018 Applications

Program Name	Arkansas	Louisiana	New Mexico	Oklahoma	Texas	Grand Total
Operations and Safety	70	119	17	64	131	401
Regional Request	4	5	1	1	5	16
State Fire Training Academy	1	1		1	1	4
Vehicle Acquisition	25	27	8	17	49	126
Grand Total	100	152	26	83	186	547



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By department type

Count of Application Number	Program Name				
Department Type	Operations and Safety	Regional Request	State Fire Training Academy	Vehicle Acquisition	Grand Total
All Paid/Career	118	3		26	147
All volunteer	154	2		65	221
Combination	120	11		33	164
Paid On-Call/Stipend	9			2	11
State Fire Training Academy			4		4
Grand Total	401	16	4	126	547



Total R6 Awards

Row Labels	Sum of Award_Amt_Fed
All Paid/Career	2,277,628
Operations and Safety	1,973,363
Regional Request	304,265
All volunteer	1,249,013
Operations and Safety	589,832
Regional Request	507,181
Vehicle Acquisition	152,000
Combination	781,489
Operations and Safety	781,489
N/A	434,783
State Fire Training Academy	434,783
Grand Total	4,742,913



What's Hot, What's New?

- SAM.gov registration
- FEMA GO – application dynamics
- MOU's – able to upload to application
- Grant writers
 - Copies of canceled checks/copies of contracts



System for Award Management

- Registering in SAM (System for Award Management) is required to submit an application
- Each organization that applies must have it's own DUNS number. This is a change from previous years. If an organization has been sharing a DUNS number with other applicants, each applicant must obtain a DUNS plus 4 number from SAM.gov
- SAM account eBiz POC is required to create a FEMA GO account. Verify your eBiz POC to register in FEMA GO
- Registration in SAM is free



Memorandum of Understanding

Regional host applicants and participating partner agencies must execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or equivalent document signed by the host and all participating organizations.

The agreement should:

- Specify the individual and mutual responsibilities
- Level of Involvement
- EIN Number of all Partners
- Proposed Distribution
- Due Before Award
 - Should have ready as early as possible



Grant Writers

- Pre-Award Expenditure Maximum of \$1,500
- Contract, Receipt ,and/or Proof of Payment Due Prior to Award
- Not Eligible if on a Contingency Basis
- Must not be suspended or debarred by Federal Government – sam.gov check



NOFO Scavenger Hunt

- What's New in FY19?
- What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety?
- What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety - Modifications to Facilities?
- What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety - Wellness & Fitness?
- What was added to Wellness and Fitness this year?
- What is max award for source capture systems per station?
- What are the facility considerations for HIGH priority Mods to Facilities projects?
- What are the HIGH priorities for Vehicles?
- What vehicle types are considered MEDIUM priority for all community types?
- What are the HIGH priorities for PPE?
- What are ineligible PPE activities?
- What must be submitted for all vehicle acquisitions?
- Is refurbished apparatus eligible under vehicle acquisitions?
- Are simulators HIGH or MEDIUM priority?
- What is the only eligible AFG activity for interoperable communications equipment?
- Is match required? How is it determined?



Activity: NOFO Scavenger Hunt

1. What's New in FY19? [Appendix A, p25](#)
2. What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety? [p30](#)
3. What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety - Modifications to Facilities? [p50](#)
4. What are the HIGH priorities for Ops & Safety - Wellness & Fitness? [p48](#)
5. What was added to Wellness and Fitness this year? [p47](#)
6. What is max award for source capture systems per station? [p50](#)
7. What are the facility considerations for HIGH priority Mod to Facilities projects? [p50](#)
8. What are the HIGH priorities for Vehicles? [p53](#)
9. What vehicle types are considered MEDIUM priority for all community types? [p54](#)
10. What are the HIGH priorities for PPE? [p44](#)
11. What are ineligible PPE activities? [p47](#)
12. What must be submitted for all vehicle acquisitions? [p55](#)
13. Is refurbished apparatus eligible under vehicle acquisitions? [p57](#)
14. Are simulators HIGH or MEDIUM priority? [p36](#)
15. What is the only eligible AFG activity for interoperable communications equip? [p42](#)
16. Is match required? How is it determined? [p5](#)



Equipment/PPE

- Purpose for requesting equipment items have been revised.
 - Obtain equipment to achieve minimum operational and deployment standards for existing missions,
 - Replace inoperable/broken/damaged to current standard,
 - Replace obsolete/non-compliant to upgraded technology,
 - Increase supply for minimum service requirement due to community growth,
 - Obtain equipment for new mission.
- Purpose for requesting PPE items have been revised.
 - Replace damaged broken inoperable equipment to current standard,
 - Replace obsolete/non-compliant to upgrade technology,
 - Increase supply for new hires and/or existing firefighters that do not have one set of turnout gear (PPE) or allocated seated positions (SCBA)



Other Changes

- Call volume is a consideration, but only between like departments.
- Age of equipment terminology changed from “medium” to “intermediate”
- Vehicle mounted exhaust systems are now listed as equipment
- Fire departments and SFTA have separate equipment lists



Top reasons for not going to panel

- Reason for purchase
- Age of equipment – median age for FY17=28 yrs
- Percent of coverage
- Compliance
- Call volume (NFIRS, every time your wheels turn)
- Facility type/Occupancy Type
- Modification type
- Trained in the proper use



