The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Fiscal Year 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program

NOTE: If you are going to apply for this funding opportunity and have not obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and/or are not currently registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), please take immediate action to obtain a DUNS Number, if applicable, and then to register immediately in SAM. It may take four weeks or more after you submit your SAM registration before your registration is active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize your information. Information on obtaining a DUNS number and registering in SAM is available from Grants.gov at: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. Detailed information regarding DUNS and SAM is also provided in Section D – Application and Submission Information of this NOFO, subsection, Content and Form of Application Submission. An active registration is required in order to apply for funding.

A. Program Description

1. **Issued By**
   Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Grant Programs Directorate (GPD)

2. **Assistance Listings (formerly Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number)**
   97.044

3. **Assistance Listings Title (formerly CFDA Title)**
   Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)

4. **Funding Opportunity Title**
   FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant

5. **Funding Opportunity Number**
   DHS-20-GPD-044-00-98

6. **Authorizing Authority for Program**
   Section 33 of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, Pub. L. No. 93-498, as amended (15 U.S.C § 2229) https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2018-title15/pdf/USCODE-2018- title15-chap49-sec2229.pdf

7. **Appropriation Authority for Program**
   Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. No. 116-93) https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-116publ93/pdf/PLAW-116publ93.pdf

8. **Announcement Type**
   Initial

9. Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

Overview

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The AFG Program accomplishes this by providing financial assistance directly to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTAs) for critical training and equipment. The AFG Program represents one part of a comprehensive set of measures authorized by Congress and implemented by DHS. Among the five basic homeland security missions noted in the DHS Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, the AFG Program supports the goal to Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience. In awarding grants, the FEMA Administrator is required to consider the following:

- The findings and recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP);
- The degree to which an award will reduce deaths, injuries, and property damage by reducing the risks associated with fire related and other hazards;
- The extent of an applicant's need for an AFG Program grant and the need to protect the United States as a whole; and
- The number of calls requesting or requiring a firefighting or emergency medical response received by an applicant.

The 2018-2022 FEMA Strategic Plan creates a shared vision for the field of emergency management and sets an ambitious, yet achievable, path forward to unify and further professionalize emergency management across the country. The AFG Program supports the goal of Readying the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters. We invite all of our stakeholders and partners to also adopt these priorities and join us in building a stronger Agency and a more prepared and resilient Nation.

Objectives

The objectives of the AFG Program are to provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

Priorities

Information on program priorities and objectives for the FY 2020 AFG Program can be found in Appendix B, FY 2020 AFG Programmatic Information and Priorities.

10. Performance Metrics

The grant recipient is required to collect data to allow FEMA to measure performance of the awarded grant in support of the AFG Program metrics, which are tied to the programmatic objectives and priorities. In order to measure performance, FEMA may request information throughout the period of performance. In its final performance report submitted at closeout, the recipient must submit sufficient information to demonstrate it has met the performance goal as stated in its award. FEMA will measure the recipient's performance of the grant by comparing the number of items, supplies, projects, and activities needed and requested in its application with the number of items, supplies, projects, and activities acquired and delivered by the end of the period of performance using the following programmatic metrics:

- Percentage of AFG Program personal protective equipment (PPE) recipients who equipped 100 percent of on-duty active members with PPE in compliance with applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.
- Percentage of AFG Program equipment recipients who reported that the grant award brought them into compliance with either state, local, NFPA, or OSHA standards.
- Percentage of AFG Program grant recipients who reported having successfully replaced their fire vehicles in accordance with industry standards.
- Percentage of AFG Program training recipients who reported that the grant award allows their members to achieve firefighter training level I and firefighter training level II within one year of coming into service.
- Percentage of AFG Program wellness and fitness recipients who reported that the grant award allows their members to achieve minimum physical and/or mental operational readiness requirements through tailored health-related fitness programs.
- Percentage of AFG Program modifications to facilities recipients who reported that the grant award brought them into compliance with either state, local, NFPA, or OSHA standards on housing and readiness posture.

B. Federal Award Information

1. Available Funding for the NOFO: **$319,500,000.00**[1]

2. Projected number of Awards: **2,000**

[1] Note that this figure differs from the total amount appropriated under the *Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act*, 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-93. In this FY 2020 AFG NOFO, percentages of "*available grant funds*" refers to the total amount appropriated—$355,000,000—by Pub. L. No. 116-93 to meet the statutory requirements of § 33 of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, as amended (codified at 15 U.S.C. § 2229). A portion of these "available grant funds" will be allocated to the Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) program, which will have a separate NOFO and application period. $35,500,000 will be allocated to FP&S for FY 2020.

3. **Period of Performance:** Twenty-four months from the date of award.

   Extensions to the period of performance are allowed. For additional information on period of performance extensions, refer to Section H.

   FEMA awards only include one budget period, so it will be same as the period of performance. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.1 for definitions of "budget period" and "period of performance."

4. **Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s):** **May 1, 2021** (will vary based on award date)

5. **Projected Period of Performance End Date(s):** **April 30, 2023** (will vary based on Period of Performance Start Date)

6. **Funding Instrument Type:** **Grant**

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

a. ***Fire Departments:*** Fire departments operating in any of the 50 states, as well as fire departments in the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,[2] or any federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization. A fire department is an agency or organization having a formally recognized arrangement with a state, local, tribal, or territorial authority (city, county, parish, fire district, township, town, or other governing body) to provide fire suppression to a population within a geographically fixed primary first due response area.

b. ***Nonaffiliated EMS organizations:*** Nonaffiliated EMS organizations operating in any of the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,[2] or any federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization. A nonaffiliated EMS organization is an agency or organization that is a public or private nonprofit emergency medical service entity providing medical transport that is not affiliated with a hospital and does not serve a geographic area in which emergency medical services are adequately provided by a fire department. FEMA considers the following as hospitals under the AFG Program:

- Clinics
- Medical centers
- Medical college or university

[2] The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are all defined as "States" in the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974. *See* 15 U.S.C. § 2203(10).

- Infirmary
- Surgery centers
- Any other institution, association, or foundation providing medical, surgical, or psychiatric care and/or treatment for the sick or injured.

c. ***State Fire Training Academies:*** A SFTA operates in any of the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.[2] Applicants must be designated either by legislation or by a Governor's declaration as the sole fire service training agency within a state, territory, or the District of Columbia. The designated SFTA shall be the only agency, bureau, division, or entity within that state, territory, or the District of Columbia, to be an eligible SFTA applicant under the AFG Program.

2. Eligible Activities

The FY 2020 AFG Program has three activities:

- Operations and Safety
- Vehicle Acquisition
- Regional Projects

Each activity has its own eligibility requirements. These requirements are outlined in Appendix B: Programmatic Information and Priorities.

3. Other Eligibility Criteria

a. National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

NFIRS reporting is not a requirement to apply for any AFG Program; however, fire departments that receive funding under this program must agree to provide information to the NFIRS for the period covered by the assistance. If a recipient does not currently participate in the incident reporting system and does not have the capacity to report at the time of the award, that recipient must agree to provide information to the system for a 12-month period commencing as soon as possible after they develop the capacity to report. Capacity to report to NFIRS must be established prior to the termination of the two-year performance period. The recipient may be asked by FEMA to provide proof of compliance in reporting to NFIRS. Any recipient that stops reporting to NFIRS during their grant's period of performance may be subject to the remedies for noncompliance at 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, unless it has yet to develop the capacity to report to NFIRS, as described above. There is no NFIRS reporting requirement for nonaffiliated EMS organizations or SFTAs.

Note: Although data collection is an important tool for understanding and justifying assistance, participation in other data sources, (e.g., National Fire Operations Reporting System [NFORS]) does not satisfy the requirement for reporting to NFIRS.

b. National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation

AFG Program applicants are not required to comply with NIMS to apply for AFG Program funding or to receive an AFG Program award. Any applicant who receives an FY 2020 AFG Program award must achieve the level of NIMS compliance required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) over the applicant's emergency service operations (e.g., a local government), prior to the end of the grant's period of performance.

4. **Maintenance of Effort (MOE)**

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 2229(k)(3), an applicant seeking an AFG Program grant shall agree to maintain, during the term of the grant, the applicant's aggregate expenditures relating to activities allowable under this NOFO, at not less than 80 percent of the average amount of such expenditures in the two fiscal years prior to the fiscal year an AFG Program grant is awarded.

In other words, an applicant agrees that if it receives a grant award, the applicant will keep its overall expenditures during the award's period of performance (including those funded with non-Federal funding) for activities that could be allowable costs under this NOFO at a level that is at least 80 percent or more of the average of what the applicant spent on such costs for those activities in fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

5. **Cost Share or Match**

Recipient cost sharing is generally required as described below and pursuant to 15 U.S.C.§ 2229(k)(1). In general, eligible applicants shall agree to make available non-federal funds to carry out an AFG Program award in an amount equal to and not less than 15 percent of the grant awarded. Exceptions to this general requirement apply to entities serving smaller communities as follows:

- When serving a jurisdiction of 20,000 residents or fewer, the applicant shall agree to make available non-federal funds in an amount equal to not less than 5 percent of the grant awarded;
- When serving a jurisdiction of more than 20,000 residents, but not more than 1 million residents, the applicant shall agree to make available non-federal funds in an amount equal to not less than 10 percent of the grant awarded;
- When serving a jurisdiction of more than 1 million residents, the applicant shall agree to make available non-federal funds in an amount equal to not less than 15 percent of the grant awarded.

The cost share for SFTAs will apply the requirements above based on the total population of the state. The cost share for a Regional application will apply the requirements above based on the aggregate population of the primary first due response areas of the Host and participating partner organizations that execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as described in Appendix B, Section J, Regional projects.

FEMA has developed a cost share calculator tool in order to assist applicants with determining their cost share. The cost share tool is available at: https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/firefighters/assistance-grants.

Types of Cost Share

i. ***Cash (Hard Match):*** Cost share of non-federal cash is the only allowable recipient contribution for AFG Program activity (Vehicle Acquisition, Operations and Safety, and Regional).

ii. ***Trade-In Allowance/Credit:*** On a case-by-case basis, FEMA may allow recipients already owning assets acquired with non-federal cash to use the trade-in allowance/credit value of those assets as cash for the purpose of meeting their cost share obligation. For FEMA to consider a trade-in allowance/credit value as cash, the allowance amount must be reasonable, and the allowance amount must be a separate entry clearly identified in the acquisition documents.

iii. ***In-kind (Soft Match):*** In-kind cost share is not allowable for the AFG Program.

The award budget will not account for any voluntary committed cost sharing or overmatch. The use of an overmatch is not given additional consideration when scoring applications.

Economic Hardship Waivers
The FEMA Administrator may waive or reduce recipient cost share or MOE requirements in cases of demonstrated economic hardship. Please see Appendix C: Award Administration Information for additional information.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Key Dates and Times: all times listed are Eastern Time (ET)

Date Posted to Grants.gov:	December 29, 2020
Application Start Date:	January 04, 2021 at 8 a.m.
Application Submission Deadline:	February 12, 2021 at 5 p.m.

All applications must be received by the established deadline.

FEMA's Grants Outcomes System (FEMA GO) automatically records proof of timely submission and the system generates an electronic date/time stamp when FEMA GO successfully receives the application. The individual with the Authorized Organization Representative role that submitted the application will also receive the official date/time stamp and a FEMA GO tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission. For additional information on how an applicant will be notified of application receipt, see the subsection titled "Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission" in Section D of this NOFO.

FEMA will not review applications that are received after the deadline or consider these late applications for funding. FEMA may, however, extend the application deadline on request for any applicant who can demonstrate that good cause exists to justify extending the deadline. Good cause for an extension may include technical

problems outside of the applicant's control that prevent submission of the application by the deadline, other exigent or emergency circumstances, or statutory requirements for FEMA to make an award.

Applicants experiencing technical problems outside of their control must notify FEMA as soon as possible and before the application deadline. Failure to timely notify FEMA of the issue that prevented the timely filing of the application may preclude consideration of the award. "Timely notification" of FEMA means the following: prior to the application deadline and within 48 hours after the applicant became aware of the issue.

If applicants experience technical issues, they must notify the FEMA GO Helpdesk as soon as possible. The FEMA GO Helpdesk can be reached at (877) 585-3242 or by e-mail at femago@fema.dhs.gov. The FEMA GO Helpdesk is open Monday through Friday, 8: a.m. – 6 p.m. ET.

A list of FEMA contacts can be found in Section G of this NOFO, "DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information." For programmatic or grants management questions, please contact your Program Analyst or Grants Management Specialist. If applicants do not know who to contact or if there are programmatic questions or concerns, please contact the AFG Helpdesk at 866-274-0960 or by e-mail at firegrants@fema.dhs.gov. The AFG Helpdesk is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM ET.

Anticipated Funding Selection Date: April 30, 2021

Anticipated Award Date: Beginning on approximately April 30, 2021 and continuing thereafter until all FY 2020 AFG Program grant awards are issued (but no later than September 30, 2021).

Other Key Dates

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Obtaining DUNS Number	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Obtaining a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN)	Eight weeks before actual submission deadline
Registering in or Updating SAM registration	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Registering Organization in FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO) System	Prior to beginning application
Submitting complete application in FEMA GO	One week before actual submission deadline

2. **Agreeing to Terms and Conditions of the Award**
   By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to comply with the requirements of this NOFO and the terms and conditions of its award, should the applicant receive an

award.

3. **Address to Request Application Package**
The online FY 2020 AFG Program application is only available via the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program's FEMA GO application portal, at https://go.fema.gov.

Note: Hard copies of the application are not available. However, the Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) and/or Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) number available for this Notice is (800) 462-7585.

Content and Form of Application Submission
FEMA will process applications through FEMA GO. Application tutorials and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) explain the current AFG Program, assist with the online grant application, and highlight lessons learned and changes for FY 2020. For more details, please visit the AFG Program website at http://www.fema.gov/firegrants.

DHS makes all funding opportunities available on the internet, accessible at http://www.grants.gov. If applicants experience difficulties accessing information or have any questions, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at (800) 518-4726.

The Grants.gov website will direct applicants to FEMA GO, at https://go.fema.gov, which contains the online AFG Program application. The online AFG Program application incorporates all required forms.

FEMA GO will allow the applicant's authorized representative(s) to log in and create their own account. This account is specific to the authorized user and must not be shared with other personnel. The FEMA GO account is separate from any previous accounts created in the eGrants system. Applicants can save, retrieve, update, and revise their work through the end of the application period. The automated system does not allow applicants to submit incomplete applications. The system alerts applicants when required information has not been entered. Prior to final submission, an online application may be saved, retrieved, or edited up to the application deadline.

Note: FEMA GO will support only the most recent major release of the following browsers:

- Google Chrome
- Internet Explorer
- Mozilla Firefox
- Apple Safari
- Microsoft Edge

Users who attempt to use tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.

NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE RELEASED BACK TO THE APPLICANT AFTER FINAL SUBMISSION

After the application period has ended, no changes can be made. There is no appeal process for inaccurate or incomplete information.

a. Standard Required Application Forms and Information

The following forms or information are required to be submitted via FEMA GO. The Standard Forms (SF) are also available at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html.

- **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**
- **Grants.gov Lobbying Form, Certification Regarding Lobbying**
- **SF-424A, Budget Information (Non-Construction)**
- **SF-424B, Standard Assurances (Non-Construction)**
- **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
- **Indirect Cost Agreement or Proposal** if the budget includes indirect costs and the applicant is required to have an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal. If the applicant does not have or is not required to have an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal, please see the "Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs" section of this NOFO for further information regarding allowability of indirect costs and whether alternatives to an indirect cost rate agreement or proposal might be available, or contact the relevant FEMA staff identified in Section G of this NOFO, "DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information" for further instructions.

b. Program-Specific Required Forms and Information

For program-specific required and optional forms and information, please see the appendices to this NOFO.

4. Steps Required to Obtain a Unique Identifier, Register in the System for Award Management (SAM), and Submit an Application

Applying for an award under this program is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Applicants are encouraged to register early as the registration process can take four weeks or more to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required submission deadlines.

Please review the table above for estimated deadlines to complete each of the steps listed. Failure of an applicant to comply with any of the required steps before the deadline for submitting an application may disqualify that application from funding.

To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

a. Apply for, update, or verify their Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service;
b. In the application, provide a valid DUNS number, which is currently the unique entity identifier;

c. Have an account with login.gov;
d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application;
e. Register in FEMA GO, add the organization to the system, and establish the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). The organization's electronic business point of contact (EBiz POC) from the SAM registration may need to be involved in this step. For step-by-step instructions, see https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/181607;
f. Submit the complete application in FEMA GO; and
g. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. As part of this, applicants must also provide information on an applicant's immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

Applicants are advised that FEMA may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when FEMA is ready to make a federal award. Further, applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which the applicant has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by any federal awarding agency. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, FEMA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Per 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(c)(2)(ii), if an applicant is experiencing exigent circumstances that prevents it from receiving a DUNS number and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a federal award, the applicant must notify FEMA as soon as possible by contacting askcsid@fema.dhs.gov and providing the details of the circumstances that prevent completion of these requirements. If FEMA determines that there are exigent circumstances and FEMA has decided to make an award, the applicant will be required to obtain a DUNS number and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the federal award date.

