The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Fiscal Year 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grants

NOTE: Eligible recipients who plan to apply for this funding opportunity, but who have not obtained a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and/or are not currently registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), should 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 the submission of a SAM registration before the registration becomes active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize the 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 of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), subsection, Content and Form of Application Submission.

A. Program Description

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

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number
97.044

CFDA Title
Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG)

Notice of Funding Opportunity Title
FY 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grants

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number
DHS-17-GPD-044-00-99

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)

Appropriation Authority for Program
Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2017 (Pub. L. No. 115-31)

Program Type
New

Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities

Program Overview

FEMA GPD is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program. The purpose of the AFG Program is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The program provides direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTA). The funds provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

Program Objectives

In awarding grants, the Administrator of FEMA shall 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 grant and the need to protect the United States as a whole.

For additional information on program priorities and objectives for the FY 2017 AFG, refer to Appendix B, FY 2017 AFG Programmatic Information and Priorities.

As specified in the *DHS Quadrennial Homeland Security Review*, the AFG Program supports the basic mission to:

- Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience

The AFG Program also addresses the following "Core Capabilities" of the National Preparedness Goal:

- Fire Management and Suppression
- Environmental Response/Health and Safety
- Threats and Hazards Identification
- Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services
- Operational Coordination
- Operational Communications
- Mass Search and Rescue Operations
- Community Resilience
- Long-term Vulnerability Reduction

B. Federal Award Information

Award Amounts, Important Dates, and Extensions

Available Funding for the NOFO: $310,500,000[1]

Projected number of Awards: 2,500

Period of Performance: Twelve months from the date of award. For additional information on period of performance extensions, refer to Section H. Additional Information and Appendix C: Award Administration Information, VIII. Payments and Amendments.

Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): 03/01/2018

Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): 03/01/2019

Funding Instrument: Grant

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

Fire Departments: Fire departments operating in any of the 56 states, which include any state of the United States, 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, territory, local, or tribal 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.

Nonaffiliated EMS organizations: Nonaffiliated EMS organizations operating in any of the 56 states including the continental United States, 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 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

[1] Note that this figure differs from the total amount appropriated under the *Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act*, 2017, Pub. L. No.115-31. In this FY 2017 AFG NOFO, percentages of "*available grant funds*" refers to the total amount appropriated—$345,000,000—by Pub. L. No. 115-31 to meet the statutory requirements of § 33 of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, as amended. 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 $34,500,000 will be allocated to FP&S for FY 2017.

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

State Fire Training Academies: A State Fire Training Academy (SFTA) operates in any of the 56 states, which includes any state of the United States, 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. Applicants must be designated either by legislation or by a Governor's declaration as the sole state fire service training agency within a state. The designated SFTA shall be the only State agency/bureau/division, or entity within that State.

Eligible Activities

AFG 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.

Other Eligibility Criteria

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 twelve-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 at 2 C.F.R. § 200.338, unless they have 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: While 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 applicants are not required to be in compliance with the NIMS to apply for AFG funding or to receive an AFG award. Any applicant who receives an FY 2017 AFG 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.

Maintenance of Effort

An applicant seeking an AFG 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 preceding fiscal years to the year this grant is awarded.

Cost Share or Match

Recipient cost sharing is generally required as described below.

In general, eligible applicants shall agree to make available non-federal funds to carry out an AFG 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;
- When serving a jurisdiction of more than 20,000 residents, but not more than 1,000,000 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;
- When serving a jurisdiction of more than 1,000,000 residents, the applicant shall agree to provide non-federal funds in an amount equal to and 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/media-library/assets/documents/153366

Types of Cost Share

i. Cash (Hard Match): Cost share of non-federal cash is the only allowable recipient contribution for AFG 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. In order 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.
iv. Overmatch: In the application narrative, an organization may indicate a voluntary pledge to commit additional financial support toward a project(s) cost, which is in addition to their required cost share obligation as detailed in the NOFO and required by law. FEMA will not account for this promised additional funding in the terms of the award.
v. 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 C: Award Administration Information for additional information.

D. Application and Submission Information

Key Dates and Times

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Date posted to Grants.gov	12/19/2017 at 8:00 AM ET
Application Start Date:	12/26/2017 at 8:00 AM ET
Application Submission Deadline Date:	02/02/2018 at 5:00 PM ET
Anticipated Program Office Review Dates:	02/02/2018 – 03/09/2018
Anticipated Funding Selection Date:	3/19/2018
Anticipated Award Date	04/06/2018
Application Submission Extension	TBD

In general, FEMA will not review applications received after the deadline or consider them 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, or other exigent or emergency circumstances. Applicants experiencing technical issues should notify the FEMA Help Desk as soon as possible. The AFG Help Desk can be reached at 1-866-274-0960 or by e-mail: firegrants@dhs.gov.