Pre-Award



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FEMA Grant Process Overview

PRE-AWARD

Program Development and Eligibility

- Appropriation is enacted
- Notice of Funding Opportunity/ Program Guidance
- Development
- Risk Allocation Determination
- Grant Solicitation Posted

PRE-AWARD

Application Submission and Review

- Grant Rollout
- Application Submission
- Application Review

AWARDING

Award Determinations and Obligation

- Final Award Determinations
- Develop Award Package
- Congressional Notification
- Recipient Notification of Award
- Federal Funding Obligated in the FEMA Financial System

POST-AWARD

Program Implementation and Management

- Funding Available to Recipient through Payment Requests
- Recipient Implements Approved Projects
- Programmatic and Financial Reporting
- Grant Amendments Requested/ Approved
- Strategic and Financial Monitoring

POST-AWARD

Evaluation and Closeout

- Evaluation and Feedback
- Final Progress and Financial Status Reports
- Grant Closeout



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Pre-Award: Criteria Development

- High priority item for high priority need
 - IAFC: International Association of Fire Chiefs
 - IAFF: International Association of Firefighters
 - NVFC: National Volunteer Fire Council
 - NFPA: National Fire Protection Association
 - NASFM: National Association of State Fire Marshals
 - IAAI: International Association of Arson Investigators
 - ISFSI: International Society of Fire Service Instructors
 - NAFTD: North American Fire Training Directors
 - CFSI: Congressional Fire Services Institute



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Steps to Apply for Funding

- Step 1: Read the NOFO!!!
- Step 2: Plan and Prepare
- Step 3: Know application process and content
- Step 4: Developing the narrative
- Step 5: Review and submit



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Step 1: Notice of Funding Opportunity

- Authorization and appropriation
- Program objectives and priorities
- Eligibility
- Key dates
- Review process
- Period of performance
- Terms of the NOFO incorporated into the terms and conditions of the award



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Step 2: Plan and Prepare

- Application Checklist
 - [Assistance to Firefighters Grant Documents](#)
- Financial information and systems
 - The following financial information MUST line-up on your application and in the respective systems
 - SAM: System for Award Management Account
 - DUNS Number - universal identifier that is used for all federal assistance programs
 - FEMA Grant Outcomes (GO) Account



Who and What is Eligible?

- Fire Department
 - Fire Department Regional
 - Non-Affiliated EMS
 - Non-Affiliated EMS Regional
 - State Fire Training Academies
 - Regional Vehicle applications
 - Micro grants
 - Operations and Safety
 - Vehicle Acquisitions
 - Regional Projects
 - Management & Administration
- Unallowable:
- Construction
 - Pre-award



What do you need?

- Conduct a risk assessment by analyzing your agency's current capabilities and identify gaps
- Determine the needs and priorities of your organization (Equipment, PPE, Training, Vehicles, a Regional Project) and align with highest priorities of the program. Determine how your needs and priorities align with AFG Program priorities!!
- Square mileage of applicant's first-due response zone/jurisdiction served (whole number only)
- Be prepared to describe the critical infrastructure which the applicant is responsible for protecting



Data Collection

- Gathering call volume information
 - Calls responded to over last 3 years
 - Times per year mutual/automatic aid is received and provided
 - Number of aid responses that were structure fires



Financial Systems

- Registering with Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to obtain a unique 9-digit number is required to submit an application
- <https://www.dnb.com>
 - Should be done before applying for federal funding
 - Can be as short as 1-2 business days but plan for longer
- Help with DUNS can be found toll-free at 866-705-5711
- DUNS registration **REQUIRED** prior to registering in SAM



System for Award Management

- SAM is only active for one year and must be renewed annually
- Know your expiration date to ensure active status through grant life cycle
 - **Can expire shortly after award**
- SAM Quick Start Video
- SAM Registration Step by Step Instructions
- <https://www.sam.gov/>
- Should be done before applying for federal funding
 - Usually takes 2-4 weeks
 - Toll free number for help: 866-606-8220
 - Federal Service Help Desk <https://fsd.gov>



Other Eligibility Criteria

- NFIRS (p5)
- Cost Share/Match (p5-6)
- EHP (p13)



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National Fire Incident Reporting System

- Must report to NFIRS during entire period of performance
- If you are unsure of how your agency is reporting, you can contact the U.S. Fire Administration at 1-888-238-3358



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Match Requirements

- 15% Match for populations over 1 Million
- 10% Match for populations 20,000 to 1 Million
- 5% Match for populations under 20,000
- 5% Match for Fire Prevention and Safety

- *Match not required at time of application
- All match must be supported with source documentation
- Cost share calculator



Environmental and Historic Preservation

- All projects that involve the **installation of equipment, ground-disturbing activities, or external placement of equipment** must undergo a FEMA Environmental Planning and Historical Preservation (EHP) review
 - Air compressor/fill station/cascade system (fixed) for filling SCBA
 - Air quality systems
 - Fire/Smoke alarm systems for the facility (life safety)
 - Generators (fixed)
 - Sprinklers
 - Vehicle exhaust systems (fixed)
 - Washer/dryer/extractors
- Questions regarding EHP may be directed to the Grant Program Directorate (GPD's) EHP Branch at GPDEHPinfo@fema.dhs.gov