Electronic Delivery

DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. DHS encourages or requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov, depending on the funding opportunity. For this funding opportunity, FEMA requires applicants to submit applications through FEMA GO.

5. How to Register to Apply

a. ***General Instructions:***

Registering and applying for an award under this program is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Read the instructions below about registering to apply for FEMA funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. To ensure an application meets the deadline, applicants are advised to start the required steps well in advance of their submission.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, Employer Identification Number (EIN), and an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration.

b. ***Obtain a DUNS Number*:**

All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html.

Note: At some point, the DUNS Number will be replaced by a "new, non-proprietary identifier" requested in, and assigned by, SAM.gov. This new identifier is being called the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), or the Entity ID. Grants.gov has begun preparing for this transition by educating users about the upcoming changes and updating field labels and references to the DUNS Number (the current identifier) within the Grants.gov system. Users should continue using the DUNS Number in UEI fields until further notice. To learn more about SAM's rollout of the UEI, please visit https://gsa.gov/entityid.

c. Obtain Employer Identification Number

In addition to having a DUNS number, all entities applying for funding must provide an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The EIN can be obtained from the IRS by visiting https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online.

d. Create a login.gov account:

Applicants must have a login.gov account in order to register with SAM or update their SAM registration. Applicants can create a login.gov account here: https://secure.login.gov/sign_up/enter_email?request_id=34f19fa8-14a2-438c-8323-a62b99571fd3.

Applicants only have to create a login.gov account once. For applicants that are existing SAM users, use the same email address for the login.gov account as with SAM.gov so that the two accounts can be linked.

For more information on the login.gov requirements for SAM registration, refer to: https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/loginFAQ.jsf.

e. *Register with SAM*:

In addition to having a DUNS number, all organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html.

Note: As a new requirement per 2 C.F.R. § 25.200, applicants must also provide the applicant's immediate and highest-level owner, subsidiaries, and predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

***i.* Additional SAM Reminders**

Existing SAM.gov account holders should check their account to make sure it is "ACTIVE." SAM registration should be completed at the very beginning of the application period and should be renewed annually to avoid being "INACTIVE." **Please allow plenty of time before the grant application submission deadline to obtain a DUNS number and then to register in SAM. It may be four weeks or more after an applicant submits the SAM registration before the registration is active in SAM, and then it may be an additional 24 hours before FEMA's system recognizes the information.**

It is imperative that the information applicants provide is correct and current. Please ensure that your organization's name, address, DUNS number, and Employer Identification Number, or EIN, are up to date in SAM and that the DUNS number used in SAM is the same one used to apply for all other FEMA awards. Payment under any FEMA award is contingent on the recipient's having a current SAM registration.

ii. Help with SAM

The SAM quick start guide for new recipient registration and SAM video tutorial for new applicants are tools created by the General Services Administration (GSA) to assist those registering with SAM. If applicants have questions or concerns about a SAM registration, please contact the Federal Support Desk at https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do or call toll free (866) 606-8220.

f. Register in FEMA GO, Add the Organization to the System, and Establish the AOR:

Applicants must register in FEMA GO and add their organization to the system. The organization's electronic business point of contact (EBiz POC) from the SAM registration may need to be involved in this step. For step-by-step instructions, see https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/181607.

Note: FEMA GO will support only the most recent major release of the following browsers:

- Google Chrome
- Internet Explorer
- Mozilla Firefox
- Apple Safari
- Microsoft Edge

Users who attempt to use tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.

6. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be completed in FEMA GO and received by February 12, 2021 at 5 p.m. ET. FEMA GO automatically records proof of timely submission and the system generates an electronic date/time stamp when FEMA GO successfully receives the application. The individual with the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role that submitted the application will also receive the official date/time stamp and a FEMA GO tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission on the date and time that FEMA GO received the application. Applications received by FEMA GO after the established due date for applications will be considered late and not considered for funding.

Applicants who experience system-related issues will be addressed until 3 p.m. ET on the date applications are due. No new system-related issues will be addressed after this deadline.

Applicants using slow internet connections, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before FEMA GO receives your application. FEMA GO will provide either an error message or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the AOR that submitted the application. The FEMA GO Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Do not do this. It may cause your application to fail to be submitted and consequently not be considered for funding. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

7. Intergovernmental Review

An intergovernmental review may be required. Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under Executive Order 12372 (see https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-

-order/12372.html; https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/spoc_1_16_2020.pdf).

8. Funding Restrictions and Allowable Costs

All costs charged to awards covered by this NOFO must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, unless otherwise indicated in the NOFO, or the terms and conditions of the award. This includes, among other requirements, that costs must be incurred, and products and services must be delivered, within the period of performance of the award. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.403(h) (referring to budget periods, which for FEMA awards is the same as the period of performance).

In general, the Cost Principles establish standards for the allowability of costs, provide detailed guidance on the cost accounting treatment of costs as direct or administrative costs, and set forth allowability principles for selected items of cost. More specifically, except as otherwise stated in this NOFO, the terms and condition of an award, or other program materials, costs charged to awards covered by this NOFO must be consistent with the Cost Principles for Federal Awards located at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E. In order to be allowable, all costs charged to a FEMA award or applied to the cost share must be reasonable in nature and amount and allocable to the particular FEMA award.

Additionally, all costs charged to awards must comply with the grant program's applicable statutes, policies, requirements in this NOFO as well as with the terms and conditions of the award. If FEMA staff identify costs that are inconsistent with any of these requirements, these costs may be disallowed, and FEMA may recover funds as appropriate, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

As part of those requirements, grant recipients and subrecipients may only use federal funds or funds applied to a cost share for the purposes set forth in this NOFO and the terms and conditions of the award, and those costs must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award.

Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other federal grants/cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity.

Additionally, federal employees are prohibited from serving in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on the development of any proposal submitted under this program.

In addition to the subsections below, please see Appendix B to this NOFO for additional information on funding restrictions and allowable costs.

a. Prohibitions on Expending FEMA Award Funds for Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services

Recipients and subrecipients of FEMA federal financial assistance are subject to the

prohibitions described in section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (FY 2019 NDAA), Pub. L. No. 115-232 (2018) and 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.216, 200.326, 200.471, and Appendix II to 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Beginning August 13, 2020, the statute – as it applies to FEMA recipients, subrecipients, and their contractors and subcontractors – prohibits obligating or expending federal award funds on certain telecommunications and video surveillance products and contracting with certain entities for national security reasons.

FEMA will issue additional guidance in a forthcoming Interim Policy.

Effective August 13, 2020, FEMA recipients and subrecipients **may not** use any FEMA funds under open or new awards to:

(1) Procure or obtain any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology of any system;

(2) Enter into, extend, or renew a contract to procure or obtain any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology of any system; or

(3) Enter into, extend, or renew contracts with entities that use covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system.

i. Replacement Equipment and Services

FEMA grant funding may be permitted to procure replacement equipment and services impacted by this prohibition, provided the costs are otherwise consistent with the requirements of the NOFO and the Preparedness Grants Manual.

ii. Definitions

Per section 889(f)(2)-(3) of the FY 2019 NDAA and 2 C.F.R. § 200.216, covered telecommunications equipment or services means:

i. Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation, (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
ii. For the purpose of public safety, security of Government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
iii. Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment; or

iv. Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the People's Republic of China.

Examples of the types of products covered by this prohibition include phones, internet, video surveillance, and cloud servers when produced, provided, or used by the entities listed in the definition of "covered telecommunications equipment or services." *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.471.

b. Construction

Construction costs are *not eligible* under the AFG Program grants. Construction includes major alterations to a building that changes the profile or footprint of the structure. Modifications to facilities activities described in Appendix A *Funding Priorities*, are not considered construction costs for purposes of general award cost categorization and may be eligible. However, modifications to facilities activities might be considered "construction" for purposes of applicable procurement under grants requirements or environmental protection and historic preservation purposes.

c. Pre-award Costs

Generally, grant funds cannot be used to pay for products and services contracted for or obligated prior to the effective date of the award. Fees for grant writers are considered an exception and may be included as a pre-award expenditure. Further, other costs incurred after the application deadline, but prior to an offer of award, may be eligible for reimbursement only if the following conditions are met:

- The recipient must request approval from FEMA to incur such pre-award costs. Requests must be sent via email to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov and include the application number and justification narrative. Please note, the recipient must seek approval at the time of acquisition and before the award is announced.
- The recipient must receive confirmation from FEMA that the expenses have been reviewed and that FEMA has determined the costs to be justified, unavoidable, and consistent with the grant's scope of work.
- See also Appendix C for further information regarding grant writer fees and the "Additional Information" section of this NOFO for general procurement under grants requirements.

d. *Fire Departments and Nonaffiliated EMS organizations*

The total amount of funding a fire department or nonaffiliated EMS organization recipient may receive under an AFG Program award is limited to the maximum amounts set by § 33(c)(2) of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, as amended (15 U.S.C. § 2229(c)(2)). These award limits are based on two factors: population served and a 1 percent aggregate amount of available grant funds.

The population of the jurisdiction served by the recipient will determine the

maximum amount of AFG Program funding a recipient is eligible to receive but no recipient may receive an award that exceeds one percent of available grant funds in FY 2020, or $3,550,000. FEMA may waive this aggregate cap in individual cases where FEMA determines that a recipient has an extraordinary need for a grant that exceeds the aggregate cap. FEMA may not waive the statutory funding caps based on population.

The following table explains the maximum funding that a recipient may receive in FY 2020:

Population of jurisdiction served by the recipient	Maximum award in FY 2019	Statutory waiver available subject to extraordinary need?
100,000 or fewer people	No more than $1 million	None available
100,001 – 500,000 people	No more than $2 million	None available
500,001 – 1,000,000 people	No more than $3 million	None available
1,000,001 – 2,500,000 people	No more than $3.55 million	Yes, but no more than $6 million
More than 2,500,000 people	No more than $3.55 million	Yes, but no more than $9 million

Regional applicants will be subject to the funding limitations based on the total population served by the host and participating partners. Additionally, Regional grants awarded are included in the host organization's funding limitations. For example: if a recipient serves a population of 100,000 or fewer and is the recipient of a Regional award for $1 million, they have met their cap and are no longer eligible for additional funds through the Operations and Safety or Vehicle activities.

Allocations and Restrictions of Available Grant Funds by Organization Type

- **Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations:** Not more than 2 percent of available grant funds shall be collectively awarded to all nonaffiliated EMS organization recipients.
- **Emergency Medical Services Providers:** Not less than 3.5 percent of available grant funds shall fund emergency medical services provided by fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations.
- **State Fire Training Academy:** Not more than 3 percent of available grant funds shall be collectively awarded to all SFTA recipients. Further, not more than $500,000 of available grant funds are eligible per applicant.
- **Vehicles:** Not more than 25 percent of available grant funds may be used by recipients for the purchase of vehicles. Of that amount, based on stakeholder recommendations, FEMA intends to allocate 10 percent of the total vehicle funds for ambulances.
- **Micro Grants:** The selection of the voluntary Micro Grant option (cumulative federal funding of $50,000) for eligible Operations and Safety activities does not impact an applicant's request or federal participation under the Vehicle Acquisition or Regional projects. Applicants who select Micro Grants under Operations and Safety as a funding opportunity choice may still apply for a Vehicle(s) Acquisition or Regional project.

e. Management and Administration (M&A) Costs

M&A expenses should be based only on actual expenses or known contractual costs; requests that are simple percentages of the award, without supporting justification, will not be allowed or considered for reimbursement. No more than 3 percent of the federal share of AFG Program funds awarded may be expended by the recipient for M&A for purposes associated with the AFG Program award.

f. Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs

Indirect costs are allowable under this program as described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including 2 C.F.R. § 200.414. Applicants with a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement that desire to charge indirect costs to an award must provide a copy of their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement at the time of application. Not all applicants are required to have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. Applicants that are not required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but are required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to develop an indirect cost rate proposal must provide a copy of their proposal at the time of application. Applicants who do not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (including a provisional rate) and wish to charge the de minimis rate must reach out to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov for further instructions. Applicants who wish to use a cost allocation plan in lieu of an indirect cost rate must also reach out to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov for further instructions. Post-award requests to charge indirect costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis and based upon the submission of an agreement or proposal as discussed above or based upon on the de minimis rate or cost allocation plan, as applicable.

9. Environmental and Historical Preservation (EHP)

As a federal agency, DHS/FEMA is required to consider the effects of its actions on the environment and historic properties to ensure that all activities and programs funded by the agency, including grant-funded projects, comply with Federal EHP regulations, laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies, as applicable.

Recipients proposing projects that have the potential to impact the environment, including, but not limited to, modification or renovation of existing buildings, structures, and facilities, must participate in the DHS/FEMA EHP review process. The EHP review process involves the submission of a screening form that includes a detailed project description that explains the goals and objectives of the proposed project along with supporting documentation, so that DHS/FEMA may determine whether the proposed project has the potential to impact environmental resources and/or historic properties. In some cases, DHS/FEMA may also be required to consult with other regulatory agencies and the public in order to complete the review process. Federal law requires EHP review to be completed before federal funds are released to carry out proposed projects. Grant recipients must receive confirmation of a completed EHP review prior to beginning project activities. FEMA may not be able to fund projects that are not in compliance with applicable EHP laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies.

Applicants may attach the optional EHP form during the application period for the

project(s) they wish to pursue; however, it does not guarantee award. Once the awards are announced, it is the responsibility of the grant recipients to supply the required EHP form at that time to DHS/FEMA, if they have not submitted already during the application period. Applicants can only proceed with their project(s) once the EHP review is completed and approved. DHS/FEMA may notify grant recipients via email if EHP review is required and will provide instructions on how to comply.

DHS and FEMA EHP policy is found in directives and instructions available on the FEMA.gov EHP page, the FEMA website page that includes documents regarding EHP responsibilities and program requirements, including implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act and other EHP regulations and Executive Orders.

Additionally, all AFG recipients are required to comply with FEMA EHP Policy Guidance, FEMA Policy #108-023-1, Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Policy Guidance.

All modifications to facility activities, and any renovation to facilities that would qualify as a modification to facility supporting activities under Training, Equipment, PPE, or Wellness and Fitness, will require an EHP review. Some Equipment activities will require an EHP review as well. Such activities include but are not limited to the installation of:

- Air compressor/fill station/cascade system (fixed) for filling Self-Contained Breather Apparatus (SCBA)
- Air quality systems
- Fire/smoke/carbon monoxide alarm systems for the facility (life safety)
- Generators (fixed)
- Sprinklers
- Vehicle exhaust systems (fixed)
- Washer/dryer/extractor
- Fixed communication antennas onto a building
- Building renovations such as removal of wall or installation of electrical or water lines
- Training/exercises in natural settings such as rope or swift water
- LED Signs
- Any scope of work that involves ground disturbances

The following activities would not require the submission of the FEMA EHP Screening Form:

- Planning and development of policies or processes
- Management, administrative or personnel actions
- Classroom-based training
- Acquisition of mobile and portable equipment (not involving installation) on or in a building and does not require a storage area to be constructed

- Purchase of PPE and/or SCBA

E. Application Review Information

1. Application Evaluation Criteria

a. Programmatic Criteria

Funding priorities and programmatic criteria for evaluating AFG Program applications are established by FEMA based on the recommendations from the Criteria Development Panel (CDP). Each year, FEMA convenes a panel of fire service professionals to develop funding priorities for the AFG Program. The panel makes recommendations about funding priorities as well as developing criteria for awarding grants.

The **nine major fire service organizations** represented on the panel:

- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- National Volunteer Fire Council
- National Fire Protection Association
- National Association of State Fire Marshals
- International Association of Arson Investigators
- International Society of Fire Service Instructors
- North American Fire Training Directors
- Congressional Fire Service Institute

The CDP is charged with making recommendations to FEMA regarding the creation or modification of previously established funding priorities as well as developing criteria for awarding grants. The content of this NOFO reflects implementation of the CDP's recommendations with respect to the priorities, direction, and criteria for awards.

FEMA will rank all complete and submitted applications based on how well they match the program priorities for the type of jurisdiction(s) served. Answers to the application's activity specific questions provide information used to determine each application's ranking relative to the stated program priorities.

b. Financial Integrity Criteria

Prior to making a federal award, FEMA is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3354, as amended by the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-117 (2020); 41 U.S.C. § 2313; and 2 C.F.R. § 200.206 to review information available through any Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, including whether the applicant is suspended or debarred. FEMA may also pose additional questions to the applicant to aid in conducting the pre-award risk review. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

i. Financial stability.

ii. Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
iii. History of performance in managing federal award.
iv. Reports and findings from audits.
v. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

c. Supplemental Financial Integrity Review

Prior to making a federal award where the anticipated federal share of a federal award will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000):

i. FEMA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant, including information on the applicant's immediate and highest-level owner, subsidiaries, and predecessors, if applicable, that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through the System for Award Management (SAM), which is currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS).
ii. An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
iii. FEMA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants, as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.206.

2. Review and Selection Process

AFG Program applications are reviewed through a multi-phase process. All applications are electronically pre-scored and ranked based on how well they align with the funding priorities outlined in this NOFO.

