The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Fiscal Year 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program - COVID-19
Supplemental Round 2 (AFG-S 2)

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

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

Assistance Listings (formerly Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number)
97.044

Assistance Listings Title (formerly CFDA Title)
Assistance to Firefighters Grants

Funding Opportunity Title
FY2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program – COVID-19 Supplemental Round 2

Funding Opportunity Number
DHS-20-GPD-XXX-XX-XX

Authorizing Authority for Program
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Div. B (Pub. L. No. 116-136); Section 33 of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, Pub. L. No. 93-498, as amended (15 U.S.C § 2229)

Appropriation Authority for Program
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Div. B (Pub. L. No. 116-136)

Announcement Type
Modification

Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

Overview

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program – COVID-19 Supplemental Round 2 (AFG-S 2) is a supplemental funding opportunity under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG). AFG is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards.

This is a modification of the original AFG-S NOFO published on April 24, 2020, Funding Opportunity Number DHS-20-GPD-044-00-99. In that original AFG-S NOFO, the initial application period, which was open to career, volunteer and combination fire departments; nonaffiliated emergency medical service (NAEMS) organizations; and state fire training academies, closed on May 15, 2020. By law, at least 25 percent of available AFG-S funds must be awarded to volunteer fire departments and at least another 25 percent must be awarded to combination fire departments. Funding made available in this modified NOFO for a second application period of AFG-S funding is limited to volunteer and combination fire departments to fulfill this requirement. Volunteer and combination fire departments are eligible to apply in this round even if they had a successful application in the first round of AFG-S funding; however, such applications must support new or additional needs or capabilities. Departments that applied in the first round of AFG-S funding but were unsuccessful can reapply to be considered for funding in this round; applications from the first round of AFG-S funding will not automatically carry forward to this round for consideration. This NOFO allows eligible applicants to apply for critical Personal Protective Equipment and supplies needed to prevent, prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The AFG-S 2 Program represents 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-S 2 Program supports the goal to Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience. In awarding grants, the Administrator of FEMA is required to consider:

- The findings and recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Panel;
- The extent of an applicant's need for an AFG-S 2 grant and the need to protect America 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 nationwide. The AFG-S 2 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-S 2 program are to provide critically needed resources that equip personnel to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and support community resilience.

Priorities

Information on program priorities and objectives for the FY 2020 AFG-S 2 can be found in Appendix A - Programmatic Information and Priorities.

Performance Metrics

Performance metrics for this program are as follows:

Percentage of AFG-S 2 recipients who equipped 100 percent of on-duty active members with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in compliance with applicable National Fire Protection Association and Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

B. Federal Award Information

Available Funding for the NOFO: $31 million

Projected number of Awards: 500

Period of Performance: Twelve months from the date of award. For additional information on period of performance extensions, refer to Section H.

Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): Jan. 15, 2021

Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): Jan. 14, 2022

Funding Instrument: Grant

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

- Volunteer Fire Departments
- Combination Fire Departments

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments: Volunteer and Combination 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 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.

Combination Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has paid firefighting personnel and volunteer firefighting personnel. Departments that pay fees or stipends to firefighting personnel for each event to which they respond (paid on call) are also considered under this category.

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

Eligible Activities
Activities under this solicitation are limited to the purchase of PPE and supplies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. This includes reimbursement for expenditures made since January 1, 2020.

Other Eligibility Criteria

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
NFIRS reporting is not a requirement to apply for the AFG-S 2 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 the NFIRS must be established prior to the termination of the one-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 in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, unless it has yet to develop the capacity to report to NFIRS, as described above.

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.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation
AFG-S 2 applicants are not required to be in compliance with NIMS to apply for AFG-S 2 funding or to receive an AFG-S 2 award. Any applicant who receives an FY2020 AFG-S 2 award must achieve the level of NIMS compliance required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction over the applicant's emergency service operations (e.g., a local government), prior to the end of the grant's period of performance.