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Step 3: Know Application Process/Content

- Where to apply
- Application Types
- Application period (typically 30 Days)
 - Do not wait until the last minute to submit your application. There are not extensions to the application period.
- Scoring
- Application Content & Checklist – narrative gives context to the statistical data



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Where to Apply

- FEMA Grant Outcomes (FEMA GO)
 - Web-based application
 - <https://go.fema.gov>
- FEMA GO is compatible with Internet Explorer (version 11 or higher), **Firefox** (version 63 or higher), or Chrome (version 70 or higher).
- Users who attempt to use tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.
- Safari web browsers on Apple devices and MAC computers have known compatibility issues

FEMA GRANTS OUTCOMES

Welcome to FEMA Grants Outcomes!

Grants Outcomes (GO) is FEMA's new platform for submitting, approving, and managing FEMA grants.

Log in

Email

Password

[Forgot password?](#)

Log in

[Create an account](#)

FEMA employees

Insert your PIV card into your smart card reader

Log in with your PIV card

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Consent

You are about to access a Department of Homeland Security computer system. This computer system and data therein are property of the U.S. Government and provided for official U.S. Government information and use. There is no expectation of privacy when you use this computer system. The use of a password or any other security measure does not establish an expectation of privacy. By using this system, you consent to the terms set forth in this notice. You may not process classified national security information on this computer system. Access to this system is restricted to authorized users only. Unauthorized access, use, or modification of this system or of data contained herein, or in transit to/from this system, may constitute a violation of section 1030 of title 18 of the U.S. Code and other criminal laws. Anyone who accesses a Federal computer system without authorization or exceeds access authority, or obtains, alters, damages, destroys, or discloses information, or prevents authorized use of information on the computer system, may be subject to penalties, fines or imprisonment. This computer system and any related equipment is subject to monitoring for administrative oversight, law enforcement, criminal investigative purposes, inquiries into alleged wrongdoing or misuse, and to ensure proper performance of applicable security features and procedures. DHS may conduct monitoring activities without further notice.

<https://www.fema.gov/gmm-training-resources>



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Places to Obtain AFG Application

- There are several ways to get AFG application information:
 - AFGP website (<http://www.fema.gov/firegrants>)
 - Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>)
 - U.S. Fire Administration: (<https://www.usfa.fema.gov>)



Tips and Tricks

- Don't forget small checkbox at bottom of page acknowledging Sam.gov registration
- Cannot print blank application; will be able to see entire application prior to submission to FEMA
- If get lost, can go to bottom section and check status of each section
- Ensure that # of stations is completed properly throughout organization
- Operating budget - wants to know current FY, not an amount
- Time-out feature but saves automatically
- 4000 characters for narrative sections
- 500 for smaller boxes
- Don't leave zeroes
- Ask for what you need, not what you want.
- Rainy day reserves: If funds are earmarked for other things, then money is already committed. If you answer yes to this, then describe why money is not available.



What are you applying for?

- Operations & Safety
- Vehicles
- Micro grants
- Regional applications
- Non affiliated EMS
- State Fire Training Academies



Review and Selection Process

- Multi-phase
- Pre-score (50% of total score)
 - Applications are electronically pre-scored, ranked based on how well they align with funding priorities
 - Application Narratives are not reviewed during pre-score process.
- Peer Review Panel Process (50% of total score)
 - Applications with the highest pre-score rankings are then scored competitively by (no less than three) members of a Peer Reviewer Panel comprised of fire service representatives. Panelists will independently score each requested activity within the application, discuss the merits and/or shortcomings of the application with his or her peers, and document the findings. A consensus is not required. The panel score is 50 percent of the total application score.
 - Technical Evaluation Process (TEP)
 - The highest ranked applications will be considered within the fundable range. Applications that are in the fundable range will undergo both a Technical Review by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) as well as a FEMA Program Office review prior to being recommended for award. The FEMA Program Office will assess the request with respect to costs, quantities, feasibility, eligibility, and recipient responsibility prior to recommending any application for award.



Rating Your Application

- **Excellent:** The applicant clearly identifies and fully articulates the proposed achievements, which are consistent with the applicant's mission. The project's goals benefit the organization and affected personnel, and are very advantageous when compared to the costs.
- **Very Good:** An analysis of the cost benefit is given, but the applicant excludes in-depth details. The affected personnel and operational needs are somewhat identified, but some of the cost of the project is excessive. Most of the funding is geared toward the applicant's mission, but more details are needed.
- **Good:** The applicant identifies the request, but includes little detail to fully understand. The affected personnel and operational needs are somewhat identified, but lack details. The applicant's operational needs and/or how costs will address those needs are not clear.
- **Fair:** The applicant fails to define the relationship between the request and their mission and/or affected personnel. The applicant provides little to no detail to understand the benefits of the project. The costs requested are underdeveloped, excessive, and/or superfluous.
- **Poor:** The applicant does not identify, nor articulate, the benefits of the request. The applicant does not adequately address the benefits to the organization or affected personal, and does not adequately explain how they are cost efficient.