Applications with the highest pre-score rankings are then scored competitively by no less than three members of a Peer Review Panel. Applications will also be evaluated through a series of internal FEMA review processes for completeness, adherence to programmatic guidelines, technical feasibility, and anticipated effectiveness of the proposed project(s). Below is the process by which applications will be reviewed:

i. Pre-Scoring Process

The application undergoes an electronic pre-scoring process based on established program priorities listed in Appendix B and answers to activity specific questions within the online application. Application Narratives are not reviewed during pre-score process. "Request Details" and "Budget" information should comply with program guidance and statutory funding limitations. The pre-score is 50 percent of the total application score.

ii. Peer Review Panel Process

Applications with the highest rankings from the pre-scoring process will undergo a Peer Review Panel process. A panel of peer reviewers is comprised of fire service

representatives recommended by the national organizations from the CDP. Peer reviewers will assess each application's merits based on the narrative statement on the requested activity. The evaluation elements listed in the "Narrative Evaluation Criteria" below will be used to calculate the narrative's score for each activity requested. 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.

iii. 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.

Once the TEP is complete, each application's cumulative score will be determined, and a final ranking of applications will be created. FEMA will award grants based on this final ranking and the ability to meet statutorily required funding limitations outlined in Appendix B, E. Restrictions on Use of Award Funds.

3. Narrative Evaluation Criteria

The Narrative Statements must provide specific details about the activity for which the applicants seek funding. Applicants must explain how the proposed activity(ies) relate to the Operations and Safety Activity or the Vehicle Acquisition Activity. FEMA reviews and compares applications for duplication. Therefore, all elements of the Narrative Statements must be original.

a. Financial Need (25 percent)

Applicants should describe their financial need and how consistent it is with the intent of the AFG Program. The financial need statement should include details describing the applicant's financial distress such as summarizing budget constraints, unsuccessful attempts to secure other funding, and proving the financial distress is out of their control.

b. Project Description and Budget (25 percent)

The Project Description and Budget statement should clearly explain the applicant's project objectives and its relationship to the applicant's budget and risk analysis. The applicant should describe various activities, including program priorities or facility modifications, ensuring consistency with project objectives, the applicant's mission and national, state, and/or local requirements. Applicants should link the proposed expenses to operations and safety, as well as to the completion of the project's goals.

c. Cost Benefit (25 percent)

Applicants should describe how they plan to address the operations and personal safety needs of their organization, including cost effectiveness and sharing assets. The Operations and Safety/Cost Benefit statement should also include details about gaining the maximum benefits from grant funding by citing reasonable or required costs, such as specific overhead and administrative costs. The applicant's request should also be consistent with their mission and identify how funding will benefit their organization and affected personnel.

d. Statement of Effect on Operations (25 percent)

The Statement of Effect on Operations should explain how this funding request will enhance an organization's overall effectiveness. It should address how an award will improve daily operations and reduce an organization's risk(s). Applicants should include how frequently the requested item(s) will be used and in what capacity. Applicants should also indicate how the requested item(s) will help the community and increase an organization's ability to save additional lives and property. Jurisdictions that demonstrate their commitment and proactive posture to reducing fire risk, by explaining their code enforcement (to include Wildland Urban Interface code enforcement) and mitigation strategies (including whether or not the jurisdiction has a FEMA-approved mitigation strategy) may receive stronger consideration under this criterion.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

In addition to the language here, please see Appendix C to this NOFO for additional award administration information.

1. Notice of Award

Before accepting the award, the recipient should carefully read the award package. The award package includes instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under federal awards. **Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any specific terms and conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.**

FEMA will provide the federal award package to the applicant electronically via FEMA GO. Award packages include an Award Letter, Summary Award Memo, Agreement Articles, and Obligating Document. An email notification of the award package will be sent through FEMA's grant application system to the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) that submitted the application. Recipients must accept their awards no later than 30 days from the award date. The recipient shall notify FEMA of its intent to accept and proceed with work under the award through the FEMA GO system.

Funds will remain on hold until the recipient accepts the award through the FEMA GO system and all other conditions of the award have been satisfied or until the award is otherwise rescinded. Failure to accept a grant award within the specified timeframe may result in a loss of funds. Recipients may request additional time to accept the award if needed.

2. Differences Between Application Request and Award

During the review process for an AFG Program award, FEMA may have modified the application request(s). These modifications will be identified in the award package provided upon the offer of an award. If the awarded activities, scope of work, or requested dollar amount(s) do not match the application as submitted, the recipient shall only be responsible for completing the activities actually funded by FEMA. The recipient is under no obligation to start, modify, or complete any activities requested by but not funded by the award. The award package will identify any differences under the Approved scope of work section.

3. Turndown Notifications

FEMA GO will provide all applicants who do not receive an FY 2020 AFG Program award with a turndown notification.

4. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

In addition to the requirements of in this section and in this NOFO, FEMA may place specific terms and conditions on individual awards in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

DHS Standard Terms and Conditions

All successful applicants for all DHS grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, which are available online at: DHS Standard Terms and Conditions. The applicable DHS Standard Terms and Conditions will be those in effect at the time in which the award was made.

Before accepting the award, the AOR should carefully read the award package for instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any special terms and conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program. By submitting an application, applicants are deemed to have accepted all of the conditions in this NOFO as well.

5. Reporting

Recipients are required to submit various financial and programmatic reports as a condition of their award acceptance. Future awards and funds drawdown may be withheld if these reports are delinquent. Recipients should keep detailed records of all transactions involving the grant. FEMA may at any time request copies of purchasing documentation along with copies of cancelled checks or other proof of payment documentation for verification.

a. Federal Financial Reporting Requirements

The Federal Financial Report Form (SF-425) and instructions are available at the following sites: SF-425 *OMB #4040-0014*.

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

Recipients of AFG Program grants are required to submit an FFR (SF-425) on a

semi-annual basis. The FFR is to be submitted using the online FEMA GO based on the calendar year beginning with the period after the award is made. Grant recipients are required to submit an FFR throughout the entire period of performance of the grant. Reports are due:

- No later than July 30 (for the period January 1 – June 30)
- No later than January 30 (for the period July 1 – December 31)
- Within 90 days after the end of the Period of Performance

b. Program Performance Reporting Requirements

The recipient is responsible for completing and submitting a Programmatic Performance Report (PPR) using FEMA GO. The PPR is due every six months after the grant's award date, and thereafter until the period of performance ends.

The PPR should include:

- A brief narrative of overall project(s) status
- A summary of project expenditures
- A description of any potential issues that may affect project completion

c. PPR Periods and Due Dates

The following reporting periods and due dates apply for the PPR:

- **No later than July 30** (for the period January 1 – June 30)
- **No later than January 30** (for the period July 1 – December 31)

d. Closeout Reporting Requirements

Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, recipients must liquidate all financial obligations and submit a final FFR (SF-425) and a final PPR (within the closeout module in FEMA GO) detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance. The closeout tutorial may be found at: https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/firefighters/closeout-report-tutorial

In addition, any recipient that issues subawards to any subrecipient is responsible for closing out those subawards as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.344; subrecipients are still required to submit closeout materials within 120 days of the period of performance end date. Recipients must ensure that they complete the closeout of their subawards in time to submit all necessary documentation and information to DHS/FEMA during the closeout of their prime grant award.

After the final SF-425 and final performance reports have been reviewed and approved by FEMA, a Closeout Notice will be completed to close out the grant. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds that will be deobligated, and address the requirement of maintaining the grant records for a minimum of three years from the date of the final FFR (SF-425). The record retention period may be longer, such as due to an audit or litigation, for equipment or real property used beyond the period of performance, or

due to other circumstances outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.334.

The recipient is responsible for returning any federal funds that they have liquidated but remain unobligated by the recipient. Information on how to return funds to FEMA is available at: https://www.fema.gov/about/payment.

e. Administrative Closeout

Administrative closeout is a mechanism for FEMA to unilaterally move forward with closeout of a grant award using available grant award information in lieu of final reports from the recipient per 2 C.F.R. § 200.344(h)-(i). It is a last resort available to FEMA, and if FEMA needs to administratively close an award, this may negatively impact a recipient's ability to obtain future funding. This mechanism can also require FEMA to make cash or cost adjustments and ineligible cost determinations based on the information it has, which may result in identifying a debt owed to FEMA by the recipient.

When a recipient is not responsive to FEMA's reasonable efforts to collect required reports needed to complete the standard closeout process, FEMA is required under 2 C.F.R. § 200.344(h) to start the administrative closeout process within the regulatory timeframe. FEMA will make at least three written attempts to collect required reports before initiating administrative closeout. If the recipient does not submit all required reports in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.344, this NOFO, and the terms and conditions of the award, FEMA must proceed to administratively close the award with the information available within one year of the period of performance end date. Additionally, if the recipient does not submit all required reports within one year of the period of performance end date, per 2 C.F.R. § 200.344(i), FEMA must report in FAPIIS the recipient's material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

If FEMA administratively closes an award where no final FFR has been submitted, FEMA uses that administrative closeout date in lieu of the final FFR submission date as the start of the record retention period under 2 C.F.R. § 200.334.

In addition, if an award is administratively closed, FEMA may decide to impose remedies for noncompliance per 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, consider this information in reviewing future award applications, or apply special conditions to existing or future awards.

f. Additional Reporting Requirements

i. Disclosing Information per 2 C.F.R. § 180.335

This reporting requirement pertains to disclosing information related to government-wide suspension and debarment requirements. Before a recipient enters into a grant award with FEMA, the recipient must notify FEMA if it knows if it or any of the recipient's principals under the award fall under one or more of the four criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335:

- Are presently excluded or disqualified;
- Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it or any of the recipient's principals for one of those offenses within that time period;
- Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a); or
- Have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

At any time after accepting the award, if the recipient learns that it or any of its principals falls under one or more of the criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335, the recipient must provide immediate written notice to FEMA in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 180.350.

ii. Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

Per 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix I § F.3, the additional post-award reporting requirements in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix XII may apply to applicants who, if upon becoming recipients, have a total value of currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all federal awarding agencies that exceeds $10 million for any period of time during the period of performance of an award under this funding opportunity.

Recipients that meet these criteria must maintain current information reported in FAPIIS about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of Appendix XII at the reporting frequency described in paragraph 4 of Appendix XII.

iii. Single Audit Report

For audits of fiscal years beginning on or after December 26, 2014, recipients that expend $750,000 or more from all federal funding sources during their fiscal year are required to submit an organization-wide financial and compliance audit report, also known as the single audit report.

The audit must be performed in accordance with the requirements of U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) Government Auditing Standards, located at https://www.gao.gov/yellowbook/overview, and the requirements of Subpart F of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, located at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=sp2.1.200.f.

6. Monitoring and Oversight

Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.337, FEMA, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits or conduct desk reviews to review project accomplishments and management control systems to review award progress and to provide any required technical assistance. During site visits or desk reviews, FEMA

will review recipients' files related to the award. As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, recipients must permit FEMA, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-related records and to interview the organization's staff and contractors regarding the program. Recipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to FEMA requests for information relating to the award.

Grant recipients will be monitored periodically by FEMA staff, both programmatically and financially, to ensure that the project goals, objectives, performance requirements, timelines, milestones, budgets, and other related program criteria are being met. Monitoring may be accomplished through either a desk-based review or on-site monitoring visits, or both. Monitoring will involve the review and analysis of the financial, programmatic, performance, compliance, and administrative processes and policies, activities, and other attributes of each federal assistance award and will identify areas where technical assistance, corrective actions, and other support may be needed.

Recipients should keep detailed records of all transactions involving the grant. FEMA may at any time request copies of purchasing documentation along with copies of cancelled checks or other adequate payment documentation for verification. Recipients have the opportunity to participate in a Post Award Orientation (PAO) offered by the FEMA Regional Fire Program Specialist (FPS) to have their questions answered, receive technical assistance, or to review the terms and conditions of the grant. The PAO is optional.

G. DHS Awarding Agency Contact and Resource Information

1. AFG Help Desk

The AFG Help Desk provides technical assistance to applicants for the online completion and submission of applications into FEMA GO, answers questions concerning applicant eligibility and recipient responsibilities, and helps in the programmatic administration of awards. The AFG Help Desk can be contacted at (866) 274-0960 or by email at FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov. Normal hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

2. FEMA Regional Fire Program Specialists

Each FEMA region has FPSs who can assist applicants with application information, award administration, and technical assistance. Contact information for a Regional FPS can be located on the AFG Program website at https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/firefighters/regional-contacts.

3. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation

GPD's EHP Team provides guidance and information about the EHP review process to recipients and subrecipients. All inquiries and communications about GPD projects under this NOFO or the EHP review process, including the submittal of EHP review materials, should be sent to *gpdehpinfo@fema.dhs.gov*.

4. FEMA GO System Information

For technical assistance with the FEMA GO system, please contact the FEMA GO Helpdesk at femago@fema.dhs.gov or (877) 585-3242, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. ET.

H. Additional Information

1. Termination Provisions

FEMA may terminate a federal award in whole or in part for one of the following reasons. FEMA and the recipient must still comply with closeout requirements at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.344-200.345 even if an award is terminated in whole or in part. To the extent that subawards are permitted under this NOFO, pass-through entities should refer to 2 C.F.R. § 200.340 for additional information on termination regarding subawards.

a. Noncompliance

If a recipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of a federal award, FEMA may terminate the award in whole or in part. If the noncompliance can be corrected, FEMA may first attempt to direct the recipient to correct the noncompliance. This may take the form of a Compliance Notification. If the noncompliance cannot be corrected or the recipient is non-responsive, FEMA may proceed with a Remedy Notification, which could impose a remedy for noncompliance per 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, including termination. Any action to terminate based on noncompliance will follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342 as well as the requirement of 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(c) to report in FAPIIS the recipient's material failure to comply with the award terms and conditions. See also the section on Actions to Address Noncompliance in this NOFO.

b. With the Consent of the Recipient

FEMA may also terminate an award in whole or in part with the consent of the recipient, in which case the parties must agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.

c. Notification by the Recipient

The recipient may terminate the award, in whole or in part, by sending written notification to FEMA setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. In the case of partial termination, FEMA may determine that a partially terminated award will not accomplish the purpose of the federal award, so FEMA may terminate the award in its entirety. If that occurs, FEMA will follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342 in deciding to fully terminate the award.

2. Extensions to the Grant Period of Performance

Extensions to the period of performance under this grant program are allowed. An award's period of performance must be active for a recipient to submit a proposed

extension request to FEMA. Recipients should request extensions sparingly and only under exceptional circumstances. ***Approval is not guaranteed.***

Extensions to the initial period of performance identified in the award will only be considered through formal amendment requests, via FEMA GO, and must contain specific and compelling justifications as to why an extension is required. All extension requests must contain:

- Grant Program, fiscal year, and award number
- Reason for delay—this must include details of the legal, policy, or operational challenges being experienced that prevent the final outlay of awarded funds by the applicable deadline
- Current status of the activity/activities
- Approved period of performance termination date and new project completion date
- Amount of funds drawn down to date
- Remaining available funds, both federal and non-federal
- Budget outlining how remaining federal and non-federal funds will be expended
- Plan for completion, including milestones and timeframes for achieving each milestone and the position/person responsible for implementing the plan for completion
- Certification that the activity/activities will be completed within the extended period of performance without any modification to the original Statement of Work approved by FEMA

3. Requirements for Period of Performance Extension Consideration

To be eligible for consideration, recipients must submit extension requests via FEMA GO. Recipients generally can submit requests at least 60 days prior to the end of the award's period of performance. In accordance with FEMA policy, FEMA reviews extensions on a case-by-case basis and typically grants them for no more than a six-month period. FEMA will grant extension requests only due to compelling legal, policy, or operational challenges. The review process can take up to 30 days or longer. Applicants should factor this review period into the timing of when to submit a request for an extension.

Example: Recipients may request an extension when an equipment order was placed during the period of performance but factors beyond the recipients' control have resulted in a delay in the expected delivery and receipt of the equipment outside of the existing period of performance; or where a specific statute or regulation mandates an environmental review that cannot be completed within this timeframe or where other extenuating circumstances warrant a brief extension.

4. Conflicts of Interest in the Administration of Federal Awards or Subawards

For conflicts of interest under grant-funded procurements and contracts, refer to the section on Procurement Integrity in this NOFO and 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327.

To eliminate and reduce the impact of conflicts of interest in the subaward process, recipients and pass-through entities must follow their own policies and procedures regarding the elimination or reduction of conflicts of interest when making subawards. Recipients and pass-through entities are also required to follow any applicable federal and state, local, tribal, or territorial (SLTT) statutes or regulations governing conflicts of interest in the making of subawards.

The recipient or pass-through entity must disclose to the respective Program Analyst or Program Manager, in writing, any real or potential conflict of interest that may arise during the administration of the federal award, as defined by the federal or SLTT statutes or regulations or their own existing policies, within five days of learning of the conflict of interest. Similarly, subrecipients, whether acting as subrecipients or as pass-through entities, must disclose any real or potential conflict of interest to the recipient or next-level pass-through entity as required by the recipient or pass-through entity's conflict of interest policies, or any applicable federal or SLTT statutes or regulations.

Conflicts of interest may arise during the process of FEMA making a federal award in situations where an employee, officer, or agent, any members of his or her immediate family, his or her partner has a close personal relationship, a business relationship, or a professional relationship, with an applicant, subapplicant, recipient, subrecipient, or FEMA employees.