Maintenance of Effort

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 2229(k)(3), an applicant seeking an AFG-S 2 grant shall agree to maintain, during the term of the grant, the applicant's aggregate expenditures relating to activities allowable under this NOFO and the FY 2019 AFG 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-S 2 grant is awarded.

In other words, an applicant agrees, if it receives a grant award, to 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 AFG-S 2 NOFO and the FY 2019 AFG 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.

Cost Share or Match

In general, eligible applicants shall agree to make available non-federal funds to carry out an AFG-S 2 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 and not less than 5 percent of the grant awarded; and/or

- 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 and not less than 10 percent of the grant awarded.

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/media-collection/fy-2020-assistance-firefighters-grant-program-covid-19-supplemental-afg-s.

Types of Cost Share

i. **Cash (Hard Match):** Cost share of non-federal cash is the only allowable recipient contribution for AFG-S 2 activity.

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 AFG-S 2.

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 Administrator of FEMA may waive or reduce recipient cost share or maintenance of effort requirements in cases of demonstrated economic hardship. Please see Appendix B: Award Administration Information for additional information.

D. Application and Submission Information

Key Dates and Times

Application Start Date:	Oct. 6, 2020 at 8 a.m. ET
Application Submission Deadline:	Nov. 13, 2020 at 5 p.m. ET
Anticipated Funding Selection Date:	Jan. 15, 2021
Anticipated Award Date:	Jan. 15, 2021

In general, DHS/FEMA will not consider for funding applications received after the deadline. DHS/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, or other exigent or emergency circumstances. If applicants experience technical issues, they must notify the AFG Help Desk as soon as possible. The AFG Help Desk can be reached at 1-866-274-0960 or by e-mail: firegrants@fema.dhs.gov. The AFG Help Desk is open Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ET.

Other Key Dates

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Register Organization in FEMA GO	Prior to beginning application
Submitting complete application in FEMA GO	One week before actual submission deadline

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.

Address to Request Application Package

The online FY 2020 AFG-S 2 application is only available via the AFG Program's FEMA GO (FEMA Grants Outcomes) 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.

Steps Required to Submit an Application.

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-S 2 application. The online AFG-S 2 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 is compatible with Internet Explorer (version 11 or higher), Microsoft Edge (version 85 or higher), Firefox (version 63 or higher), or Chrome (version 70 or higher). Users who attempt to use tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.

There is no appeal process for inaccurate or incomplete information retained by the system due to improper or multiple browser usage by applicants.

Electronic Delivery
DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative that provides the grant communities a single site to find grant funding opportunities. Before applying for a DHS Grant, applicants must have a Data Universal Number System, or DUNS number, and must be registered and active in SAM.

DUNS Number
All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (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. Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number can be found at the following website:
http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization- registration/step-1-obtain-duns- number.html.

System for Award Management (SAM)
Applicant registration in SAM is free. All applicants must be registered and active in order to apply online. Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found here: SAM Registration Home Page. Please remember that SAM registration is only active for one year and must be renewed annually.

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 renewed annually to avoid becoming **"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 take four weeks or more after the applicant submits the SAM registration before the registration is active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize the information.

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.

As part of the SAM registration process, applicants must now provide information in SAM on their immediate owner and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all predecessors that have been awarded a federal contract or federal financial assistance within the last three years. This is a new requirement instituted by amendments to 2 C.F.R. part 25 made by the Office of Management and Budget on Aug. 13, 2020.

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 and provide the details of the exigent 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.

IMPORTANT: The SAM registration process must be completed by the applicant. It is imperative that the information provided by the applicant 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. The organization's name on the SF 1199A Direct Deposit Form must be entered as it appears in SAM. Payment under any FEMA award is contingent on the recipient's having a current SAM registration.

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 tollfree (866) 606-8220.

How to Get a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code
To get a CAGE code, applicants must first be registered in SAM, which is a requirement for doing business with the Federal Government. Applicants will be assigned a CAGE code as part of the SAM validation process, and as soon as the registration is active, applicants may view the CAGE code online by logging in to the SAM account.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission
All applications must be received by Nov. 13, 2020 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 will not be considered for funding.