Application Content

▪ TYPES:

- ✓ Operations & Safety
- ✓ Micro Grants
- ✓ Regional Ops & Vehicle
- ✓ Vehicle
- ✓ Non-affiliated EMS
- ✓ State Fire Training Academies

▪ SECTIONS:

- ✓ Applicant Information
- ✓ Applicant Characteristics
- ✓ Operating Budget
- ✓ Applicant and Community Trends
- ✓ Community Description
- ✓ Call Volume
- ✓ Grant Request Details

Characteristics I and II – Demographics, statistical data, community, Request details, Response Area, Critical Infrastructure, Call Volume

Be sure to include all of the items you wish under the request details section. It must be included here to be funded.



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Operations and Safety Activities

- Training
- Equipment
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Wellness/Fitness
- Modifications to Facilities



Equipment

- Product lifecycles are assigned an age category of Short, Intermediate or Long to compare like types of Equipment. An application does not score higher or lower based on the product lifecycle of an item of Equipment.
- Firefighting equipment (Hose, nozzles, foam, etc.)
- Thermal Imaging Cameras
- Communications (Radios, pagers, tablets, MDT's)
 - For radios, justify the type (high/low/multiple band etc..) and the price
- EMS Equipment (Cardiac monitors, AED's, Power Stretchers, Cardiac Compression Devices, etc.)
- Rescue Equipment – HRT, Tech Rescue, etc.
- Air Refill / Cascade Systems / PPE Washers
- RIT Packs, Gear Bags and Flashlights
- Training Simulators/Props



Equipment, cont'd.

Funding Priorities that are generally rated as high must also comply with required national standards

- Extended warranties and service agreements, when offered, are eligible on all items
- Application must identify that applicant is already trained on equipment being requested OR receiving training
- If requesting training for equipment, request must be made in the Equipment activity under Additional Funding
- Additional Considerations
 - ✓ Call volume and population
 - ✓ Age of equipment being replaced based on product life cycle



PPE/SCBA's

- SCBA=Harness, face piece and 2 cylinders
- Bunker / turnout gear
- Rescue Bailout Systems
- EMS turnout gear
- Wildland turnout gear
- In order to PPE/SCBA be considered “obsolete”, it must be a minimum of two NFPA cycles and 10 years of age or older.
- SCBA's Awarded per Seated Riding Positions (need vs want)
- Higher priority given to applicants who need to purchase PPE for the first time (i.e., for new firefighters) over departments replacing old, obsolete, or substandard equipment (e.g., equipment not meeting current NFPA and OSHA standards).



PPE/SCBA's, cont'd.

- PPE: The applicant is required to include the applicant's inventory with regard to the age of their current PPE inventory
- SCBA: The applicant is required to include the applicant's current SCBA inventory with regard to NFPA standards
- PPE can be requested as a complete set or as individual pieces
- Some examples of PPE in the AFG application
 - Structural turnout gear
 - Wildland turnout gear
 - Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
- Application must identify that applicant is already trained on PPE being requested OR receiving training
- If requesting training for PPE, request must be made in the *PPE activity* under *Additional Funding*



Wellness and Fitness Activity - Priority 1

In order to be eligible for funding in the Wellness and Fitness activity, fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations must offer, or plan to offer (if the grant is awarded), all of the following Priority 1 activities:

- Periodic health screenings
- Entry physical examinations
- Immunizations
- Behavioral health programs
- Cancer screening



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Wellness and Fitness Activity - Priority 2

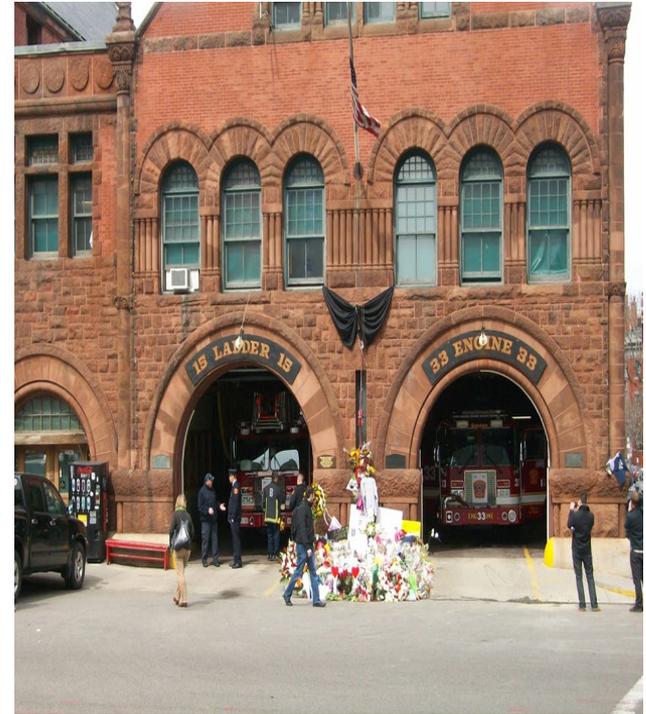
- In order to be eligible for funding in the Wellness and Fitness Priority 2 activities, fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations must offer, or plan to offer (if the grant is awarded), all of the Priority 1 activities:
- Examples of Priority 2 activities
 - Candidate physical ability evaluation
 - Formal fitness and injury prevention program/equipment
 - Injury/Illness rehab program(s)
 - IAFF or IAFC peer fitness trainer programs
 - NFPA 1583 compliance

Simultaneous requests for Priority 1 and 2 activities will be a lower priority than requests for the four Priority 1 activities.