5. Procurement Integrity

Through audits conducted by the DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) and FEMA grant monitoring, findings have shown that some FEMA recipients have not fully adhered to the proper procurement requirements when spending grant funds. Anything less than full compliance with federal procurement requirements jeopardizes the integrity of the grant as well as the grant program. To assist with determining whether an action is a procurement or instead a subaward, please consult 2 C.F.R. § 200.331.

The below highlights the federal procurement requirements for FEMA recipients when procuring goods and services with federal grant funds. FEMA will include a review of recipients' procurement practices as part of the normal monitoring activities. **All procurement activity must be conducted in accordance with federal procurement standards at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327.** Select requirements under these standards are listed below. The recipient and any of its subrecipients must comply with all requirements, even if they are not listed below.

Under 2 C.F.R. § 200.317, when procuring property and services under a federal award, states (including territories) must follow the same policies and procedures they use for procurements from their non-federal funds; additionally, states must now follow 2 C.F.R. § 200.321 regarding socioeconomic steps, 200.322 regarding domestic preferences for procurements, 200.323 regarding procurement of recovered materials, and 2 C.F.R. § 200.327 regarding required contract provisions.

All other non-federal entities, such as tribes (collectively, non-state entities), must

have and use their own documented procurement procedures that reflect applicable SLTT laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable federal law and the standards identified in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. These standards include, but are not limited to, providing for full and open competition consistent with the standards of 2 C.F.R. § 200.319 and § 200.320.

a. Important Changes to Procurement Standards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200

OMB recently updated various parts of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, among them, the procurement standards. States are now required to follow the socioeconomic steps in soliciting small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms per 2 C.F.R. § 200.321. All non-federal entities should also, to the greatest extent practicable under a federal award, provide a preference for the purchase, acquisition, or use of goods, products, or materials produced in the United States per 2 C.F.R. § 200.322.

The recognized procurement methods in 2 C.F.R. § 200.320 have been reorganized into informal procurement methods, which include micro-purchases and small purchases; formal procurement methods, which include sealed bidding and competitive proposals; and noncompetitive procurements. The federal micro-purchase threshold is currently $10,000, and non-state entities may use a lower threshold when using micro-purchase procedures under a FEMA award. If a non-state entity wants to use a micro-purchase threshold higher than the federal threshold, it must follow the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)(iii)-(iv). The federal simplified acquisition threshold is currently $250,000, and a non-state entity may use a lower threshold but may not exceed the federal threshold when using small purchase procedures under a FEMA award.

See 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.216, 200.471, and Appendix II as well as section D.13.a of the NOFO regarding prohibitions on covered telecommunications equipment or services.

b. Competition and Conflicts of Interest

Among the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.319(b) applicable to all non-federal entities other than states, in order to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. FEMA considers these actions to be an organizational conflict of interest and interprets this restriction as applying to contractors that help a non-federal entity develop its grant application, project plans, or project budget. This prohibition also applies to the use of former employees to manage the grant or carry out a contract when those former employees worked on such activities while they were employees of the non-federal entity.

Under this prohibition, unless the non-federal entity solicits for and awards a contract covering both development and execution of specifications (or similar elements as described above), and this contract was procured in compliance with 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327, federal funds cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of those specifications. This

rule applies to all contracts funded with federal grant funds, including pre-award costs, such as grant writer fees, as well as post-award costs, such as grant management fees.

Additionally, some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include, but are not limited to:

- Placing unreasonable requirements on firms for them to qualify to do business;
- Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;
- Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;
- Noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts;
- Organizational conflicts of interest;
- Specifying only a "brand name" product instead of allowing "an equal" product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and
- Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.319(c), non-federal entities other than states must conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed SLTT geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts state licensing laws. When contracting for architectural and engineering services, geographic location may be a selection criterion provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract.

Under 2 C.F.R. § 200.318(c)(1), non-federal entities other than states are required to maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of their employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. **No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.** Such conflicts of interest would arise when the employee, officer or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.

The officers, employees, and agents of the non-federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. However, non-federal entities may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial, or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-federal entity. If the recipient or subrecipient (other than states) has a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a state, local, tribal, or territorial government, the non-federal entity must also maintain written standards of conduct covering organizational conflicts of interest. In this context, organizational conflict of interest means that because of a

relationship with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization, the non-federal entity is unable or appears to be unable to be impartial in conducting a procurement action involving a related organization. The non-federal entity must disclose in writing any potential conflicts of interest to FEMA or the pass-through entity in accordance with applicable FEMA policy.

c. Supply Schedules and Purchasing Programs

Generally, a non-federal entity may seek to procure goods or services from a federal supply schedule, state supply schedule, or group purchasing agreement.

iii. General Services Administration Schedules

States, tribes, and local governments, and any instrumentality thereof (such as local education agencies or institutions of higher education) may procure goods and services from a General Services Administration (GSA) schedule. GSA offers multiple efficient and effective procurement programs for state, tribal, and local governments, and instrumentalities thereof, to purchase products and services directly from pre-vetted contractors. The GSA Schedules (also referred to as the Multiple Award Schedules and the Federal Supply Schedules) are long-term government-wide contracts with commercial firms that provide access to millions of commercial products and services at volume discount pricing.

Information about GSA programs for states, tribes, and local governments, and instrumentalities thereof, can be found at https://www.gsa.gov/resources-for/programs-for-State-and-local-governments and https://www.gsa.gov/buying-selling/purchasing-programs/gsa-schedules/schedule-buyers/state-and-local-governments.

For tribes, local governments, and their instrumentalities that purchase off of a GSA schedule, this will satisfy the federal requirements for full and open competition provided that the recipient follows the GSA ordering procedures; however, tribes, local governments, and their instrumentalities will still need to follow the other rules under 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327, such as solicitation of minority businesses, women's business enterprises, small businesses, or labor surplus area firms (§ 200.321), domestic preferences (§ 200.322), contract cost and price (§ 200.324), and required contract provisions (§ 200.327 and Appendix II).

iv. Other Supply Schedules and Programs

For non-federal entities other than states, such as tribes, local governments, and nonprofits, that want to procure goods or services from a state supply schedule, cooperative purchasing program, or other similar program, in order for such procurements to be permissible under federal requirements, the following must be true:

- The procurement of the original contract or purchasing schedule and its use by the non-federal entity complies with state and local law, regulations, and written procurement procedures;
- The state or other entity that originally procured the original contract or purchasing schedule entered into the contract or schedule with the express

purpose of making it available to the non-federal entity and other similar types of entities;
- The contract or purchasing schedule specifically allows for such use, and the work to be performed for the non-federal entity falls within the scope of work under the contract as to type, amount, and geography;
- The procurement of the original contract or purchasing schedule complied with all the procurement standards applicable to a non-federal entity other than states under at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327; and
- With respect to the use of a purchasing schedule, the non-federal entity must follow ordering procedures that adhere to applicable state, tribal, and local laws and regulations and the minimum requirements of full and open competition under 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

If a non-federal entity other than a state seeks to use a state supply schedule, cooperative purchasing program, or other similar type of arrangement, FEMA recommends the recipient discuss the procurement plans with its FEMA Program Analyst.

d. Procurement Documentation

Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.318(i), non-federal entities other than states and territories are required to maintain and retain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement covering at least the rationale for the procurement method, contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price. States and territories are encouraged to maintain and retain this information as well and are reminded that in order for any cost to be allowable, it must be adequately documented per 2 C.F.R. § 200.403(g).

Examples of the types of documents that would cover this information include but are not limited to:
- Solicitation documentation, such as requests for quotes, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals;
- Responses to solicitations, such as quotes, bids, or proposals;
- Pre-solicitation independent cost estimates and post-solicitation cost/price analyses on file for review by federal personnel, if applicable;
- Contract documents and amendments, including required contract provisions; and
- Other documents required by federal regulations applicable at the time a grant is awarded to a recipient.

6. Record Retention

a. Record Retention Period

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-federal entity records pertinent to a federal award generally must be maintained for at least three years from the date the final FFR is submitted. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334. Further, if the recipient does not submit a final FFR and the award is administratively closed, FEMA uses the date of administrative closeout as the start of the general record retention period.

The record retention period **may be longer than three years or have a different start date** in certain cases. These include:

- Records for real property and equipment acquired with federal funds must be retained for **three years after final disposition of the property**. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334(c).
- If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records **must be retained until** all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records **have been resolved and final action taken**. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334(a).
- The **record retention period will be extended if the recipient is notified in writing** of the extension by FEMA, the cognizant or oversight agency for audit, or the cognizant agency for indirect costs. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334(b).
- Where FEMA requires recipients to report program income after the period of performance ends, the **program income record retention period begins at the end of the recipient's fiscal year in which program income is earned**. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334(e).
- For indirect cost rate proposals, cost allocation plans, or other rate computations records, the start of the record retention period depends on whether the indirect cost rate documents were submitted for negotiation. If the **indirect cost rate documents were submitted for negotiation, the record retention period begins from the date those documents were submitted** for negotiation. If indirect cost rate documents were **not submitted for negotiation, the record retention period begins at the end of the recipient's fiscal year or other accounting period covered by that indirect cost rate**. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 200.334(f).

b. Types of Records to Retain

FEMA requires that non-federal entities maintain the following documentation for federally funded purchases:

- Specifications
- Solicitations
- Competitive quotes or proposals
- Basis for selection decisions
- Purchase orders
- Contracts
- Invoices
- Canceled checks

Non-federal entities should keep detailed records of all transactions involving the grant. FEMA may at any time request copies of any relevant documentation and records, including purchasing documentation along with copies of canceled checks for verification. *See, e.g.*, 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.318(i), 200.334, 200.337.

In order for any cost to be allowable, it must be adequately documented per 2 C.F.R. § 200.403(g). Non-federal entities who fail to fully document all purchases may find their

expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed.

7. Actions to Address Noncompliance

Non-federal entities receiving financial assistance funding from FEMA are required to comply with requirements in the terms and conditions of their awards or subawards, including the terms set forth in applicable federal statutes, regulations, NOFOs, and policies. Throughout the award lifecycle or even after an award has been closed, FEMA or the pass-through entity may discover potential or actual noncompliance on the part of a recipient or subrecipient. This potential or actual noncompliance may be discovered through routine monitoring, audits, closeout, or reporting from various sources.

In the case of any potential or actual noncompliance, FEMA may place special conditions on an award per 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.208 and 200.339, FEMA may place a hold on funds until the matter is corrected, or additional information is provided per 2 C.F.R. § 200.339, or it may do both. Similar remedies for noncompliance with certain federal civil rights laws are authorized pursuant to 44 C.F.R. Parts 7 and 19.

In the event the noncompliance is not able to be corrected by imposing additional conditions or the recipient or subrecipient refuses to correct the matter, FEMA might take other remedies allowed under 2 C.F.R. § 200.339. These remedies include actions to disallow costs, recover funds, wholly or partly suspend or terminate the award, initiate suspension and debarment proceedings, withhold further federal awards, or take other remedies that may be legally available. For further information on termination due to noncompliance, see the section on Termination Provisions in the NOFO.

FEMA may discover and take action on noncompliance even after an award has been closed. The closeout of an award does not affect FEMA's right to disallow costs and recover funds as long the action to disallow costs takes place during the record retention period. *See* 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.334, 200.345(a). Closeout also does not affect the obligation of the non-federal entity to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions. 2 C.F.R. § 200.345(a)(2).

The types of funds FEMA might attempt to recover include, but are not limited to, improper payments, cost share reimbursements, program income, interest earned on advance payments, or equipment disposition amounts.

FEMA may seek to recover disallowed costs through a Notice of Potential Debt Letter, a Remedy Notification, or other letter. The document will describe the potential amount owed, the reason why FEMA is recovering the funds, the recipient's appeal rights, how the amount can be paid, and the consequences for not appealing or paying the amount by the deadline.

If the recipient neither appeals nor pays the amount by the deadline, the amount owed will become final. Potential consequences if the debt is not paid in full or otherwise resolved by the deadline include the assessment of interest, administrative fees, and penalty charges; administratively offsetting the debt against other payable federal funds;

and transferring the debt to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for collection.

FEMA notes the following common areas of noncompliance for FEMA's grant programs:

- Insufficient documentation and lack of record retention.
- Failure to follow the procurement under grants requirements.
- Failure to submit closeout documents in a timely manner.
- Failure to follow EHP requirements.
- Failure to comply with the POP deadline.

8. Audits

FEMA grant recipients are subject to audit oversight from multiple entities including the DHS OIG, the GAO, the pass-through entity, or independent auditing firms for single audits, and may cover activities and costs incurred under the award. Auditing agencies such as the DHS OIG, the GAO, and the pass-through entity (if applicable), and FEMA in its oversight capacity, must have access to records pertaining to the FEMA award. Recipients and subrecipients must retain award documents for at least three years from the date the final FFR is submitted, and even longer in many cases subject to the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.334. In the case of administrative closeout, documents must be retained for at least three years from the date of closeout, or longer subject to the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.334. If documents are retained longer than the required retention period, the DHS OIG, the GAO, and the pass-through entity, as well as FEMA in its oversight capacity, have the right to access these records as well. *See* 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.334, 200.337.

Additionally, non-federal entities must comply with the single audit requirements at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F. Specifically, non-federal entities, other than for-profit subrecipients, that expend $750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with Subpart F. 2 C.F.R. § 200.501. A single audit covers all federal funds expended during a fiscal year, not just FEMA funds. The cost of audit services may be allowable per 2 C.F.R. § 200.425, but non-federal entities must select auditors in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.509, including following the proper procurement procedures. For additional information on single audit reporting requirements, see section F of this NOFO under the header "Single Audit Report" within the subsection "Additional Reporting Requirements."

The objectives of single audits are to:

- Determine if financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP);
- Determine whether the schedule of expenditures of federal awards is presented fairly;
- Understand, assess, and test the adequacy of internal controls for compliance with major programs; and
- Determine if the entity complied with applicable laws, regulations, and contracts or grants.

For single audits, the auditee is required to prepare financial statements reflecting its financial position, a schedule of federal award expenditures, and a summary of the status of prior audit findings and questioned costs. The auditee also is required to follow up and take appropriate corrective actions on new and previously issued but not yet addressed audit findings. The auditee must prepare a corrective action plan to address the new audit findings. 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.508, 200.510, 200.511.

Non-federal entities must have an audit conducted, either single or program-specific, of their financial statements and federal expenditures annually or biennially pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.504. Non-federal entities must also follow the information submission requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.512, including submitting the audit information to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse within the earlier of 30 calendar days after receipt of the auditor's report(s) or nine months after the end of the audit period. The audit information to be submitted include the data collection form described at 2 C.F.R. § 200.512(c) and Appendix X to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 as well as the reporting package described at 2 C.F.R. § 200.512(b).

The non-federal entity must retain one copy of the data collection form and one copy of the reporting package for three years from the date of submission to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. 2 C.F.R. § 200.512; *see also* 2 C.F.R. § 200.517 (setting requirements for retention of documents by the auditor and access to audit records in the auditor's possession).

FEMA, the DHS OIG, the GAO, and the pass-through entity (if applicable), as part of monitoring or as part of an audit, may review a non-federal entity's compliance with the single audit requirements. In cases of continued inability or unwillingness to have an audit conducted in compliance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F, FEMA and the pass-through entity, if applicable, are required to take appropriate remedial action under 2 C.F.R. § 200.339 for noncompliance, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.505.

Appendix A – FY 2020 AFG Program Updates

Appendix A contains a brief list of changes between FY 2019 and FY 2020 to the AFG Program.

New for FY 2020

The FY 2020 AFG Program NOFO contains some changes to definitions, descriptions and priority categories. Changes to the FY 2020 AFG Program NOFO include:

- Under sections D – Application and Submission Information, E – Application Review Information, F – Federal Award Administration Information, G – DHS Awarding Agency Contact and Resource Information, and H – Additional Information:
  - Various grants management changes due to recent OMB revisions to 2 C.F.R., particularly regarding SAM registration, performance measures, procurement, closeout, and termination

- Under Federal Award Information:
  - Period of performance for AFG Program awards is 24 months

- Under Supporting Definitions:
  - Paid on-call/Stipend departments are added to the definition of Combination Fire Department

- Under Application Tips:
  - Explanation of AFG Program-approved seated riding positions was added

- Under Training Activity:
  - Rental of Audio/Visual equipment was added as eligible activity

- Under Operations and Safety Activity:
  - Radio over Internet Protocol (Rip) communication equipment was added as a Medium Priority
  - Integrated thermal imaging cameras were added under ineligible list under PPE category

- Under Modifications to Facility Activity:
  - Intruder alerting systems and deployment notification systems were added as ineligible

- Under Regional Applications:
  - Guidance requiring purchases from same vendor added

- Under EHP
  - Updated process for EHP added

- Under Award Administration Information (Appendix C):
  - Updated process for Economic Hardship Waiver added
  - Excess Funds Restrictions specifies High Priority items as eligible under this option
  - Updated instruction on supporting documentation is added for advance and reimbursement payment request

Appendix B –Programmatic Information and Priorities

Appendix B contains details on AFG Program information and priorities. Reviewing this information may help applicants make their application(s) more competitive.