Other Key Dates

Event	Suggested Deadline for Completion
Obtaining DUNS Number	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Obtaining a valid EIN	Eight weeks before actual submission deadline
Updating SAM registration	Four weeks before actual submission deadline
Submitting complete application in eGrants	One week before actual submission deadline

Address to Request Application Package

The AFG eGrants system is only accessible through the AFG application portal at https://portal.fema.gov. There are several ways to get AFG application information:

- AFG website (http://www.fema.gov/firegrants)
- Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov)
- US Fire Administration: (https://www.usfa.fema.gov)

Note: Hard copies of the application are not available.

In addition, the Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) and/or Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) number available for this Notice is: (800) 462-7585.

Application tutorials and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) assist with the online grant application, and highlight lessons learned, to include changes, for FY 2017. For more details, please visit the AFG website at http://www.fema.gov/rules-tools.

Technological Note: The application system and related websites may have issues with any other browser other than Internet Explorer (IE 6 or higher). The eGrants system is compatible up to Internet Explorer 11, which should be used if available to the applicant. Do not have multiple browser tabs open when entering information, even when using Internet Explorer. There are several known problems entering application information using non-IE browsers or having multiple browsers open, including but not limited to:

- System failure to recognize correct information.
- System failure to capture and retain correct information.
- System functions like "cut and paste" being disabled.

The eGrants system will allow an authorized representative to log in and create a user name and password. This user name and password is specific to the authorized user and

must not be shared with other personnel. If the applicant has submitted other Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program application (AFG, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S), and/or Station Construction Grant (SCG)) in a previous grant cycle, they must continue to use the same username, password, and DUNS number for any FY 2017 application(s).

If the applicant has forgotten the password or primary point of contact has changed, please visit http://www.fema.gov/assistance-firefighters-grant-program-most-frequently-asked-questions for instructions on how to update and correct the organization's information.

Prior to final submission, an online application may be saved, retrieved, or edited, up to the application deadline.

Content and Form of Application Submission

DHS makes all funding opportunities available through the common electronic storefront Grants.gov, accessible on the Internet 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.

Required Forms and Registrations

All required forms have been incorporated into the online application submission.

Application Submission Receipt

Once the application is submitted and received, the primary point of contact listed in the application will be electronically messaged within the eGrants system.

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

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 in SAM.

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 register in order to apply online. Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found here: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html. 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 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 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.

FEMA will not make an award to an entity until the entity has complied with the requirements to provide a valid DUNS number and maintain an active SAM registration with current information. If the applicant is noncompliant with this requirement at the time of award offer, then FEMA will determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award.

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 toll free (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.

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 http://www.fws.gov/policy/library/rgeo12372.pdf).

Names and addresses of the SPOCs are maintained at the Office of Management and

Budget's home page at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc to ensure currency.

Funding Restrictions

Federal funds made available through this award may only be used for the purpose 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.

Construction

Construction costs are *not eligible* under the AFG grants. Construction includes major alterations to a building that changes the profile or footprint of the structure. Modifications to facilities costs described in Appendix A *Funding Priorities*, are not considered construction costs and may be eligible.

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. However, 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 submit a written request to FEMA to incur such pre-award costs by providing notification (containing the application number and a justification narrative) to FEMA via email to the AFG Help Desk at FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov. The notification to FEMA should be concurrent with their acquisition activity, and must be submitted within the eligible timeframe and noted above.
- The recipient must receive confirmation from FEMA that the expenses have been reviewed and FEMA has determined the costs to be justified, unavoidable, and consistent with the grant's scope of work.
- Fees for grant writers are considered an exception and may be included as a pre-award expenditure.

Award Limits

Fire Departments and Nonaffiliated EMS organizations
The total amount of funding a fire department or nonaffiliated EMS organization recipient may receive under an AFG award 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 funding a recipient is eligible to receive but no recipient may receive an award that exceeds one (1) percent of available grant funds in FY 2017, or $3,450,000. FEMA may waive this aggregate cap of $3,450,000 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 served.

The following table explains the maximum funding that a recipient may receive in FY 2017:

Population of jurisdiction served by the recipient	Maximum award in FY 2017	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 – 2,500,00 people	No more than $3,450,000	Yes, but no more than $6 million
More than 2,500,000 people	No more than $3,450,000	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 & Safety or Vehicle activity.

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 State Fire Training Academy 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 $25,000) 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 Acquisition or Regional project.

Management and Administration

Management and administrative 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 funds awarded may be expended by the recipient for management and administration (M&A) for purposes associated with the AFG award.

Indirect (Facilities & Administrative {F&A}) Costs

Indirect costs are allowable under this program as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.414. With the exception of recipients who have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), recipients must have an approved indirect cost rate agreement with their cognizant federal agency to charge indirect costs to this award. A copy of the approved rate (a fully executed, agreement negotiated with the applicant's cognizant federal agency) is required at the time of application, and must be provided to FEMA before indirect costs are charged to the award. Copies of the indirect cost rate agreements, along with the AFG application number, must be submitted electronically to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov.

Indirect costs will be evaluated as part of the application for federal funds to determine if they are allowable, reasonable, or disproportionally impact an application's cost benefit.