Modification to Facilities *EHP

- Program Priorities
- Requests for direct source-capture exhaust systems, sprinkler and smoke/fire alarm systems
- Stations with sleeping quarters and occupied 24/7
- Additional Considerations
- Age of the building—older buildings receive higher priority for funding
- \$100,000.00 maximum per station



Training

- Training instruction costs, training equipment costs, and costs to pay / backfill members to attend training
- Training that brings the department into compliance with national / state standards
- Projects that benefit the highest percentage of personnel within a fire department and open to other departments in the region
- Provides the greatest training benefit
- Hands-on, instructor-led training
- Meets a national, state or DHS-adopted standard
- Training results in a national or state certification



Micro-Grants Activity

- Grants of \$50,000 or less (Federal Share)
 - Eligibility:
 - Fire Departments and Non-Affiliated EMS Agencies
 - All of the Operations and Safety Activities are eligible
 - Equipment
 - PPE
 - Training
 - Wellness and Fitness (Priority 1 Only)
 - Modification to Facilities
- Drop downs only have high priority items.
- Micro Grant counts as your one Operations and Safety Grant application.



Vehicles

- Based on leader
- Unsafe vehicles
- Replacing vehicles converted from vehicles not intended for fire service
- Replacing firefighting vehicles purchased prior to 1992 Ed. NFPA Standard 1901
- Total number of vehicle request 2450
- One quarter of all vehicle requests were to replace converted vehicles.
- Don't include the model year of the vehicle-only the age of the vehicle
- Factors:
 - Age of the vehicle being replaced
 - Existing fleet, including like vehicles
 - Open cab or converted
 - Call volume
 - Population



Regional Applications

- A regional application is one in which multiple organizations serving more than one local jurisdiction benefit directly from the activities implemented with the grant funds.
- Requires a Host; all other departments must maintain compliance
- Eligible projects:
 - Operations and Safety:
 - Training, equipment, personal protective equipment
 - Vehicle acquisition
 - MOU requirement
- NOFO: Mutual Aid: (Per NFPA 1710, 3.3.2.1 - 2010 edition and NFPA1720 - 2009) is a written intergovernmental agreement between agencies and/or jurisdictions stating that they will assist one another on request by furnishing personnel, equipment, and/or expertise in a specified manner.



Regional Applications

Eligible projects:

- Operations and Safety
 - Training, equipment, personal protective equipment
- Vehicle acquisition
- MOU requirement
- Multiple organizations (serving more than one local jurisdiction) benefit directly from the activities implemented with the grant funds



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Regional Applications - Hosts

- An Eligible Department must act as Host
 - List all participating agencies in the application
 - Required to enter EIN into the Regional Application for all participating organizations
- Include demographics and budget information for all agencies involved in the regional project
- All partner agencies must be compliant with AFG requirements
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required
- Regional Applicants are now required to enter EIN into the application for all of their participating orgs—mention so they can start collecting info.



Step 4: Developing the Narrative

- **Focus on the *needed* High priority items**
- Explain the need for and justify the requested items
- Write it so your department's needs are clear (application will be read by fellow fire service peers)
- Utilize unbiased party to review narratives
- Relate only local information—not national statistics
- Provide information that is unique to your community
- Do not use brand names



Self-Evaluation Sheets

- Designed to help you understand the four narrative questions
- [Assistance to Firefighters Grant Documents](#)
- Increase understanding of what panelists are asked to look for in your answer
- View actual scoring criteria used by the panelists



Scoring the Narrative

- Project Description and Project Budget (25%)
- Financial Need (Applicant Characteristics II) (25%)
- Cost/Benefit (25%)
- Effect on Daily Operations (25%)



Description of Organization and/or Community Served

- **NOT SCORED**
- Sets the Tone for the Panelist's Review
- Location, Size and Geography of Coverage Area
- Department – Stations, Services, Apparatus, Call Vol, etc.
- What's Happening – Growth, Decline, Development, Increasing Alarms
- Discuss things that make your Department/Community Unique
- Identify Critical Infrastructure Protected



Project Description and Budget

- Clearly identify all aspects of the project and budget
 - Problem, solution and cost
 - Describe how project aligns with program priorities
 - Demonstrate that project will be completed within one (1) year period of performance.
- Describe risk assessment
- Identify method for determining cost
 - Necessary and reasonable
- Tie the project goals to applicant department's mission



Financial Need

- Describe why you can't complete this project without the assistance of federal funds
- Compare your income to expenses in order to illustrate current funding deficiencies
- Show other attempts you have made to fund department needs
- Describe applicant's community/agency budgets
- Include financial stressors
- Be as detailed as possible
- Relevant stressors
 - Taxes
 - Grants
 - EMS billing
 - Fund drives



Cost/Benefit

- Maximize benefits – minimize costs
- Advantages of project and value it brings
- Benefits tied to department's mission
 - Firefighter and public safety
 - Decreased property loss
 - Used frequently
 - Mutual aid benefits
- Costs
 - Break down per capita