A. Ineligible Applications and/or Organizations

FEMA considers two or more separate fire departments or nonaffiliated EMS organizations with different funding streams, personnel rosters, and EINs but sharing the same facilities as being separate organizations for the purposes of AFG Program eligibility. If two or more organizations share facilities and each submits an application in the same program area (i.e., Equipment, Modify Facilities, PPE, Training, and Wellness and Fitness Programs), FEMA reserves the right to review all of those program area applications for eligibility. This determination is designed to avoid the duplication of benefits.

Examples of ineligible applications and/or organizations include:

- Although fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations may share some common program priorities, there are some restricted activities for nonaffiliated EMS organizations; nonaffiliated EMS organizations are not eligible to request any activity that is specific or unique to structural/proximity/wildland firefighting gear.
- Fire departments that are a Federal Government entity, or contracted by the Federal Government, and are solely responsible under a formally recognized agreement for suppression of fires on federal installations or land.
- Fire departments or nonaffiliated EMS organizations that are not independent entities but are part of, controlled by, or under the day-to-day operational command and control of a larger department, agency or AHJ.
  - However, if a fire department is considered to be the same legal entity as a municipality or other governmental organization, and otherwise meets the eligibility criteria, that municipality or other governmental organization may apply on behalf of that fire department as long as the application clearly states that the fire department is considered part of the same legal entity.
- Fire-based EMS organizations are not eligible to apply as a nonaffiliated EMS organization.
- Auxiliaries, hospitals or fire service associations or interest organizations that are not the AHJ over the applicant.
- State or local agencies, or subsets of any governmental entity, or any authority that do not meet the requirements as defined by 15 U.S.C. §2229(a), (c).
- If an applicant submits two or more applications for the same equipment or other eligible activity (for example, if an applicant submits two or more applications, one under the Regional activity, and one under the Operations and Safety activity for SCBA), both applications may be disqualified. If an applicant submits two separate applications for the same activity (i.e., two separate vehicle applications for exactly the same type of vehicle) during the same application period, both applications may be disqualified.
  - This is different from when where an entity is applying on behalf of other organizations that are agencies or instrumentalities of the applicant (e.g.,

multiple fire departments under the same county, city, borough, parish, or other municipality). In that situation, the applicant may request the same activity as long as the application clearly states which costs under the activity (including quantities if applicable) is for which agency/instrumentality. This is permissible even if that entity submits multiple applications across regional versus direct applications.

- Eligible applicants may submit only one application for each activity (Operations and Safety or Regional) but may submit for multiple projects within each activity. Under the Vehicle Activity, applicants may submit one application for vehicles for their department and one separate application for a Regional vehicle (the same vehicle may not be requested for both purposes). All submissions of duplicate applications may be disqualified.
- Dive teams, search and rescue squads, or similar organizations that do not provide medical transport.
- Fire departments, regional, or nonaffiliated EMS organizations that are for profit.

B. Supporting Definitions for this NOFO

AHJ is that person or office charged with enforcing the NFPA codes (Per NFPA101-2015 Edition: Life Safety Code).

Automatic Aid is a plan developed between two or more fire departments for immediate joint response on first alarms, (Per NFPA 1710 – 2016 edition and NFPA 1720 – 2014).

Career Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has an all-paid force of firefighting personnel other than paid-on-call firefighters.

Combination Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has paid firefighting personnel and volunteer firefighting personnel. FEMA considers a fire department with firefighting personnel paid a stipend on a per event basis, or paid on-call, to be a combination fire department.

Mutual Aid 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 (NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments, 2016 edition and NFPA 1720 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2014 Edition).

Metro Department is a metropolitan fire department that has a minimum staffing of 350 career firefighters as defined by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). DHS/FEMA collects information on metro departments for statistical purposes only. Status as a metro department is not a factor in scoring or funding.

Primary First Due is a geographic area surrounding a fire station in which a company from

that station is projected to be first to arrive on the scene of an incident. NFPA 1710; 3.3.28. https://www.nfpa.org/Codes-and-Standards/All-Codes-and- Standards/Free-access.

Volunteer fire department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has an all-volunteer force of firefighting personnel.

C. Community Classifications

The information the applicant organization supplies in Department Characteristics I and II of the AFG Program application determines whether the jurisdiction is identified by FEMA as urban, suburban, or rural. The community classification will determine the funding priority.

The US Census Bureau's urban-rural classifications are fundamentally a delineation of geographical areas. For more information, please visit https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html.

FY 2020 demographics for determining urban, suburban, or rural include:

Community	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Population of primary first due response area	>3,000 sq. mi. or 50,000 + population	1,000-2,999/sq. mi. or 25,000-50,000 population	0-999/sq. mi. or <25,000 population
Water Supply (percentage of primary first due response area covered by hydrant service)	75-100% hydrants (municipal water)	50-74% hydrants	<50% hydrant
Land Use within primary first due response area	<25% for agriculture (based on zoning) industrial and commercial combined >50%	25-49% used for agriculture (based on zoning) industrial and commercial combined >25%-49%	50% used for agriculture (based on zoning) industrial and commercial combined <25%
Square miles within primary first due response area per station	<3 sq. mi. per station	3-9 sq. mi. per station	>10 sq. mi. per station

D. Application Tips

The following information may be useful when preparing a competitive application:

- NFPA – "FREE ACCESS" - As part of its commitment to enhancing public safety and supporting the emergency responder, the NFPA makes its codes and standards available online for free. Please visit: http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess.

- Regional Applicants are eligible to only apply for Training, Equipment, and/or PPE within Operations and Safety, and Vehicle Acquisition, and Wellness & Fitness.
- SFTA Applicants are only eligible to apply for Equipment, and/or PPE within Operations and Safety, and Vehicle Acquisition.
- Successful Regional applicants will be subject to the funding limitations based on the total population served by the host and participating partners. Any Regional award made will impact or be included in the host organization's funding limitations.
- Applications differ based on the applicant type. For example, the SFTA application for a vehicle will be different from the fire department application for a vehicle. Be sure to select the appropriate applicant type when applying.
- Fire Departments or nonaffiliated EMS organizations that are part of a larger organization with a broader scope should apply through the larger organization to avoid limiting eligible activities. For example, a rescue squad that periodically participates in structural firefighting and that belongs to a county fire and rescue agency should apply through the county for structural PPE; in other words, the county should apply on behalf of the rescue squad.
- FEMA recognizes the number of seated riding positions in front line apparatus as a reasonable measurement of the quantity of PPE or relevant equipment (radios, etc.) to be funded. Exceptions to the front-line seated riding position count may be considered by FEMA if compelling need to include seated riding positions in reserve apparatus can be demonstrated and justified. Applicants that seek to include reserve apparatus seated riding positions in the total seated riding position count must submit a justification narrative.

E. Restrictions on Use of Award Funds

- No AFG Program funds may be used to support hiring (part-time or full-time), salaries, benefits, or fringe benefits (including but not limited to contributions for social security, insurance, workers' compensation, pension, or retirement plans) for any personnel.
- Documented back fill and/or overtime/lost wages costs to support awarded training activities are allowable personnel expenses.
- Instructor's rates/base rates should be provided as part of the application narrative, as well as the market researched competitive rate for delivering the requested training.
- If the instruction provided for an awarded training activity is delivered by an existing member(s) of the recipient's organization, only the established base rate of compensation, without benefits or overtime, may be eligible for reimbursement.
- Recipients are encouraged to allow other organizations to benefit from an awarded activity; e.g., filling another organization's SCBA cylinders using a grant funded compressor, or cleaning another organization's turnout gear, or offering excess capacity training opportunities (if recipients choose to include costs associated with shared benefit [e.g., backfill, overtime, tuition] for members outside of their department, they must apply as a Regional application).
- Under the Operations and Safety Activity, when requesting additional funding in the request detail section of an application, items being requested may only be from that same Activity's area. Furthermore, improperly requesting a grant award for an

activity that is not an Operations and Safety Activity may disqualify the request, for example:

- Do not request a cascade system under PPE (cascade systems are classified as equipment).
- Do not request Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) packs under PPE (RIT packs are classified as equipment).
- Do not request a Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System under equipment (a Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System is classified as PPE).

F. Funding Priorities

I. Operations and Safety – Training Overview

FEMA has determined that hands-on, instructor-led training that meets a national, state, or DHS adopted standard and results in a national or state certification provides the greatest training benefit.

All of the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations: HIGH (H), MEDIUM (M), LOW (L)

Fire Department and Regional Training Priorities by Purpose	
H	• Training evaluated using national or state standards
H	• Training that brings a department into compliance with recommended NFPA or other national standards
H	• Instructor-led training that requires student testing to demonstrate academic competence or practical proficiency
H	• Training that benefits the highest percentage of applicable personnel, such as the hazardous materials training within a fire department or training that will be open to other eligible organizations
M	• Training that does not result in certification
M	• Training that is self-directed/validated
L	• Training that will address an identified risk however it is not associated with compliance to any standards

Fire Department and Regional Training Priorities by Course Type				
Training	**NFPA #**	**Urban**	**Suburban**	**Rural**
NFPA 1001 (firefighter I, II)	1001	H	H	H
NFPA (instructor)	1041	H	H	H
NFPA 472 (Hazmat operations)	472/1072	H	H	H
NFPA 1581(infection control)	1581	H	H	H
Confined space (awareness)	1670	H	H	H
Wildland firefighting (basic)	1143	H	H	H
Wildland firefighting certification (red card)	1051/1143	H	H	H
Wildland Fire Officer	1051	H	H	H
Rapid intervention training	1407	H	H	H
NFPA (officer)	1021	H	H	H
Emergency Medical Responder		H	H	H
Firefighter safety and survival	1407	H	H	H
Safety officer	1521	H	H	H
Driver/operator	1002	H	H	H

Fire Department and Regional Training Priorities				
Training	**NFPA #**	**Urban**	**Suburban**	**Rural**
Fire prevention	1037/1730	H	H	H
Fire inspector	1031	H	H	H
Fire investigator	1033	H	H	H
Fire educator	1035	H	H	H
NIMS/Incident Command System (ICS)	1561	H	H	H
Emergency scene rehab	1584	H	H	H
Critical Incident debriefing/Crisis Intervention	1500/1583	H	H	H
Any training to a National/State or NFPA standards		H	H	H

Fire Department and Regional Training Priorities by Course Type				
Compliance with federal/state-mandated program		H	H	H
Rescue Technician	1006/1670	H	H	H
Emergency Medical Technician		H	H	H
Advanced Emergency Medical to Paramedic		H	H	H
Paramedic to Community Paramedic		H	H	H
Vehicle rescue	1670	H	H	H
Another officer	1021	H	H	M
NFPA [Aircraft Rescue Firefighting (ARFF)]	1003/402	H	H	M
Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)	472/1072	H	H	H
Mass casualty		H	H	H
Hazmat (technician)	472/1072	H	H	H
Training to address a local risk not elevated to a national or state		M	M	M
Specialized Training		M	M	M
Maritime Firefighting	1405/1925/1005	L	L	L
Instructor-led training that does not lead to certification		L	L	L
Self-taught courses		L	L	L
Training not elevated to a national or state standard		L	L	L

Funding Priorities for Fire Departments and Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations Training

The AFG Program provides training grants to meet the educational and performance requirements of fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS personnel. Training should align with the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which designs and specifies a National Standard Curriculum for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training and the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT), a private, central certifying entity whose primary purpose is to maintain a national standard (NREMT also provides certification information for paramedics who relocate to another state).

A higher priority is assigned to the following due to time and cost of upgrading an organization's response level:

- Organizations seeking to elevate the response level from Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) to EMT.
- Organizations seeking to elevate the response level from Advanced EMT (AEMT) to Paramedic.
- Organizations seeking to train Community Paramedics: Organizations seeking to train a high percentage of the active EMRs will receive additional consideration when applying under the Training activity.

Eligible Training Activities for Fire Departments and Regional Applications include but are not limited to:	
• Train-the-trainer courses • Alternative fuel firefighting • Response to natural disasters • Minor interior alterations (requested under Additional Funding and limited to $10,000 total expenditure to support the awarded Training activities (e.g., removal/construction of a non-weight bearing wall) • Overtime expenses paid to career firefighters to attend training or to backfill positions for colleagues who are in training • Rental of facilities to conduct training • Rental of Audio/Visual equipment • Travel expenses associated with attendance at a formal training course or conference (mileage, hotel, and lodging expenses) • Compensation to volunteers (Fire and nonaffiliated EMS) for wages lost to attend training; there is no overtime or backfill for volunteers • Tuition, exam/course fees, and certifications/certification expenses	• Purchase of training curricula and training services (instructors) • Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) awareness, performance, planning, and management • Travel expenses associated with Type3 Incident Management Teams (IMT) attending position development/mentoring assignment with national Type 2 or Type 1 IMTs • Those supplies or expendables for one time- use items essential for an award's scope of work, such as foam, breaching materials (e.g., wood or sheetrock) for ventilation or rescue props, or the amount of fuel required to sustain an awarded live fire training activity, or per NFPA1403 Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, reasonable safety mitigations to a structure acquired for training • Props (single-use or permanent) for training programs cannot exceed $50,000 for Operation and Safety requests. This does not apply to SFTA requests

Ineligible Training Activities for Fire Departments and Regional Applications include but are not limited to:	
• Construction of facilities(buildings, towers, sheds, etc.) • Firefighting equipment or PPE, such as SCBA, used exclusively for training • Remodeling not directly related to grant activities • Any costs associated with planning and/or participating in formal or planned special event exercises to identify user needs, evaluate an organization's performance capabilities, validate existing capabilities, or to facilitate coordination and asset sharing • Firefighting equipment and PPE rental, as well as training facility personnel costs (such as facility maintenance, cleaning, safety officer services, etc.)	• Site preparation to accommodate or modify any training activity, facility, or prop that is a permanent or semi- permanent improvement, including but not limited to: landscaping, cutting or grading an access road, trenching, paving a training area, exterior stairs or sidewalks, or the installation of utilities is an ineligible and non-reimbursable Training activity • Purchase or lease of real estate (this does not preclude departments from securing necessary training facilities such as classrooms, use of towers, training props, etc.) • Purchase of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and Drones • Food and beverages

Eligible Nonaffiliated EMS Training Activities include but are not limited to:	
• EMR • EMT • Advanced EMT (AEMT) • AEMT to Paramedic • Paramedic (Applicant must clearly demonstrate plan to accomplish paramedic training within the period of performance) • Community Paramedics (Paramedics with Primary Care certification) • Travel expenses associated with attendance at a formal training course or conference (air/rail transportation, mileage, hotel/lodging expenses), Note: Food and beverages are ineligible travel expenses	• Attendance at formal training forums or conferences providing continuing education credits, etc. • Overtime expenses paid to career nonaffiliated EMS responders to attend training or to backfill positions for colleagues who are in training • Compensation to volunteers (Fire and nonaffiliated EMS) for wages lost to attend training; there is no overtime or backfill for volunteers • Supplies or expendables or one- time use items essential to complete the training activity of a nonaffiliated EMS award's scope of work. Examples include bandages, splints, expendable respiratory supplies, etc.

II. Operations and Safety - Equipment Overview

AFG Program grants fund equipment for effective response, firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical operations to enhance the public safety.

Requests to replace obsolete or damaged equipment should enable the applicant to meet a consensus standard (e.g., a personal SCBA face piece for every operational member of an organization).

Reminder: When requesting training for any items in this section, enter the request under "Other" within "Additional Funding" in the "Request Details" section of the application. Make sure to identify the type and scope of training, time frame, etc. in the explanation section of additional funds. Training must be specific to the use of the equipment (i.e., vendor training) and not duplicative of courses listed under the Training activity.

NOTE:

- Accountability systems are located under equipment activity.
- All simulators, tow vehicles, and all mobile or fixed fire/evolution props (e.g., burn trailers, forcible entry, or rescue/smoke mazes) are located under the equipment activity.

All of the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations:

NOTE: 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. Under this system, an item that should have a useful life of 10 years is only compared against other items that have a similar lifecycle. An application does not score higher or lower based on the product lifecycle of an item. It only serves to ensure a more even scoring of equipment based on type.