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.

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/2019/02/SPOC- February-2019.pdf).

Funding Restrictions
Federal funds made available through this award may only be used for the purposes set forth in this award and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Award funds may not be used for matching funds for any 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. Failure to adhere to the award conditions will cause the recipient to be considered in default of the grant agreement and may require the return of all federal funds disbursed under the grant.

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

Allowable Costs

Pre-award Costs
Pre-award expenditures for eligible PPE and supplies are eligible under this program. The expenditures must have been made after Jan. 1, 2020. Fees for grant writers are also included as a pre-award expenditure.

Fire Departments
The total amount of funding a fire department recipient may receive under an AFG-S award (defined for these purposes as the sum total of any awards under the initial AFG-S and this AFG-S 2) is limited to 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 one percent aggregate amount of available grant funds.

The population of the jurisdiction served by the recipient will determine the maximum amount of AFG-S 2 funding a recipient is eligible to receive but no recipient may receive an award (when considering any initial AFG-S award plus an award under AFG-S 2) that exceeds one (1) percent of available grant funds for the entire FY 2020 AFG-S, or $1,000,000. FEMA may waive this aggregate cap of $1 million 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 size.

The following table explains the maximum funding that a recipient may receive under this solicitation:

100,000 or fewer people	No more than $1 million	None available
100,001 – 500,000 people	No more than $1 million	Yes, but no more than $2 million
500,001 – 1,000,000 people	No more than $1 million	Yes, but no more than $3 million
1,000,001 – 2,500,000 people	No more than $1 million	Yes, but no more than $6 million
More than 2,500,000 people	No more than $1 million	Yes, but no more than $9 million

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).

Allocations and Restrictions of Available Grant Funds by Organization Type

- **Micro Grants:** The selection of the voluntary Micro Grant option (cumulative federal funding of $3,000) for eligible activities does not impact an applicant's request or federal participation under Regional projects. Applicants who select Micro Grants as a funding opportunity choice may still apply for a Regional project. Further, at least $150,000 of the available funds will be allocated toward this applicant type.
- **Regional Projects:** A Regional application is an opportunity for a volunteer or combination Fire Department to act as a host and apply for funding on behalf of itself and any number of other participating AFG eligible organizations. Fire Departments that serve as host regional applicants can apply on behalf of other eligible fire departments within the same application. Career fire departments are not eligible to apply under the Regional activity or be included in a regional award. 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.

The community identification characteristic (e.g., rural, urban, or suburban) and the organizational status of the host applicant (e.g., combination or volunteer) will be entered and used for the regional application, regardless of the composition of the participating partners.

In the application narrative, a Regional host must include a list of all the AFG-S 2 eligible participating organizations benefitting from a proposed Regional project, including validated points of contact, each organization's Employee Identification Number (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.

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 supply inventories) of the partners that serve the region.

All participants of a Regional applicant must be compliant with AFG 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 Memorandum of Understanding (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 organization and must be a party to the MOU or equivalent document**.**

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 this solicitation.

Management and Administration (M&A) Costs: 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-S 2 funds awarded may be expended by the recipient for management and administration (M&A) for purposes associated with the AFG-S 2 award.

Indirect Facilities & Administrative (F&A) Costs: Indirect costs are allowable under this

program as described in 2 C.F.R. pt. 200, including 2 C.F.R. § 200.414. Applicants with a 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. Applicants that are not required by 2 C.F.R. pt. 200 to have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but are required by 2 C.F.R. pt. 200 to develop an indirect cost rate proposal must provide a copy of their proposal at the time of application. Copies of the indirect cost rate agreements or proposals, along with the AFG-S 2 application number, must be submitted electronically to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov. 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.

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, and Executive Orders as applicable.