Statement of Effect

- Improve operations
- Increase department viability
- Reduce organizational risk
- Frequency of Use
- Impact on firefighter and public safety
- Other daily benefits
- demonstrate commitment to reducing fire risk
- explain code enforcement and mitigation strategies



Step 5: Review and Submittal

- Cannot make changes once submitted
- There is not a built-in RFI process
- Review application for any placeholders or incomplete fields
- Utilize unbiased party to review application
- Submit early...don't procrastinate
- Once submitted, applicant will receive a confirmation message on the application website and also a separate email
- Print copy to retain for your records



FEMA

Certifications and Assurances

- Included on Standard Form 424B now
- Acceptance of compliance with applicable federal laws, federal regulations, circulars, agency policies, program guidance, etc. Examples include the following:
 - Lobbying 31 U.S.C. 1352
 - Debarment and Suspension
 - Drug-free Workplace
 - Davis-Bacon Act
 - Hatch Act
 - Non-discrimination
 - 2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidance



Award Recommendation & Acceptance



FEMA

FEMA Grant Process Overview

PRE-AWARD

Program Development and Eligibility

- Appropriation is enacted
- Notice of Funding Opportunity/ Program Guidance
- Development
- Risk Allocation Determination
- Grant Solicitation Posted

PRE-AWARD

Application Submission and Review

- Grant Rollout
- Application Submission
- Application Review

AWARDING

Award Determinations and Obligation

- Final Award Determinations
- Develop Award Package
- Congressional Notification
- Recipient Notification of Award
- Federal Funding Obligated in the FEMA Financial System

POST-AWARD

Program Implementation and Management

- Funding Available to Recipient through Payment Requests
- Recipient Implements Approved Projects
- Programmatic and Financial Reporting
- Grant Amendments Requested/ Approved
- Strategic and Financial Monitoring

POST-AWARD

Evaluation and Closeout

- Evaluation and Feedback
- Final Progress and Financial Status Reports
- Grant Closeout



FEMA

Award Process

- Rolling award notification process
- Awards based on highest scoring applications
- Statutorily required funding limitations
- Applicant receives email from FEMA with award notification
- Applicant accepts award in FEMA GO



FEMA

Review and Selection Process

- Multi-phase
- Pre-score (50% of total score)
 - Applications are electronically pre-scored, ranked based on how well they align with funding priorities
 - Application Narratives are not reviewed during pre-score process.
- Peer Review Panel Process (50% of total score)
 - Applications with the highest pre-score rankings are then scored competitively by (no less than three) members of a Peer Reviewer Panel comprised of fire service representatives. Panelists will independently score each requested activity within the application, discuss the merits and/or shortcomings of the application with his or her peers, and document the findings. A consensus is not required. The panel score is 50 percent of the total application score.
 - Technical Evaluation Process (TEP)
 - The highest ranked applications will be considered within the fundable range. Applications that are in the fundable range will undergo both a Technical Review by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) as well as a FEMA Program Office review prior to being recommended for award. The FEMA Program Office will assess the request with respect to costs, quantities, feasibility, eligibility, and recipient responsibility prior to recommending any application for award.



Eligibility/Financial Integrity Review

- Financial stability
- Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards
- History of performance in managing Federal awards
- Reports and findings from audits
- Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements



Grant Acceptance

- Accept grant in FEMA GO
- Authorized official representative (AOR) receives notification
- All staff with grant responsibilities should read the:
 - Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
 - Award Package – Terms and Conditions **human trafficking, civil rights, etc.*
 - Award Letter
 - Award Amount & Cost-Share
 - Agreement Articles
 - Period of Performance – October 1 through September 30
 - Approved Projects & Detailed Budget
 - Obligation Document
- Grant Assurances (e.g., NIMS)



Award & Turndown Notifications

- Awards based on highest scoring applications
- Electronic pre score and peer panel score together
- Statutorily required funding limitations
- Applicant receives email from FEMA with award offer
- Rolling award notification process
- Applicant accepts award in eGrants system



FEMA

Common Application Mistakes

- Incomplete application submittal (placeholder laden)
- DUNS not registered in SAM.gov
- Banking information not matching (1199A Direct Deposit Form)
- Equipment/Vehicles requested that do not meet the NFPA standards
- Non-compliant communication equipment request
- Excessive SCBA and PPE request
- Requesting items that are not high funding priorities
- Failing to list entire PPE inventory or the age of PPE
- Requesting items personnel are not trained to use and for which no training is requested with project
- Individual applications by regional partners duplicate the regional request



Top reasons for not going to panel

- Didn't read directions
- Over 80% of apps are started and finished in last couple of hours
- Reason for purchase
- 50% of orgs didn't ask for right items
- Age of equipment – median age for FY17=28 yrs
- Percent of coverage
- Compliance
- Call volume (NFIRS, every time your wheels turn)
- Facility type/Occupancy Type
- Modification type
- Trained in the proper use



Age

- Age to be paneled is determined by leader within a group of top performing like departments. This also applies to call volume.
- PPE (will start with depts that have zero compliant gear)
- Vehicles
- Equipment product lifecycles are assigned an age category of Short (5-7 years), Intermediate (8-14 years), or Long (15-20 years). These age categories are used to compare like types of equipment of a similar age category.