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
BASIC EQUIPMENT			
H	Intermediate	Air Compressor/Fill Station/Cascade System (Fixed or Mobile) for filling SCBA	Air Compressor/Fill Station/Cascade System (Fixed or Mobile) for filling SCBA
H	Long	Appliance(s)/Nozzle(s)/ Foam Educators	Appliance(s)/Nozzle(s)/ Foam Educators
H	Long	Basic Hand Tools (Structural/Wildland)	Basic Hand Tools (Structural/Wildland)
H	Intermediate	Electric/Gas Powered Saws/Tools	Electric/Gas Powered Saws/Tools
H	Short	Fit Tester	Fit Tester

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
H	Intermediate	Hose (Attack/Supply)	Hose (Attack/Supply)
H	Short	Imminently Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) Monitoring Equipment	IDLH Monitoring Equipment
H	Immediate	IDLH Protection for Investigators (This is single-use respiratory protection)	
H	Long	Ladders	Ladders
H	Short	Personal Accountability Systems	Personal Accountability Systems
H	Intermediate	PPE Washer/Extractor/Dryer	PPE Washer/Extractor/Dryer
H M	Intermediate	Props: For Fire Department applicants: M For Regional Applicants: H	Props - H
H	Intermediate	RIT Pack/Cylinder	RIT Pack/Cylinder
M	Intermediate	Generator – Portable	Generator – Portable
H	Intermediate	Ropes, Harnesses, Carabiners, Pulleys, etc.	Ropes, Harnesses, Carabiners, Pulleys, etc.
H M	Short	Simulators - M	Simulators - H
H	Short	Thermal Imaging Camera (Must be NFPA 1801 compliant)	Thermal Imaging Camera (Must be NFPA 1801 compliant)
H	Short	Software and LMS to support training	Software and LMS to support training
M	Short	Computers used in support of training	Computers used in support of training
M	Short	Vehicle Mounted Exhaust Systems	Vehicle Mounted Exhaust Systems
M	Short	Mobile computing devices intended to be used on scene (Tablets)	Mobile computing devices intended to be used on scene (Tablets)
COMMUNICATIONS			
H	Intermediate	Base Station (must be P-25 Compliant)	Base Station (must be P-25 Compliant)
H	Intermediate	Headsets	Headsets
H	Intermediate	Mobile Radios (must be P-25 Compliant)	Mobile Radios (must be P-25 Compliant)
H	Intermediate	Mobile Repeaters (must be P- 25 compliant)	Mobile Repeaters (must be P-25 compliant)
H Rural	Intermediate	Pagers (limited to number of active members)	Pagers (limited to number of active members)

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
H	Intermediate	Portable Radios (must be P-25 compliant, limited to number of AFG approved seated positions)	Portable Radios (must be P-25 compliant, limited to number of AFG approved seated positions)
M	Intermediate	Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)	MDT
M Urban/Sub-urban	Intermediate	Pagers (limited to number of active members)	Pagers (limited to number of active members)
M	Short	Cell phones/carrier plans/software specifically to enable RoIP	Cell phones/carrier plans/software specifically to enable RoIP
EMS EQUIPMENT			
H	Short	Airway Equipment (Non-Disposable)	Airway Equipment (Non-Disposable)
H	Short	Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) BLS Level	AEDs BLS Level
H	Short	Automatic Chest Compression Device (CPR)	Automatic Chest Compression Device (CPR)
H	Short	EMS Training Aids	EMS Training Aids
H	Short	EMS/Rescue Equipment	EMS/Rescue Equipment
H	Short	Monitor/Defibrillator – 15 leads	Monitor/Defibrillator – 15 leads
H	Intermediate	Power Lift Cot	Power Lift Cot
H	Intermediate	Power Lift System	Power Lift System
H	Short	Pulse Oximeters	Pulse Oximeters
H	Short	Responder Rehab Equipment	Responder Rehab Equipment
L	Short	Portable Lift System (i.e., devices, hydraulic or electrical, used to assist with the lifting of patients that are not associated with cots)	Portable Lift System (i.e., devices, hydraulic or electrical, used to assist with the lifting of patients that are not associated with cots)
EXTRICATION			
H	Intermediate	Cutter/Spreader	Cutter/Spreader
H	Intermediate	Vehicle Extrication Equipment	Vehicle Extrication Equipment
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (Hazmat)			
M	Intermediate	Basic Hazmat Response Equipment	Basic Hazmat Response Equipment
M	Intermediate	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment
M	Short	Sampling Devices (Hazmat)	Sampling Devices (Hazmat)

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
SPECIALIZED			
H	Intermediate	Skid Unit	Skid Unit
M	Intermediate	Air Quality Device	Air Quality Device
M	Intermediate	Boats	Boats
M	Short	Marine equipment (NFPA 1925: Standard on Marine Fire-Fighting Vessels)	Marine equipment (NFPA 1925: Standard on Marine Fire-Fighting Vessels)
M	Intermediate	Mobile Generator	Mobile Generator
M	Intermediate	Portable Pump	Portable Pump
L	Short	Specialized Equipment (Other)	Specialized Equipment (Other)
CBRNE EQUIPMENT			
L	Short	CBRNE-related Equipment	CBRNE-related Equipment
L	Short	Non-Disposable Biological Detection	Non-Disposable Biological Detection

Priority	Age Category	Tow Vehicles	Applicant Type
Note: Tow vehicles may be applied for under different application types with differing priority levels. Please reference the chart below when applying for tow vehicles.			
H	Long	Tow Vehicle	SFTA
H	Long	Tow Vehicle	Regional
L	Long	Tow Vehicle	Fire Department

Priority	Age Category	EMS	EMS Regional
COMMUNICATIONS			
H	Intermediate	Base Station (must be P-25 Compliant)	Base Station (must be P-25 Compliant)
H	Intermediate	Mobile Radios (must be P-25 Compliant)	Mobile Radios (must be P-25 Compliant)
H	Intermediate	Mobile Repeaters (must be P-25 Compliant)	Mobile Repeaters (must be P-25 Compliant)
H	Intermediate	Pagers (limited to number of active members)	Pagers (limited to number of active members)

Priority	Age Category	EMS	EMS Regional
H	Intermediate	Portable Radios (must be P-25 Compliant, limited to number of AFG approved seated positions)	Portable Radios (must be P-25 Compliant, limited to number of AFG approved seated positions)
M	Intermediate	MDT	MDT
M	Intermediate	Headsets	Headsets
M	Short	Cell phones/carrier plans/software specifically to enable RoIP	Cell phones/carrier plans/software specifically to enable RoIP
EMS EQUIPMENT			
H	Short	ALS/BLS Equipment	ALS/BLS Equipment
H	Short	Airway Equipment (Non- Disposable)	Airway Equipment (Non-Disposable)
H	Short	AEDs BLS Level	AEDs BLS Level
H	Short	Automatic Chest Compression Device (CPR)	Automatic Chest Compression Device (CPR)
H	Short	EMS Training Aids	EMS Training Aids
H	Short	Monitor/Defibrillator - 15 leads	Monitor/Defibrillator - 15 leads
H	Intermediate	Power Lift Cot	Power Lift Cot
H	Intermediate	Power Lift System	Power Lift System
H	Short	Responder Rehab Equipment	Responder Rehab Equipment
H	Short	Suction	Suction
M	Short	Computers used in support of training	Computers used in support of training
M	Short	Mobile computing devices intended to be used on scene (tablets)	Mobile computing devices intended to be used on scene (tablets)
L	Short	Portable Lift System (i.e., devices, hydraulic or electrical, used to assist with the lifting of patients that are not associated with cots)	Portable Lift System (i.e., devices, hydraulic or electrical, used to assist with the lifting of patients that are not associated with cots)

Priority	Age Category	EMS	EMS Regional
HAZ-MAT			
M	Intermediate	Basic Hazmat Response Equipment	Basic Hazmat Response Equipment
M	Intermediate	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment
M	Short	Sampling Devices (HazMat)	Sampling Devices (HazMat)

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA Equipment Priorities		
Priority		**Definition**
H	Obtain equipment to achieve minimum operational and deployment standards for existing missions	Applies to requests for equipment needed, and not currently owned, to achieve minimum operational and deployment standard for a department's existing mission requirements. The AFG Program will only fund basic equipment not listed in NFPA 1901/1906 chapters 1 to 28.
H	Replace unusable/unrepairable equipment to meet current standard	Applies to equipment that is no longer usable because it is broken and/or damaged beyond repair. Replacement equipment requested under a grant must meet the most current and appropriate standards for that type of equipment.
H	Replace non-compliant equipment to current standard	Applies to equipment that is deemed obsolete and/or is out of compliance with current standards for that type of equipment. Equipment requested under this reason for purchase has not been deemed inoperable, and while it may not be compliant with current standards it is not broken, damaged, or otherwise unusable.

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA Equipment Priorities		
M	Obtain equipment for new mission	Applies to requests for equipment supplies or inventories that are intended to fulfill minimum services requirements associated with new missions that a department is taking on and building the capability for but has not been previously fulfilled. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, establishing a new hazmat capability or Swift Water Rescue capability.
L	Upgrade technology to current standard	Applies to requests for equipment that may or may not be owned, but newer technology is available.

Additional Considerations for Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA Equipment Priorities

- Equipment that has a direct effect on firefighters' health and safety
- Age of equipment considered for replacement
- Equipment that operationally benefits other jurisdictions
- Equipment that brings the department into compliance with a national recommended standard, (e.g., NFPA or statutory compliance like OSHA)

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA Equipment Activities include but are not limited to:

- Shipping, taxes, assembly and installation of the requested equipment
- Extended warranties and service agreements if acquired concurrent with initial acquisition
- Minor interior alterations (requested under Additional Funding and limited to $10,000 total expenditure) to support the awarded Equipment activities (e.g., removal /construction of a non-weight bearing wall)
- Equipment for response to incidents involving CBRNE/WMD
- Training specific to the requested equipment
- Requested support activities for Equipment requiring supplies or expendables or "onetime" use items essential for an award's scope of work, such as foam, breaching materials (e.g., wood or sheetrock) for ventilation or rescue props, or the amount of fuel required to sustain an awarded live fire training activity, or per NFPA1403 Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, reasonable safety mitigations to a structure acquired for training

Ineligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA Equipment Activities include but are not limited to:	
• Construction of facilities, such as buildings, towers, sheds to house communications • All fixed non-mobile repeaters or fixed site amplifiers • Sirens or other outdoor warning devices • Signage of any kind • Phones (telephone/satellite/cell) • Investments in emergency communications systems and equipment must meet applicable SAFECOM Guidance • Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System (PPE) • Computer assisted dispatch (CAD) systems and software, geographic information systems (GIS), dispatch consoles, workstations and office furniture • Nonaffiliated EMS expendable supplies (including, but not limited to medications)	• Utility Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles (UTV/ATV) • UAVs and Drones • Bomb disposal equipment and robots • Mobile radios for personally owned vehicles (except Chief Fire Officer's personal vehicle if justified) • Those supplies or expendables or common one-time use items such as foam, soaps, disinfectant wipes, medical gowns/gloves, bandages, any drug, intravenous bags/fluids, defibrillator pads/electrodes, syringes, cervical collars, batteries, exhaust system filters and splints • Flashover or other simulators/props that do not meet NFPA 1402 or 1403 standard (homemade or aftermarket simulators) • Subscriptions, memberships, equipment rental or lease to purchase

IMPORTANT: The only eligible AFG Program activity for interoperable communications equipment is the acquisition of P-25 compliant equipment.

- P-25 compliant interoperable communications equipment has a digital platform that is programmable, scalable, and can communicate in analog mode with legacy radios, and in both analog and digital mode with other P-25 equipment. P-25 compliance enhances interoperability, allowing first responders to communicate with each other to coordinate their response to and mitigate all hazards.
- The procurement of interoperable communications equipment that does not meet P-25 compliance is unallowable.
- There are no waivers for P-25 waivers compliance. All recipients awarded activities with emergency communication equipment and its related activities must comply with the SAFECOM Guidance for Emergency Communication Grants, including provisions on technical standards that ensure and enhance interoperable communications.
- The technical specifications for FY 2018 SAFECOM Guidance on Emergency Communications Grants is available at https://www.dhs.gov/safecom/blog/2018/05/16/release-fy-2018-safecom-guidance-emergency-communications-grants.
  It is the recipient's responsibility to obtain documented evidence that the equipment to be acquired has been tested and passed all the applicable P-25

requirements and the recipient shall be able to produce such documentation to FEMA upon request.

- AFG Program applicants are not required to identify a specific P-25-compliant product in their application narrative, but they must affirm that the interoperable communications equipment requested or acquired will be P-25 compliant.

Note: Recipients using FY2020 AFG Program funds to support emergency communications activities should review and comply with the SAFECOM Guidance for Emergency Communication Grants, including provisions on technical standards that ensure and enhance interoperable communications. Communication equipment (e.g., portable radios) would be included in this standard. Recipients investing in emergency communications must ensure their projects support the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) for their state.

III. Operations and Safety - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Overview

AFG Program funds used to acquire PPE may only be used to acquire compliant PPE for firefighting and nonaffiliated EMS personnel. Only the acquisition of PPE compliant with the most current edition of NFPA 1971, 1976, 1977, 1981, and 1999, are eligible activities. The acquisition of used, refurbished or updated PPE will be ineligible for reimbursement.

PPE requested should have the goal of increasing firefighter safety. When requesting to replace noncompliant or inoperable/unusable/unrepairable PPE (e.g., Turnout Gear and SCBA), applicants will be asked to provide the age of the items being replaced. All PPE items in the current inventory must be accurately described and accounted for in the application narrative.

Based in part on NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting, in order for PPE (to include SCBA) to be considered noncompliant, the items must be a minimum of 2 NFPA cycles and 10 years of age or older from the date they were manufactured.

Training for requested PPE

- Applicants must certify that all grant-funded PPE will only be used by sufficiently trained personnel (failure to meet this requirement will result in the request for funding deemed ineligible).
- If applicants are requesting training to support a PPE activity, it must be entered in the "Additional Funding" section within the "Request Details" section of the application.

- Acquiring or replacing an individual SCBA face piece for each operational member of an organization is High H Priority. To the extent a request for additional face pieces exceeds any face pieces requested as part of an SCBA unit,

that request should be entered as a separate request line item and will not be considered a request "to increase supplies" (e.g., the applicant has the need for 35 Face Pieces, and requested 25 SCBA Units, applicants should separately request 10 additional Face Pieces).

- FEMA considers a complete set of Structural/Proximity PPE Turnout Gear to be comprised of these NFPA 1971 or 1976 compliant components: one pair of pants, one coat, one helmet, two hoods, one pair of boots, two pairs of gloves, and one pair of suspenders, one pair of goggles. In the AHJ where additional PPE such as a Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System is statutorily required, FEMA will consider all statutorily required items to be part of a complete PPE set.
- FEMA considers a complete set of EMS PPE Turnout Gear to be comprised of these NFPA 1999 compliant components: one pair of pants, one coat, one helmet, one pair of boots, one pair of gloves, one pair of suspenders and one pair of goggles.
- FEMA considers a complete set of Wildland PPE Turnout Gear to be comprised of these NFPA 1977 compliant components: one pair of pants, one coat, one jumpsuit, one helmet, one pair of boots, one pair of gloves, one pair of suspenders, one pair of goggles, one fire shelter, web gear, backpack and canteen/hydration system. (**Note: funding is limited to (1) set of PPE Turnout Gear per person.**)
- FEMA considers a complete SCBA unit to be comprised of a harness/backpack, one face piece and two cylinders. The following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations:

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Joint/Regional, and SFTA PPE Priorities		
Priority	**Activity**	**Definitions**
H	Replace unusable/unrepairable PPE to meet current standard	Applies to PPE-Turnout Gear that is no longer usable because it is broken and/or damaged beyond repair. (This turnout gear is out-of-service and not being worn by emergency responders.) All PPE-Turnout gear requested under a grant must meet the appropriate standards for PPE-Turnout Gear. Departments requesting entire inventory replacement under this purpose will be required to provide documentation to validate inventory condition.
H	Increase supply for new hires and/or existing firefighters that do not have one set of turnout gear (PPE) or allocated seated positions (SCBA)	Applies to PPE-Turnout Gear for new firefighters (i.e. new hires or volunteer recruits) and/or existing firefighters that do not currently have one set of PPE-Turnout Gear.

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Joint/Regional, and SFTA PPE Priorities		
M	Replace noncompliant PPE to current standard	Applies to PPE-Turnout Gear that is deemed obsolete and/or is out of compliance with current standards for PPE-Turnout Gear. PPE-Turnout Gear to be replaced, it has not been deemed inoperable, and while it may not be compliant with current standards it is not broken, damaged, or otherwise unusable.

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA SCBA Priorities	
H	**Note:** FEMA considers SCBA (PPE) noncompliant if it is a minimum of two NFPA cycles and 10 years of age or older, from the date of manufacture. • Replace unusable or unrepairable equipment to current standard, NFPA 1981, 2002 Edition or prior. (These SCBA(s) are out-of-service and not being used by emergency responders). • Increase supply for new hires and/or existing firefighters that do not have one set of SCBA for allocated seated positions. • Funding every operational member with their own individual face piece.
M	• Replace noncompliant PPE to upgrade technology.

Additional Considerations for Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and SFTA SCBA Priorities
• Applicants will be required to provide the age of the PPE being replaced. • Priority of the requested PPE is a factor. • Call volume can contribute to the justification for new risk. • Applicants with the oldest PPE and/or trying to bring the department into 100 percent NFPA compliance or the number of active members who will have compliant gear.