E. Application Review Information

Funding priorities and criteria for evaluating AFG-S 2 applications are established by FEMA based on the recommendations from the Criteria Development Panel. FEMA convened a panel of fire service professionals to develop funding priorities for the AFG-S 2 grant program. The panel made recommendations about funding priorities as well as developing criteria for awarding grants.

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

- 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; and
- Congressional Fire Service Institute.

The Criterial Development Panel 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 panel'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.

Eligible Activities

AFG-S 2 has three activities:

- Operations and Safety – PPE;
- Regional Projects; and
- Micro Grants.

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

Application Evaluation Criteria

Prior to making a federal award, the federal-awarding agency is required by 31 U.S.C.§ 3321 note, 41 U.S.C. § 2313, and 2 C.F.R. Part 200 to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing federal award(s); (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

All investments selected for recommendation will also undergo an additional risk review conducted by the DHS/FEMA Grants Management Specialist to evaluate the risk for noncompliance in carrying out the federal award. Using their subject matter expertise, the questions the DHS/FEMA Grants Management Specialist may assess include, but are not limited to:

- Is the applicant on any exclusion lists as identified in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov)?
- If the applicant has received federal funding in the past, has the applicant performed all audits required by the Single Audit requirements under 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F?
- Has the applicant provided sufficient budget information and justification as required by the NOFO?
- Are the costs proposed by the applicant in the budget information and justification allowable and reasonable based on the criteria set forth in the applicable appendix in the Preparedness Grants Manual, NOFO, and regulations?
- Is the budget representative of the total cost of performance of the projects?
- If indirect costs are included, has the applicant provided an approved Indirect Cost Rate agreement?
- Is the applicant delinquent on any federal debt?
- Has the applicant had substandard performance in a prior award?
- Is the applicant on the Do Not Pay List?

Based on the outcome of this review, DHS/FEMA may determine that it will not make an

award to an applicant that poses a risk of noncompliance. DHS/FEMA may also determine that it will make an award to an at-risk applicant, subject to additional terms and conditions as described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

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 (see Section 805 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-91, OMB Memorandum M-18-18 at https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/M-18-18.pdf; see also FEMA Information Bulletin No. 434, *Increases and Changes to the Micro-Purchase and Simplified Acquisition Thresholds*):

- DHS/FEMA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant 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) and is also accessible through the SAM website.
- An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
- DHS/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. Part 200.

Review and Selection Process

AFG-S 2 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 Reviewer 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 A 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-score process will undergo a peer review 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. During this review, priority for award will be given to applications that did not receive funding in the first round of AFG-S application.

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, Restrictions on Use of Award Funds.

Narrative Evaluation Criteria

1. **Financial Need (25 percent)**

   Applicants should describe their financial need and how consistent it is with the intent of the AFG-S 2 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.

2. **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. Applicants should link the proposed expenses to operations and safety, as well as to the completion of the project's goals. Applicants should describe how their current response capabilities are impacted by COVID-19 as well as the overall rate of COVID-19 in their community. Applicants can reference data supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through referencing state level data from the following website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html. This data will be taken into consideration when prioritizing funding.

3. **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.

4. **Statement of Effect on Operations (25 percent)**

   The Statement of Effect on Operations statement should explain how this funding request will enhance an organization's overall effectiveness. It should address how an award will

impact the 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 detail whether award funding will seek reimbursement of pre-award expenses related to the acquisition of eligible PPE, acquire PPE for immediate use, or acquire PPE resources to strengthen future response capabilities. Applicants will be evaluated on the current inventory of supplies, response usage of requested supplies, and anticipated future needs (e.g., actual or anticipated burn rate percentage of PPE resources).

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Notice of Award
Once FEMA has approved and recorded an award in the system, FEMA GO sends an award package to the grant official authorized by the recipient. FEMA GO will provide the award package and email notification. The authorized grant official should follow the directions in the notification to accept the award documents. The authorized grant official should read the award package carefully for instructions on administering the grant, to determine whether there has been an adjustment to the award, and to become familiar with the terms, conditions and responsibilities of federal award recipients.