Post-Award



FEMA

FEMA Grant Process Overview

PRE-AWARD

Program Development and Eligibility

- Appropriation is enacted
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- Development
- Risk Allocation Determination
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PRE-AWARD

Application Submission and Review

- Grant Rollout
- Application Submission
- Application Review

AWARDING

Award Determinations and Obligation

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POST-AWARD

Program Implementation and Management

- Funding Available to Recipient through Payment Requests
- Recipient Implements Approved Projects
- Programmatic and Financial Reporting
- Grant Amendments Requested/ Approved
- Strategic and Financial Monitoring

POST-AWARD

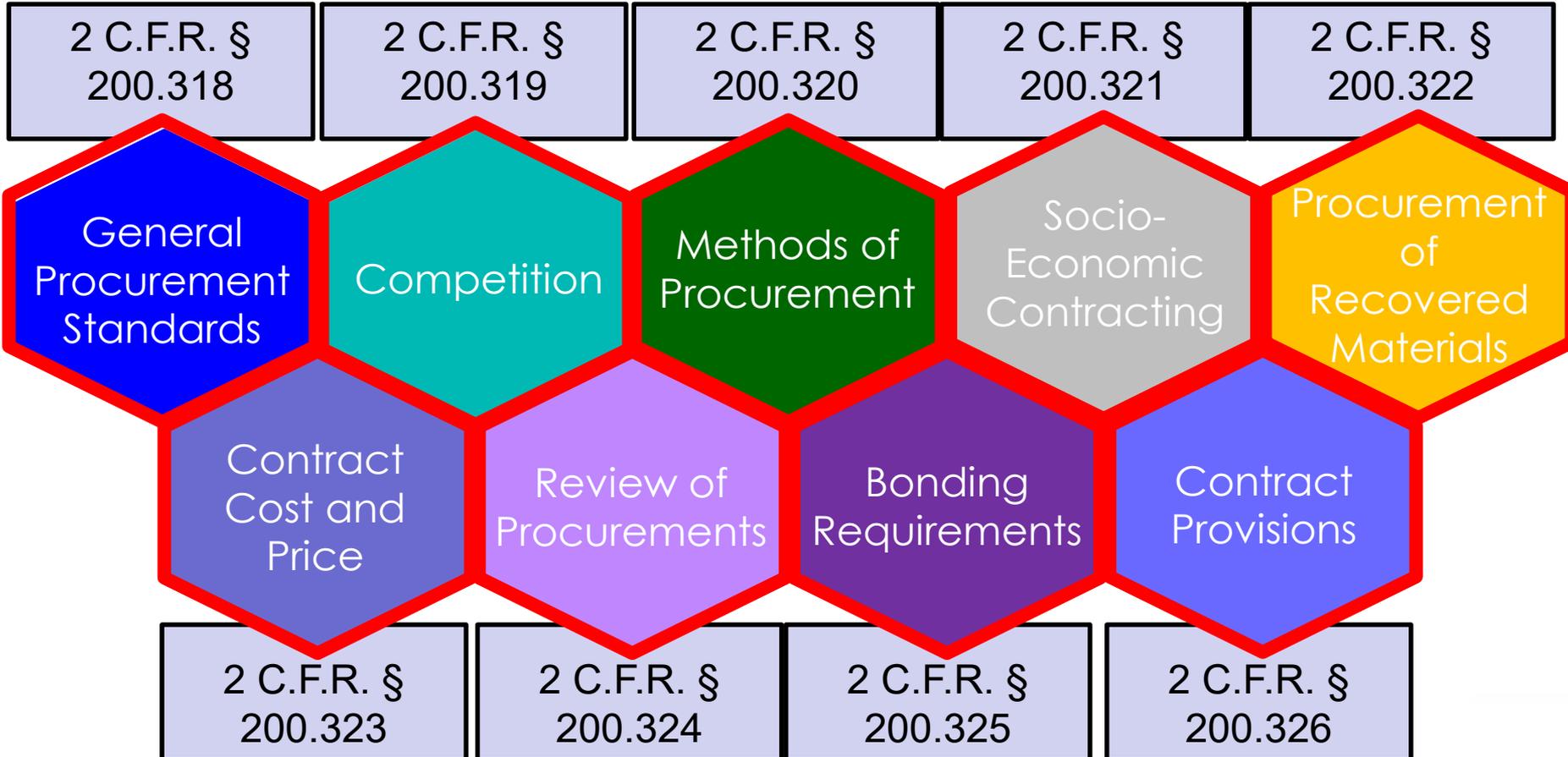
Evaluation and Closeout

- Evaluation and Feedback
- Final Progress and Financial Status Reports
- Grant Closeout



FEMA

Overview of Procurement Standards



Procurement

- Know your local procurement policies
- Start early with product research and pricing estimates
 - Initial market research & pricing should be conducted prior to submitting your application
 - Prepare bid specifications before you receive an award if possible
- Be VERY mindful of vendor relationships that may result in a conflict of interest



Types of Monitoring

Monitoring is a partnership; not an audit.