PPE List	
Structural/Proximity - H	
• American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Traffic Vests • Boots • Coats • Complete Set of Turnout Gear • Gloves • Goggles	• Helmets • Hoods • Pants • Pass Devices • Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System • Suspenders

PPE List	
Respiratory - H	
• Air-Line Unit • Face Pieces • Respirators	• SCBA Spare Cylinders • SCBA (SCBA Unit includes: Harness/Backpack, Face Piece, and2 cylinders)
Wildland - H	
• Jumpsuits/Coveralls • Boots • Coats • Pants • Suspenders	• Goggles • Shelters • Web Gear/Backpacks • Canteens/Hydration Systems • Helmets • Hoods
Specialized PPE - M	
• Ballistic Protective Equipment (BPE), which includes one vest, one helmet, one triage bag, one pair of goggles • Chemical/Biological Suits (Must conform to NFPA 2012 edition) • Encapsulated Suits	• Extrication Clothing/Rescue Clothing • Proximity Suits • Splash Suits • Wet and Dry Suits

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Joint/Regional and SFTA PPE Activities include but are not limited to:	
• ANSI approved retro-reflective highway apparel • Training for requested PPE	• Customized helmet shields • Level C suits • Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System

Ineligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional and SFTA PPE Activities include but are not limited to:	
• Three-quarter length rubber boots • Uniforms (formal/parade or station/duty) and uniform items (hats, badges, etc.) • Rapid Intervention Packs • Gear Bags • Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System for nonaffiliated EMS organizations • Food and beverages • Integrated thermal imaging cameras (TIC) with heads-up display **Note:** Where bailout system is statutorily required, FEMA will consider all statutorily required items to be part of a complete PPE set	• Bomb disposal suits • Any communications equipment (e.g., radios and pagers) in the PPE section • Structural, proximity, wildland firefighting gear, or rescue and extrication gear for nonaffiliated EMS organizations • Any decals, embroidery, engraving, flags, graphics, logos, vehicles, and PPE Turnout lettering that customizes awarded items beyond the normal expectation (except customized helmet shields) • Funding is limited to one set of PPE Turnout Gear per person • Equipment rental or lease to purchase

IV. Operations and Safety - Wellness and Fitness Overview

Wellness and Fitness activities are intended to strengthen emergency responders so that their mental, physical, and emotional capabilities are resilient enough to withstand the demands of all hazardous operations. In order to be eligible for funding, applicants must offer, or plan to offer, all five of the following Priority 1 activities as discussed in the table below.

Note: The AFG Program has added cancer screening programs as an eligible item.

Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness Priorities
Priority 1 - Below are the five activities required for a complete Wellness and Fitness program. • Initial medical exams • Job-related immunization • Annual medical and fitness evaluation • Behavioral health • Cancer Screening Program to meet NFPA 1582 NOTE: Applicants are encouraged to review NFPA 1583 for guidance on the minimum requirements for the development, implementation and management of a health-related fitness program. **Priority 2 -** Applicants may only apply for Priority 2 Items if the applicant offers or is requesting a combination of the five activities required under Priority 1.

Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness Priorities

- Candidate physical ability evaluation.
- Injury/illness rehab.
- Formal fitness, injury prevention.
- International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) or IAFC peer fitness trainer program, (including transportation, travel, overtime/backfill, and reasonable expenses associated with member participation in Train- the-Trainer for IAFC/IAFF and implementation of a peer fitness trainer programs). Core components included in a firefighter fitness assessment include:
    - Aerobic Capacity
    - Body Composition
    - Muscular Strength
    - Muscular Endurance, and
    - Flexibility

Departments that have some of the Priority 1 programs in place must apply for funds to implement the missing Priority 1 programs before applying for funds for any additional program or equipment within this activity. In addition, for all AFG Programs, all grant-funded physicals (except those for explorers) must meet NFPA 1582 standards (Chapter 6, Medical Evaluations of Candidates 6.1 and Chapter 9, Essential Job Tasks — Specific Evaluation of Medical Conditions in Members). The cost of physicals should be based on local physician or health center prices. Detailed information on implementing NFPA 1582 physicals can be found at https://www.fstaresearch.org/roadmap.

Applicants should note that FEMA is working with the NFPA Technical Committee on Fire Service Occupational Safety and Health to evaluate whether the NFPA 1582 standard complies with applicable federal civil rights laws. No decisions have been made and FEMA will issue additional guidance if and when more information becomes available.

NOTE: Simultaneous requests for Priority 1 and Priority 2 activities will receive a lower funding consideration than requests that complete the bundle of the five Priority 1 activities. Applicants should review Health Related Fitness Programs as outlined in NFPA 1583 which is summarized below.

NFPA 1583 Standards on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members

Scope. This standard establishes the minimum requirements for the development, implementation, and management of a health-related fitness program (HRFP) for members of the fire department involved in emergency operations.

Purpose.

The purpose of this standard is to provide the minimum requirements for a health- related fitness program for fire department members that enhances the members' ability to perform occupational activities efficiently and safely and reduces the risk of injury, disease, and premature death.

This document is intended to help fire departments develop a health-related fitness program for fire department members that requires mandatory participation but is not punitive.

This document is not intended to establish physical performance criteria.

Eligible Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness activities include but are not limited to:	
• The five Priority 1 items, initial medical exams, job-related immunization, annual medical and fitness evaluation, behavioral health and cancer screening. • Behavioral health programs to include, but not limited to: Critical Incident Stress Management Programs or Employee Assistance Programs. • Transportation expenses related to a member's participation in offered Wellness and Fitness activities.	• Contractual costs (non-hiring) for personnel (such as nutritional counseling), physical fitness equipment (including shipping charges and sales tax, as applicable), and supplies directly related to physical fitness activities. • Minor interior alterations (requested under Additional Funding and limited to $10,000 total expenditure) to support the awarded Wellness and Fitness activities (e.g., removal/ construction of a non-weight bearing wall), will require EHP review.

Ineligible Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness activities include but are not limited to:	
• Fitness club memberships for participants or their families. • Non-cash incentives, (e.g., t-shirts or hats of nominal value and vouchers to local businesses or time-off). • Purchase of real estate. • Cash incentives. • Food and beverages	• Purchase of medical equipment that is not used as part of the Wellness and Fitness program. • Contractual services for non-medical and/or non-licensed professionals for programs such as smoking cessation. • Subscriptions and memberships.

V. Operations and Safety - Modifications to Facilities Overview

AFG Program funds may be used to modify fire stations and other facilities. New fire station construction is not eligible.

Eligible activities include source capturing exhaust, sprinkler, carbon monoxide alarms or smoke/fire detection systems – only for these types of systems and not multi-purpose systems that encompass ineligible features as described below.

All changes to facilities including major or minor modifications and equipment installations require EHP review.

The benchmark for eligibility does not apply to minor interior alterations (requested under Additional Funding and limited to $10,000 total expenditure) to support Training, or Wellness and Fitness activities (e.g., removal/construction of a non-weight bearing wall).

In recognition of the risks posed by exposure to diesel fumes, Source Capture Exhaust Extraction Systems (SCES) are an AFG High H Priority item for vehicle exhaust mitigation under Modification to Facilities.

An SCES is a system where exhaust gases from a vehicle are captured directly, via a conduit that attaches to/over the end of the vehicle's exhaust system at the tailpipe. The captured exhaust gases are expelled through the attached conduit via mechanical/pneumatic means to the exterior of the building.

No modification may change the structure's footprint or profile. If requesting multiple items, such as a sprinkler system and exhaust system, the funding for any projects or activities cannot cumulatively exceed $100,000 (Total Project Cost(s)) for any individual station. Eligible projects under this activity must have a direct effect on the health and safety of firefighters.

Note: Vehicle Mounted Exhaust Systems are now listed as a "medium" priority in the equipment activity.

All of the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations:

Eligible Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Modifications to Facilities Priorities include but are not limited to:	
H	• Departments requesting source capture exhaust systems, sprinkler systems, carbon monoxide, or smoke/fire detection systems – only for these types of systems and not multi-purpose systems that encompass ineligible features as described below
M	• Emergency generators, Air Quality Systems (AQSs) **Note:** AQSs are fixed equipment that are air purifying, scrubbing, and/or air exchange systems

Ineligible Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Modifications to Facilities activities include but are not limited to:	
• Station maintenance • Resurfacing bay floors • Security systems, or other alerting systems of similar purpose designed to notify fire stations of unauthorized access or provide deployment notifications or multi-purpose systems that include any of these features even if they also include otherwise eligible features	• Interior remodeling not pertaining to the requested project(s) • Food and beverages

Facility Considerations
H Staffed
H Facilities with sleeping quarters
M Facilities without sleeping quarters M Part-time or selected coverage
L Not on a regular basis
L Training facilities and marine fire facilities

G. Regional Applications

Overview

A Regional application is an opportunity for a Fire Department or a Nonaffiliated EMS (NAEMS) organization to act as a host and apply for funding on behalf of itself and any number of other participating AFG Program eligible organizations (a NAEMS organization who is a host regional applicant can only host other NAEMS organizations). A Fire Department that serves as host regional applicant can apply on behalf of other eligible fire departments and NAEMS organizations within the same application. SFTAs are not eligible to apply under the Regional activity. Eligible Regional activities are Vehicle Acquisition and Operations and Safety (but only for Training, Equipment, Wellness and Fitness, and PPE activities). Regional activities should achieve cost effectiveness, support regional efficiency and resilience, and benefit more than one local jurisdiction (county, parish, town, township, city or village) directly from the activities implemented with the grant funds. To align with the stated program objective of fostering interoperability (see Section A), departments and agencies party to regional applications must use the same vendor.

The community identification characteristic (e.g., Rural, Urban, or Suburban) and the organizational status of the host applicant (e.g., Career, Combination, or Volunteer) will be entered and used for the regional application, regardless of the composition of the participating partners.

Regional populations served are the aggregate of the geographically fixed primary first due response areas of the host and participating partner organizations.

Neither the regional host nor any participating partner is prevented from also applying on behalf of their own organization for any AFG Program activity (Vehicle Acquisition or Operations and Safety) however, it cannot be for the same item. For example, a department cannot apply for PPE under its own organization and participate in a regional PPE application.

In the application narrative, a Regional host must include a list of all the AFG Program eligible participating organizations benefitting from a proposed Regional project, including validated points of contact, each organization's EIN, and clear and detailed information on the regional activities requested.

Host organizations should provide specific details, fully explaining the distribution of any grant-funded acquisitions or grant-funded contracted services, as well as the responsibilities between the host and the partner organizations.

In order to apply for a regional project, the host organization must agree, if awarded, to be responsible for all aspects of the grant. This includes, but is not limited to, cost share, accountability for the assets, and all reporting requirements in the regional application.

The host will be required to enter information that captures the macro demographics (e.g., total square miles) and master listings of information (e.g., combined SCBA inventories)

of the partners that serve the region.

All participants of a Regional applicant must be compliant with AFG Program requirements, including being current with past grants, closeouts, and other reporting requirements. Upon notification by the AFG Program Office, the host agency shall not distribute grant funded assets or provide grant-funded contractual services to non-compliant partner organizations. The host and the delinquent partners will be notified by the AFG Program Office of their specific deficiency.

Regional host applicants and participating partner agencies must execute a MOU or equivalent document signed by the host and all participating organizations. The agreement should specify the individual and mutual responsibilities of the participating partners, the participant's level of involvement in the project(s), and the proposed distribution of all grant funded assets and/or contracted services. Copies of the MOU will be requested during the technical evaluation of the application.

The MOU must specify the individual and mutual responsibilities of the host and participating partners, the host's and participant's level of involvement in the project(s), the participating partner's EIN numbers, and the proposed distribution of all grant funded assets or contracted services. Any entity named in the application as benefiting from the award must be an eligible AFG Program organization and must be a party to the MOU or equivalent document.

H. Vehicle Acquisition

Overview

Vehicles purchased with AFG Program funds must be compliant with NFPA 1901 (Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus), NFPA 1906 (Standard for Wildland Fire Apparatus), or NFPA 1917 or equivalent (Standard for Automotive Ambulances). Leases, loan payments, or installment plans to obtain a vehicle are not eligible acquisition activities under the AFG Program and will not be reimbursed.

Community Paramedic vehicles are non-transport vehicles and are not intended to have a dual role (e.g., as utility or support vehicles). There is nothing inherent in the delivery of community paramedic services that requires any emergency response packages (e.g., lights, sirens) or operational equipment (e.g., rescue tools, structural/wildland firefighting equipment); consequently, such activities are ineligible.

Applicants may apply for more than one vehicle. Requests cannot exceed the financial cap based on population listed in the application. If a department submits multiple types of applications, and more than one of those requests are approved, the department will be held to the same financial cap based on the population listed in the application.

When requesting more than one vehicle, applicants will be asked to fill out a separate line item and answer all the questions including a separate narrative for each vehicle. For example, if applicants are requesting to replace three ambulances, the applicant must fill out the age and vehicle identification number (VIN) of each vehicle being replaced. Applicants cannot use the same VIN in each line item.

In the case(s) when an applicant is not replacing a vehicle but only changing the service status of a vehicle(s), such as from first due to reserve, a VIN number is still required for the narrative and for the vehicle being reassigned.

Applicants requesting fire vehicles that do not have drivers or operators trained to NFPA 1002 or equivalent and are not planning to have a training program in place by the time the awarded vehicle(s) is delivered, will not receive a vehicle award.

Applicants requesting nonaffiliated EMS vehicles that do not have drivers or operators trained to the National Standard Emergency Vehicle Operator Curriculum (EVOC) developed by the United States Department of Transportation (DOT), or equivalent, and are not planning to have a training program in place by the time the awarded vehicle(s) is delivered, will not receive a vehicle award.

All applicants may request funding for a driver training program within the "Vehicle Acquisition" section but must add the request in the "Additional Funding" area in the "Request Details" section of the Vehicle Application.

All driver training program(s) must be in place prior to the delivery of the awarded vehicle(s) or the recipient will be considered in violation of the grant agreement.
The pre-score evaluation criteria consider the department's need for the vehicle based on the age/condition of current vehicles and/or the demands on the organization. ***All of the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations:***

Eligible Fire Department, and SFTA Vehicle activities include but are not limited to the following Vehicle Priorities:			
Priority	**Urban Communities**	**Suburban Communities**	**Rural Communities**
H	• Aerial • Ambulance • Pumper • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium, or Heavy • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Quint • Brush Type III or larger	• Aerial • Ambulance • Pumper • Tanker/Tender • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium or Heavy • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Quint • Brush	• Aerial • Ambulance • Brush/Attack • Pumper • Tanker/Tender • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Quint

Eligible Fire Department, and SFTA Vehicle activities include but are not limited to the following Vehicle Priorities:			
M	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazmat Unit • Air/Light Unit • Rehab Unit	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazmat Unit • Air/Light Unit • Rehab Unit	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazardous Materials Unit • Air/Light Unit • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium, or Heavy
L	• ARFF • Foam Truck • Fire Rescue/Boat • Highway Safety Unit • Hybrid (i.e. Transport Engine) • Tanker/Tender	• ARFF • Foam Truck • Highway Safety Unit • Hybrid (i.e. Transport Engine) • Fire Rescue/Boat	• ARFF • Foam Truck • Highway Safety Unit • Hybrid (i.e. Transport Engine) • Fire Rescue/Boat • Rehab Unit

Eligible Regional Vehicle activities for Fire Departments (ALL Community Types)	
H	• Aerial • Air/Light Unit • Bariatric Ambulance • Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Rehab Unit • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium or Heavy • Tow Vehicle (Applied for under equipment)
M	• Highway Safety Unit
L	• Hazardous Materials Unit • Foam Truck

Eligible Nonaffiliated EMS and Nonaffiliated Regional Vehicle activities	
H	• Ambulances • Bariatric Ambulance • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare)

Compliance with Standards

- Ambulances must comply with NFPA 1917, Edition 2016, or GSA Federal Standard KKK- A-1822F
- Applicants must certify that unsafe vehicles will be permanently removed from service if awarded a grant. Acceptable uses of unsafe vehicles include farm, nursery, scrap metal, salvage, construction, or donation to a foreign entity
- Applicants should consider adopting the principles of Traffic Incident Management Systems. The USFA report on TIMS can be found at https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa_330.pdf.
- New fire apparatus must be compliant with NFPA 1901 or 1906 for the year ordered/manufactured

Additional Considerations (to include, but not limited to)

- Age and mileage of the vehicle being replaced; older equipment receives higher consideration
- Age of the newest vehicle in the department's fleet that is like the vehicle to be replaced
- Average age of the fleet; older equipment within the same class
- Call volume of primary first due response area or region
- Converted vehicles (with an emphasis on tanker/brush trucks) not designed or intended for use in the fire service departments that have automatic aid agreements, mutual aid agreements, or both. A converted vehicle is any vehicle that is not engineered to an NFPA standard, or not being used for its original design, or over its gross vehicle weight (GVW)
- Vehicles on loan to the organization in the application narrative but not in the organization's inventory
- Damaged vehicles and out of service vehicles in the organization's inventory
- Replacement of open cab/jump seat configurations

IMPORTANT

Upon accepting an offer of an award for Vehicle Acquisition under the AFG Program, grant recipients must submit a copy of their vehicle purchase contract to the designated Regional FPS or Program Analyst. To locate Regional FPSs or Program Analyst, please visit https://www.fema.gov/fire-grant-contact-information.

Applicants will be asked to scan document(s) into a PDF format and email them to the Regional FPS for inclusion in the grant file. Submitting a vehicle purchase contract will assist in the programmatic monitoring of an award and help ensure programmatic compliance with the Improper Payments Eliminations and Recovery Act of 2012 (Pub. L. No. 112-248). If recipients do not submit a vehicle purchase contract, they will be

unable to:

- Submit for an advance of federal funds for partial vehicle payment or chassis payment.
- Submit an amendment requesting a Period of Performance extension for the project.

Performance Bond Strongly Recommended: Performance bonds are strongly recommended but not required by the AFG Program. This is for any organization that is going to advance its own funds to their vendor prior to receipt of the vehicle. The bond may be obtained through the vendor or bank. The concept behind this is to ensure the applicant's funds are not lost in the event of a vendor's failure to perform, e.g., not finishing or delivering the vehicle or going out of business.