The offered award will remain on hold and be available for a maximum of 30 days until the recipient either accepts or declines the award via FEMA GO online or unless FEMA grants additional time to accept the award. The recipient should follow the directions in the notification to confirm acceptance of the award. Failure to accept the grant award within 30 days of an offer of award may result in a loss of funds. Recipients may request additional time to accept the award if needed.

Differences Between Application Request and Award
During the review process for an AFG-S 2 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.

Turndown Notifications
FEMA GO will provide all applicants who do not receive an FY 2020 AFG-S 2 award with a turndown notification.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements
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.

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.

Record Retention
Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-Federal entity records pertinent to a Federal award must be retained for at least three years from the date the final FFR is submitted or longer if the award or entity is under audit or other circumstances necessitate longer retention of records, as required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200. 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 three-year retention period.

FEMA requires that recipients maintain the following documentation for federally funded purchases:

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

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 canceled checks for verification as permitted by 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Recipients who fail to fully document all purchases may find their expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed.

Federal Financial Reporting Requirements

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)
Recipients of AFG-S 2 grants are required to submit a Federal Financial Report (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 Jan. 1 – June 30)
- No later than January 30 (for the period July 1 – Dec. 31)
- Within 90 days after the end of the Period of Performance

The Federal Financial Report Form (SF-425) and instructions are available at the following sites: SF-425

OMB #4040-0014.

Financial and Compliance Audit Report
For audits of fiscal years beginning on or after Dec. 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. The audit must be performed in accordance with the requirements of GAO's Government Auditing Standards, located at http://www.gao.gov/govaud/ybk01.htm, and the requirements of Subpart F of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, located at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6f12725a5b5811eb8f2ed19f6dde0417&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5.

Program Performance Reporting Requirements

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

The PPR should include the following:

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

Program Performance Reporting Periods and Due Dates

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

- No later than July 30 (for the period Jan. 1 – June 30)
- No later than January 30 (for the period July 1 – Dec. 31)

Monitoring
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.

Closeout

Within 90 days after the end of the period of performance, recipients must submit a final Federal Financial Report Form (SF-425) and a final performance report (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. Part 200. 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 Federal Financial Report Form (SF- 425). 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.

Administrative Closeout
Administrative closeout is a unilateral mechanism for FEMA to move forward with closeout of a grant award using available grant award information in lieu of final reports from the recipient. It is a last resort and recipients should always submit their final reports instead of relying on this mechanism. 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.

FEMA may use the administrative closeout process when a recipient is not responsive to FEMA's reasonable efforts to collect required reports needed to complete the standard closeout process. FEMA will make three written attempts to collect required reports before initiating administrative closeout.

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 three-year record retention period under 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

In addition, if an award is administratively closed, FEMA may decide to impose remedies for noncompliance per 2 C.F.R. Part 200, consider this information in reviewing future award applications, or apply special conditions to existing or future awards.

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.

G. DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information Contact and Resource Information

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 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.

FEMA Regional Fire Program Specialists

Each FEMA region has Fire Program Specialists who can assist applicants with application information, award administration, and technical assistance. Contact information for a Regional Fire Program Specialist can be located on the AFG website at https://www.fema.gov/fire-grant-contact-information.

FEMA GO System Information

For technical assistance with FEMA GO, please contact the Enterprise Service Desk at (877) 611-4700. Regular hours of operation are also from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.

H. Additional Information

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; and
- 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.

Requirements for Extension Consideration
To be eligible for consideration, recipients must submit extension requests via FEMA GO. Recipients generally can submit requests no later than 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.

Appendix A –Programmatic Information and Priorities

Appendix A contains details on AFG-S 2 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 with different funding streams, personnel rosters, and EINs but sharing the same facilities as being separate organizations for the purposes of AFG-S 2 eligibility. 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:

- 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.
- Nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations.
- State Fire Training Academies.
- 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 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 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- 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).
- Dive teams, search and rescue squads, or similar organizations that do not provide medical transport.
- Fire departments or regional organizations that are for-profit.