Quarterly/Semi-Annual Cash Analysis:

- Internal review of most recent financial report and our federal financial system

Quarterly/Semi-Annual Performance Report Review:

- Internal review of most recent performance reports

First Line Review:

- Internal risk assessment to determine the need for additional monitoring

Desk Reviews:

- Financial or Programmatic
- Office-based verification of compliance
- Requires documentation submission to federal reviewer

Site Visits:

- Financial or Programmatic
- On-site direct contact with stakeholders
- Visual review of operations, inventory, procedures and performance sites



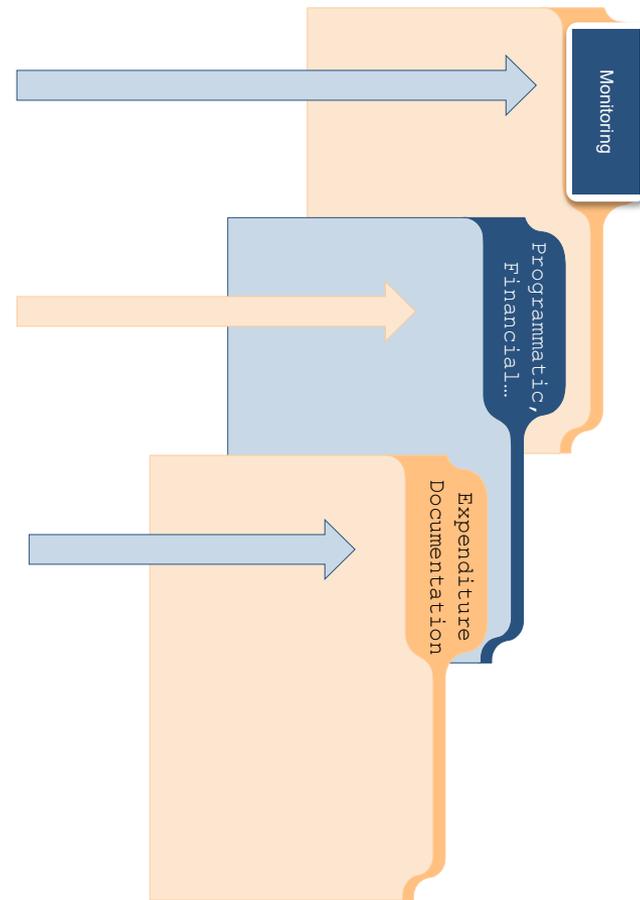
Common Audit Findings

- Inadequate written policies and procedures
- Lack of subrecipient monitoring or monitoring plan
- EHP non-compliance
- Procurement Issues
- Inadequate accounting procedures
- Period of Performance expiration
- Failure to manage audit results
- Inventory management deficiencies



Grant File Creation

1. Application
2. Award Package
3. Amendments
4. Performance and Financial Reports
5. Expenditure Source Documentation
6. Policies and Procedures
7. Indirect Cost Rate Agreements
8. Audits and Corrective Action Plans (CAP) – must be uploaded to Federal Audit Clearinghouse
9. Correspondence
10. Sub-Recipient Grant Information



Visual 7.24



FEMA

Grant Management Tips

- Get organized!
- Maintain adequate written procedures and policies
- Sam.gov
- Timely Reporting
- Ensure POCs are updated
- Obtain and document EHP Approval
- Manage and monitor project activity and progress
- Inventory Management
- Maintain adequate financial system:
 - Clear financial paper trail
 - Associate grant expenditures to a specific funding source
 - Maintain Source Documentation
 - Manage cash effectively



Resources



FEMA

Your AFG Team

Regional Program Analyst

- Program technical assistance, programmatic reporting, programmatic monitoring, recommend/not recommend amendments
- Cathy Severs, cathy.severs@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 297-0210
- Andrea R. Selmon, andrea.selmon@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 222-0909
- Roberto E. Ramirez, Roberto.Ramirez@fema.dhs.gov; (940) 383-7329

HQ Program Analyst

- Programmatic authority/approval
- Monique Jones, monique.d.jones@fema.dhs.gov; (202) 212-3117

HQ Grants Management Specialist

- Financial POC, SF-425, financial monitoring, payments
- Dee Myerly, Edith.Myerly@fema.dhs.gov; (202) 786-9786



Applicant Support & Resources

- Help Desk Phone #: 1-866-274-0960
- Help Desk E-Mail: firegrants@dhs.gov
- AFG Website: www.fema.gov/firegrants
 - ✓ Application Checklist
 - ✓ Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
 - ✓ Get Ready Guide
 - ✓ Application Webinar Schedule: [Webinar Schedule Page](#)
 - ✓ Cost Share Calculator
 - ✓ Self Evaluation Sheets
 - ✓ <https://www.fema.gov/assistance-firefighters-grants-documents>
- DHS OIG Hotline: DHSOIGHOTLINE@dhs.gov
- DUNS Number: <https://www.dnb.com>
- Sam.Gov: <https://www.sam.gov/>; help desk: <https://fsd.gov>
- Environmental & Historic Preservation (EHP) Inbox: GPDEHPinfo@fema.dhs.gov
- FEMA GO (Application Portal): <https://go.fema.gov>
- FEMA GO User Guides: <https://www.fema.gov/gmm-training-resources>



FEMA

Help FEMA prevent Fraud, Waste and Abuse

- If applicants or recipients have information about instances of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement involving FEMA programs or operations, they should contact the DHS OIG Hotline
 - 1-(800) 323-8603
 - By fax at (202) 254-4297
 - Email DHSOIGHOTLINE@dhs.gov



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Questions



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