Prepayment Bond Required: AFG Program vehicle awardees are required to obtain a prepayment bond if the recipient plans to advance federal funds to their vendor for a down payment. This is to safeguard the federal funds against loss if the vendor goes out of business or fails to deliver the vehicle. Prepayment bonds may be obtained through the vendor or bank. The cost of a Prepayment Bond is a reimbursable activity under a vehicle acquisition award.

Penalty Clause Required: All contracts for any AFG Program-funded vehicle must contain a penalty clause. Non-delivery by the contract's specified date, or other vendor nonperformance, will require a penalty that is no less than $100 per day until such time that the vehicle, compliant with the terms of the contract, has been accepted by the recipient.

Down Payment: A down payment for the purchase of a vehicle is allowable if required in the vehicle purchase contract, but FEMA will only allow up to 25 percent of the federal share to be drawn for this purpose.

Any costs over-and-above the 25 percent limit, such as the cost of a chassis or any other fees or services, must be borne by the recipient or deferred until final payment is drawn.

Federal funds may not be requested for any other payments to include, but not limited to: periodic or progress vehicle payments, loan payments, or the acquisition of NFPA 1901 compliant equipment for the awarded vehicle if they are being supplied under the vehicle contract. Purchases outside of the vehicle contract can be requested for payment, i.e. driver/operator training, physical exams for driver/operator, and NFPA 1901/1906 compliant equipment specific to the type of apparatus awarded.

Final Payment: To expedite the acquisition process, and prior to the vehicle being received, inspected, and accepted, the recipient may request the final vehicle payment as an advance payment request. However, the recipient shall not disburse or satisfy the vehicle obligation until after the vehicle is received, inspected, and accepted by the recipient.

Vehicle Loans: Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.313(a)(2), recipients may not encumber AFG Program-funded equipment unless approved by FEMA. For example, recipients may not use a vehicle funded with AFG Program funds as collateral for any type of financial loan unless approved by FEMA.

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations, Regional, and SFTA Vehicle activities include but are not limited to:	
• Cost of vehicle • Physicals to meet current NFPA 1582/US DOT 649 F • Cost of associated equipment that is eligible under current NFPA 1901/1906	• Driver/operator training programs that meet applicable standards, current NFPA 1002 or EVOC, or equivalent • Travel expenses (air/rail transportation, mileage, hotel/lodging) to inspect a requested vehicle during production (if justified in the Vehicles narrative) **Note: Food and beverages are ineligible travel expenses**

Ineligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations, Joint/Regional, and SFTA Vehicle activities include but are not limited to:	
• Leasing, rental, or installment purchase of any grant funded vehicle • Aircraft, bulldozers, and construction- related equipment • Using the vehicle being awarded as collateral for any financial loan • Food and beverages	• UTVs and ATVs are not eligible • UAVs and Drones • Used or refurbished apparatus are ineligible activities under Vehicle Acquisition • Converted vehicles not originally designed for firefighting are not eligible for refurbishment

Example of vehicle types

- Pumper (an apparatus that carries a minimum of 300 gallons of water and has a pump with the capacity to pump a minimum of 750 gallons per minute)
- Urban interface vehicles (Type I) pumper (300 gallons of water and 750 GPM)
- Ambulance (vehicle used for transporting patients)
- Tanker/Tender (an apparatus that has water capacity in excess of 1,000 gallons of water
- Quint Aerial (an aerial ladder, elevating platform, or water tower that is designed to position personnel, handle materials, provide continuous egress, or discharge water)
- Quint (Fire apparatus with a permanently mounted fire pump, a water tank, a hose storage area, an aerial ladder or elevating platform with a permanently mounted waterway, and a complement of ground ladders)
- Aerial Ladder: Elevating platform, or water tower that is designed to position personnel, handle materials, provide continuous egress, or discharge water

Unsafe Vehicles

If applicants specify the vehicle(s) to be replaced are unsafe, they must certify that if awarded, the unsafe vehicle to be replaced will be permanently removed from emergency service response. Permanently removed from emergency service response means the recipient cannot use the vehicle being replaced for any emergency service response, nor can the recipient sell or otherwise transfer title to any individual or emergency service response organization that will use the unsafe vehicle for emergency service response.

A recipient who certifies it will remove an unsafe vehicle from service but then sells/transfers the unsafe vehicle to another emergency service response organization, or otherwise does not remove the unsafe vehicle from emergency service response, is considered to be in violation of the grant agreement.

Acceptable dispositions (donation or sale) of unsafe vehicles include. but are not limited to: a training facility (NO emergency response off the training grounds), farm use, construction or nursery use, sale to a non-emergency service response entity for refurbishment, scrap metal, salvage or foreign donation.

Appendix C: Award Administration Information

1. *Appendix C contains detailed information on AFG Program Award Administration. Reviewing this information may help recipients in the programmatic and financial administration of their award(s).*

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 Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline at (800) 323-8603, by fax at (202) 254-4297, or email DHSOIGHOTLINE@dhs.gov.

I. Economic Hardship Waivers of Cost Share and Maintenance of Effort

In cases of demonstrated economic hardship, and upon the request of the recipient, the Administrator may waive or reduce an AFG Program cost share or MOE requirement for certain recipients. (15 U.S.C. § 2229(k)(4)(A)) As required by statute, the Administrator of FEMA established guidelines for determining what constitutes economic hardship and published these guidelines at FEMA's website:

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1519836401291-5ab3e7fc3eaea15bea8a68b5638e892d/Eco_Hardship_Waiver_FPS_SAFER_AFG_IB_FINAL.pdf

The applicant is required to submit documentation supporting their request for an Economic Hardship Waiver at the time of the application by attaching the supporting document to the grant application.

To receive and Economic Hardship Waiver the applicant must address the specific conditions as well as format the waiver request submission as specified in 'Section III – Guidance, Part D: Eligibility – Demonstrating Economic Hardship' of Information Bulletin No. 427.

Failure to provide documentation at the time of application or address the conditions or following the prescribed format in Information Bulletin No. 427 will result in a denial of the waiver.

II. Grant Writer/Preparation Fees

Fees for grant writers may be included as a pre-award expenditure. Fees payable on a contingency basis are not an eligible expense. For grant writer fees to be eligible as a pre-award expenditure, the fees must be specifically identified and listed within the "Request Details" section of the application. FEMA will only consider reimbursements for application preparation, not administration, up to, but not more than $1,500. Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, recipients may not use federal grant funds to reimburse any entity, including a grant writer or preparer, if that entity is presently suspended or debarred by the Federal Government from receiving funding under federally-funded

grants or contracts. Recipients must verify that the contractor is not suspended or debarred from participating in specified federal procurement or nonprocurement transactions pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.300.

By submitting the application, applicants are certifying all of the information contained therein is true and an accurate reflection of the organization, and that regardless of the applicant's intent, the submission of information that is false or misleading may result in actions by FEMA. These actions include but are not limited to the submitted application not being considered for award, temporary withholding of funding under the existing award pending investigation, or referral to the DHS OIG.

Prior to submission of the application, please review all work produced by grant writers or other third parties for accuracy. In addition, in order to charge grant writer fees to the grant award, the fees must have been paid no later than 30 days after the end of the application period. The following documentation shall be provided to FEMA upon request:

i. A copy of the grant writer's contract for services
ii. A copy of the invoice or purchase order
iii. A copy of the canceled check (front and back)

Failure to provide the requested documentation may result in the grant writer fee being deemed ineligible and the grant reduced accordingly.

NOTE: FEMA requires that all applicants identify any individual or organization that assisted with the development, preparation, or review of the application to include drafting or writing the narrative and budget, whether that person, entity, or agent is compensated or not and whether the assistance took place prior to submitting the application.

III. Maintenance and Sustainment for AFG Programs

The use of FEMA preparedness grant funds for the costs of repairs or replacement, as well as maintenance contracts, warranties, and user fees may be allowable.

The intent of eligible Maintenance and Sustainment activities is to provide direct support to the critical capabilities developed using FEMA and other DHS grants and support activities. Routine upkeep and the supplies, expendables, or one-time use items that support routine upkeep (e.g., gasoline, tire replacement, routine oil changes, monthly inspections or grounds and facility maintenance) are the responsibility of the recipient and may not be funded with AFG Program funding.

Generally, when purchasing a maintenance agreement, service contract, or extended warranty for systems or equipment, the period of coverage provided under such a plan may not extend beyond the period of performance of the grant with which the agreement, warranty or contract is purchased.

The duration of an extended warranty purchased incidental to the original purchase of the equipment may exceed the period of performance as long as the coverage purchased is consistent with that which is typically provided for, or available through, these types of agreements, warranties, or contracts. When purchasing a stand-alone warranty or extending an existing maintenance contract on an already-owned piece of equipment or system, coverage purchased may not exceed the period of performance of the award used to purchase the maintenance agreement or warranty. As with warranties and maintenance agreements, this policy extends to licenses and user fees as well.

Even if purchased incidental to the original purchase of the equipment, the duration of an extended maintenance agreement or warranty must also be reasonable for the type of equipment or system being purchased. For example, if a vendor offers a 10-year extended warranty incidental to the purchase of a piece of equipment, but the useful life of that equipment being purchased is five years, the purchase of a 10-year extended warranty would not be a reasonable cost and may not be charged to the grant.

IV. Taxes, Fees, Levies, and Assessments

Taxes, fees, levies, or assessments that the recipient is legally required to pay and is directly related to any eligible AFG Program acquisition activity may be charged to an AFG Program award pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.470. These charges shall be identified and enumerated in the AFG application narrative, as well as the "Request Details" section of the acquisition activity.

Any avoidable and unreasonable costs that result from the action or inaction of a recipient (or recipient's agent) or that prevent that recipient from enjoying any lawful exemption, waiver, or reduction of any tax, fee, levy, or assessment directly related to any eligible AFG Program acquisition activity, are not chargeable to any AFG Program award.

Example: Governmental entities and Public Safety Agencies are exempt from some Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fees*, but only if the eligible organization submits an exemption or waiver request to the FCC.

**Government entities are not required to pay FCC regulatory fees. Non-profit entities (exempt under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code) may also be exempt. The FCC requires that any entity claiming exempt status submit, or have on file with the FCC, a valid Internal Revenue Service Determination Letter documenting its nonprofit status or certification from a governmental authority attesting to its exempt status. For more information, please visit http://www.fcc.gov.*

V. Excess Funds

After completing the initial project's purpose in the recipient's application, some recipients may have unexpended funds remaining in their budget. These excess funds may result from any combination of under-budget acquisition activities or competitive

procurement processes.

These cost-shared excess funds may be utilized to address an organization's local needs or to mitigate identified capability gaps. FEMA expects excess funds to be obligated concurrent with an award's period of performance to address a known or critical need.

Excess Funds Restrictions

In general, excess funds are limited to no more than $10,000 for any award. If you have any questions, contact the AFG Help Desk at 866-274-0960 or e-mail us at firegrants@fema.dhs.gov.

The $10,000 maximum is cumulative for any grant, regardless of the number of activities within the award, and will require no amendment except when the use of excess funds is for any eligible activity that would normally require an EHP review.

- Excess funds cannot be used to support Fire Prevention and Safety activities.
- Consistent with the funding priorities set by the panel of fire service professionals and stakeholders, excess funds are limited to the purchase of High Priority items only.
- The opportunity for excess funds is limited when the original uncompleted Scope of Work is changed via an Amendment.

Example: An award has a single activity (i.e., the acquisition of 50 SCBAs) that is reduced via Amendment. The federal participation and the recipient cost obligation are both reduced and any remaining unliquidated federal funds resulting from the reduction in quantity is *not allowable* as excess funds.

- Excess funds cannot be used for grant writer/preparer fees.
- Excess funds may only be used for allowable activities identified in the program guidance for that fiscal year's grant cycle.

Exceptions to the $10,000 use may be considered by FEMA if urgent and compelling need that can be directly related to a demonstrated event impacting the health and safety of the firefighters within the department can be identified. This request must be submitted in writing via an amendment.

VI. Payments and Amendments

FEMA uses the Direct Deposit/Electronic Funds Transfer (DD/EFT) method of payment to recipients. AFG Program payment/drawdown requests are generated using FEMA GO. AFG Program payment/drawdown requests from state or local government entities will be governed by applicable federal regulations in effect at the time a grant is awarded to the recipient and may be either advances or reimbursements. Recipients should not expend funds until all special conditions listed on the grant award document have been met, including completion of EHP review, and the request for payment in FEMA GO has been approved. Recipients should draw down funds based upon

immediate disbursement requirements; however, FEMA strongly encourages recipients to draw down funds as close to disbursement or expenditure as possible to avoid accruing interest.

Non-federal entities should keep detailed records of all transactions involving the grant. FEMA may at any time request copies of any relevant documentation and records, including purchasing documentation along with copies of cancelled checks for verification. *See, e.g.*, 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.318(i), 200.334, 200.337.

Advances
Recipients shall be paid in advance, provided they maintain, or demonstrate the willingness and ability to maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and its disbursement by the recipient (not to exceed 30 days), and the financial management systems that meet the standards for fund control and accountability as established in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The recipient shall include invoice(s) and/or purchase orders for advance AFG Program payment/drawdown requests. EHP review requirement must be met prior to advanced payments.

Although advance drawdown requests are permissible, recipients remain subject to applicable federal laws in effect at the time a grant is awarded to the recipient. Governing interest requirements include the *Uniform Administrative Requirements Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and the *Cash Management Improvement Act* (CMIA) and its implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205. Interest under CMIA will accrue from the time federal funds are credited to a recipient's account until the time the recipient pays out the funds for program purposes. For the rate to use in calculating interest, please visit Treasury Current Value rate at https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsreports/rpt/cvfr/cvfr_home.htm.

Reimbursement
Payment by reimbursement is the preferred method when the requirements to be paid in advance, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.305, cannot be met. In accordance with U.S. Department of Treasury regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205, if applicable, the recipient shall maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and the disbursement of said funds. As a prerequisite of AFG Program approval for reimbursement requests, recipients shall include proof of purchase, in the form of a cancelled check or credit card transaction, and a final invoice(s) in each reimbursement AFG Program payment/drawdown request.

Rebates
Recipients shall disburse program income, rebates, refunds, contract settlements, audit recoveries, and interest earned on such funds before requesting additional cash payments, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.305. The reduction of federal financial participation via rebates/refunds *may* generate excess funds for the recipient if the recipient previously obligated their Cost Share match based upon the original award figures. If the recipient previously obligated their original Cost Share *prior* to the rebate, then the recipient *may* have minimum excess funds equal to the difference

between the original Cost Share less the rebate adjusted Cost Share.

Payment Requests During Closeout
A recipient may only submit reimbursement payment requests up to 120 days after the expiration of the period of performance, during an award's closeout reconciliation per 2 C.F.R. § 200.344. Reimbursement payments are the only eligible type of requests to be submitted after a grant's period of performance has expired. The expenditure must have been obligated and received during the period of performance of the award. The recipient's request should contain clear and specific information certifying that the liquidation of federal funds is reimbursement for an obligation properly incurred during the active period of performance; FEMA may request documentation supporting the reimbursement for review at any time.

Amendments
FEMA may approve AFG Program award amendments on a case-by-case basis, for the following reasons:

- Extension of the period of performance in order to complete the scope of work;
- Changes to the activity, mission, retroactive approval [pre-award], closeout issues, and some excess funds requests;
- Budget changes (adding funds to award/non-closeout deobligation of funds).

FEMA will only consider amendments submitted via FEMA GO. These requests must contain specific and compelling justifications for the requested change. Amendments or changes to the scope of work may require additional EHP review. FEMA strongly encourages recipients to expend grant funds in a timely manner, to be consistent with AFG Program goals and objectives.

NOTE: A recipient may deobligate (i.e., return) unused funds (i.e., those remaining funds previously drawn down via payment request and/or remaining award funding that was never requested) to DHS/FEMA prior to the end of an award's period of performance. To exercise this option, a recipient must submit an amendment via FEMA GO and state in the amendment that the unliquidated funds (i.e., the funds to be returned) are not necessary for the fulfillment or success of the grant's obligations or mission. The recipient must also indicate in the amendment that it understands that the returned funds will be deobligated and unavailable for any future award expenses. Deobligation of funds will decrease the federal portion of the grant and the amount of the recipient's Cost Share obligation. FEMA will confirm deobligation amendments with all points of contact; after confirmation of the recipient's intent to deobligate, FEMA will hold the approved deobligation request for 14 calendar days as a period for recipient reconsideration before FEMA processes the deobligation request.

VII. Disposition of Grant Funded Equipment

A recipient must use, manage, and dispose of AFG Program-funded equipment in accordance with the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 C.F.R. § 200.313. With the exception of state

governments, when original or replacement equipment acquired under an AFG Program award is no longer needed for the original project, program, or other activities currently or previously supported by a federal awarding agency, the recipient must request disposition instructions from FEMA. FEMA strongly recommends contacting a Regional FPS or the AFG Help Desk prior to the disposition of AFG Program-funded equipment, to include vehicles.

Appendix D: Award Administration Information

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the DHS will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the:

- President's September 2, 2020 memorandum, entitled Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds that Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities;

- Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping (E.O. 13950);

- Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence (E.O. 13933); and

- Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
    - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
    - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
    - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty (E.O. 13798) and Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
    - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
    - Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).