B. Supporting Definitions for this NOFO

Authority Having Jurisdiction (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).

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).

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.

C. Community Classifications

The information the applicant organization supplies in Community Description of the AFG-S 2 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.

FY2020 Demographics for Determining Urban, Suburban, or Rural Include:

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. Restrictions on Use of Award Funds

- No AFG-S 2 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, workman's compensation, pension, or retirement plans) for any personnel.

E. Funding Priorities

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

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).
- Applicants must certify that when using PPE optimization strategies, training on PPE use, including proper donning and doffing procedures, must be provided to Health Care Professionals before they carry out patient care activities.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) List – Funding Priorities

COVID-19 Response

- **Eye Protection -** Appropriately fitted, indirectly vented goggles or single use disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face.

- **Isolation Gowns –** Nonsterile, single use fluid-resistant and impermeable patient isolation gown.

- **Protective Coveralls** - 360-degree protection of whole body, including the back, lower legs and feet.

- **Gloves –** patient examination gloves.

- **Footwear Covers –** Single use, disposable medical footwear covers.

- **Respirators -** Any NIOSH-approved particulate respirator (i.e., N-95 or higher-level respirator). Includes the purchase of filters appropriate for use.

- **Surgical Type Face Masks -** loose-fitting, single use disposable physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer to allow fire and EMS personnel to meet CDC recommendations and/or state mandates for face covering when in a public setting other than direct patient contact.

- Other supplies are also eligible, however will be considered a lower priority than items listed above. Examples include**:**
    - Decontamination supplies and services for PPE, station-quarters, and vehicles.
    - Replacement High-Efficiency Particulate Air filters and other types of disposable filtration supplies used on EMS respiratory and/or ventilator equipment.
    - Personally-issued antiseptic hand washes, antiseptic hand rubs such as alcohol-based hand sanitizers, foams or gels, and reasonable refill supply

- Departments will be rated against like departments (i.e., combination, volunteer, regional, micro grants) through the following data points:
    - Call volume
    - Size of population of the jurisdiction served.

- Applicants requesting reimbursement or requesting immediate use of PPE will receive a higher consideration than applicants requesting funds to prepare for future response capabilities. Applicant requests should align with information about current supply, response usage, and anticipated peak dates.

- The CDC provides timely updates on the evolving spread of COVID-19 public health emergency cases by state on the following website https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html. This data will be taken into consideration when prioritizing funding.

Ineligible Items

- Thermometers
- Narcotics and medications
- N95 Fit Tester
- Separation barriers or flexi glass
- COVID-19 Testing Kits
- Pulse Oximeters

Appendix B: Award Administration Information

Appendix B contains detailed information on AFG-S 2 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 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-S 2 cost share or maintenance of effort 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 in Information Bulletin 427 and published these guidelines at FEMA's website:

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1518026897046-483d76a37022b8a581ffb7d42fa9b17e/Eco_Hardship_Waiver_FPS_SAFER_AFG_IB_FINAL.pdf.

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

To receive an Economic Hardship Waiver the applicant must address the specific conditions as well as format your waiver request submission as specified in 'Section III – Guidance, Part D: Eligibility – Demonstrating Economic Hardship' of Information Bulletin No. 427. Failure to 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 non-procurement 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 Office of the Inspector General (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; and
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. 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-S 2 Program acquisition activity may be charged to an AFG-S 2 award pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.470. These charges shall be identified and enumerated in the AFG-S 2 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-S 2 Program acquisition activity, are not chargeable to any AFG-S 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 IRS 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.*

IV. Excess Funds

After completing the initial projects proposed 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 and may only be used for activities eligible under the AFG-S 2 Program. If you have any questions, contact our help desk at 866-274-0960 or e-mail us at firegrants@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.

- The opportunity for excess funds is limited when the original uncompleted Scope of Work is changed via an Amendment.

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.

V. Procurement Integrity

Through audits conducted by 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 policies jeopardizes the integrity of the grant as well as the grant program. Noncompliance with the Federal procurement rules may result in FEMA imposing specific conditions as described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 or other remedies for noncompliance under 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

The below highlights the Federal procurement requirements for FEMA recipients when procuring goods and services with Federal grant funds. DHS 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 in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Select requirements under these standards are listed below. The recipient must comply with all requirements, even if they are not listed below.

Under 2 C.F.R. Part 200, when procuring property and services under a Federal award, states must follow the same policies and procedures they use for procurements from their non-Federal funds; additionally, states must follow provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 regarding procurement of recovered materials, and provisions regarding required contract provisions.

All other non-Federal entities, such as tribes, must use their own documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable state, local, territorial and tribal 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. Part 200.

Competition and Conflicts of Interest

Among the requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 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 this an organizational conflict of interest and interprets this restriction as applying to contractors that help a recipient 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 such 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 the Federal Procurement Standards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Federal funds cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of such 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. For more information on grant writer and grant management costs, see Section D.

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

- Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order 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.

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, non-Federal entities other than states must conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state, local, territorial or tribal 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.

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, 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 which 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 government, or Indian tribe, 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.

Supply Schedules
Generally, a non-Federal entity may seek to procure goods or services from a Federal supply schedule, state supply schedule, or group purchasing agreement. State and local governments may procure goods and services from a General Services Administration (GSA) schedule. Information about GSA programs for state and local governments can be found at https://www.gsa.gov/resources-for/programs-for-state-and-local- governments. For local governments that purchase off a GSA schedule, this will satisfy the Federal requirements for full and open competition provided that the recipient follows the GSA ordering procedures; however, local governments will still need to follow the other rules under the Federal Procurement Standards of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, such as contract cost and price and solicitation of minority, women-owned, or small businesses.

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

- The procurement of the original contract or purchasing schedule and its use by the recipient 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 recipient 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 of the procurement standards applicable to a non-Federal entity other than states under 2 C.F.R. Part 200.
- With respect to the use of a purchasing schedule, the recipient must follow ordering procedures that adhere to state 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 such a state supply schedule, cooperative purchasing program, or other similar type of arrangement, it is recommended that recipients discuss their procurement plans with the FEMA Grant Programs Directorate.

Documentation
Non-Federal entities are required to maintain and retain the following:

- Backup documentation, such as bids and quotes;
- Cost/price analyses on file for review by Federal personnel, if applicable; and
- Other documents required by Federal regulations applicable at the time a grant

is awarded to a recipient.

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; and
- Canceled checks.

Non-Federal entities 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 for verification as required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

Non-Federal entities who fail to fully document all purchases will find their expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed.

VI. Payments and Amendments

AFG-S 2 payment/drawdown requests are generated using FEMA GO. AFG-S 2 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 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.

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.

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 US 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.

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 90 days after the expiration of the period of performance, during an award's closeout reconciliation. 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-S 2 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. FEMA strongly encourages recipients to expend grant funds in a timely manner, to be consistent with AFG-S 2 Grant Program's 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-S 2-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-S 2 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 Fire Program Specialist or the AFG Help Desk prior to the disposition of AFG-S 2-funded equipment.

VIII. Amendments to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and Other Federal Grants Management and Administration Regulations

On Aug. 13, 2020, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published final guidance amending the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, as well as other Federal grants management and administration regulations at 2 C.F.R. Parts 25 and 170. In addition, OMB is adding Part 183 to 2 C.F.R. With limited exceptions, these changes go into effect on Nov. 12, 2020 and will be applicable to all grants awarded by FEMA under this NOFO. FEMA will incorporate these regulations and any additional guidance into the terms of grant awards issued under this NOFO.

The changes to these regulations can be found in the Federal Register at https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/08/13/2020-17468/guidance-for-grants-and-agreements.