Other Submission Requirements

Environmental and Historical Preservation (EHP)
As a federal agency, 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.

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 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 FEMA may determine whether the proposed project has the potential to impact environmental resources and/or historic properties. In some cases, FEMA may also be required to consult with other regulatory agencies and the public in order to complete the review process. The EHP review process must be completed before funds are released to carry out the proposed project. FEMA will not fund projects that are initiated without the required EHP Review.

Additionally, all recipients are required to comply with FEMA EHP Policy Guidance. EHP Policy Guidance can be found in FP 108-023-1, Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Policy Guidance, and FP 108.24.4, Environmental Planning and Historical Preservation Policy.

All modifications to Facility activities, and any renovation to facilities that would qualify as a modification to facilities 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 SCBA
- Air quality systems
- Fire/Smoke alarm systems for the facility (life safety)
- Generators (fixed)
- Sprinklers
- Vehicle exhaust systems (fixed)
- Washer/dryer/extractors

If the recipient receives an award package from FEMA that contains an EHP comment in the "Negotiation Comments" section of the award package, the recipient MUST submit an EHP screening form to FEMA for review and approval prior to beginning any work that required the screening.

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

The AFG EHP Screening form and instructions are available at: https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90195

Complete the AFG EHP Screening form and submit to the EHP Office at GPDEHPInfo@fema.dhs.gov.

E. Application Review Information

Prior to making a federal award, the federal-awarding agency is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3321 and 41 U.S.C. § 2313, 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; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

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.

Funding priorities and criteria for evaluating AFG 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 grant 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 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
- 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.

Review and Selection Process

AFG 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 notice.

Applications with the highest pre-score rankings are then scored competitively by (no less than three) members of the Peer Panel Review process. 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. "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. These peer reviewers will assess each application's merits based on the narrative statement on the activity, including the evaluation elements listed in the "Narrative Evaluation Criteria" below.

Panelists will independently score each project 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, V. Restrictions on Use of Award Funds.

Narrative Evaluation Criteria

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

   Applicants should describe their financial need and how consistent it is with the intent of the AFG Program. This statement should include details describing the applicant's financial distress, 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%)**

   This 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 the completion of the project goals.

3. **Operations and Safety/Cost Benefit (25%)**

   Applicants should describe how they plan to address the operations and personal safety needs of their organization, including cost effectiveness and sharing assets. This 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.

4. **Statement of Effect/Impact on Daily Operations (25%)**

   This statement 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.

Simplified Acquisition Threshold Requirements

If the anticipated federal award amount will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently $150,000 (see 2 CFR §200.88):

- Prior to making a federal award with a total amount of federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, DHS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal

Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)).

- An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered within the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.
- FEMA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, when 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 CFR §200.205, "Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants".

Turndown Notifications

All applicants who do not receive an FY 2017 AFG award will receive a decision notification from FEMA within the eGrants system.

The notification email will briefly describe those application factors that did not adequately align to the higher AFG Program priorities and consequently, why the application did not score high enough for further consideration. Due to the historical volume of applications and turndowns, a detailed debrief for each applicant will not be possible.

F. Federal Award Administration Information Notice of Award

Notice of Award

Once an award has been approved and recorded in the system, an award package is sent to the grant official authorized by the recipient. The award package and email notification will be made within the eGrants system. The authorized grant official should follow the directions in the notification to accept the award documents. The authorized grant official should carefully read the award package for instructions on administering the grant, whether there has been an adjustment to the award, and to become familiar with the terms, conditions, and responsibilities of federal awards.

The offered award will remain on hold and be available (for a maximum of 30 days) until the recipient either accepts the award via the online AFG eGrants system or declines 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.

Negotiation of Award

During the offer of an AFG award, the application request(s) may have been modified during the review process, or awarded activities may require EHP Review.

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 but not funded by the award.

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: https://www.dhs.gov/publication/fy15-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 Authorized Organizational Representative (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.

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 for verification.

Federal Financial Reporting Requirements

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

Recipients of AFG 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 eGrants system 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 period January 1 – June 30)
- **No later than January 31** (for period July 1 – December 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 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. 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.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-501.pdf**

Program Performance Reporting Requirements

The recipient is responsible for completing and submitting a programmatic Performance Report using the eGrants system. The programmatic Performance Report is due every six months after the grant's award date, and thereafter until the award is closed out.

Monitoring

Grant recipients will be monitored periodically by FEMA staff, both programmatically and financially, to ensure that the project goals, objectives, performance requirements, timelines, milestone completion, 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 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 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 eGrants system) 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/closeout-report-tutorial-introduction.

After these 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 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.

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 the eGrants system, answers questions concerning applicant eligibility and recipient responsibilities, and offers assistance 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., Monday through Friday. All times listed are Eastern Time.

FEMA Regional Fire Program Specialists

Each FEMA region has 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.

H. Additional Information

Extensions to the Grant Period of Performance

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 the eGrants system, 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

Requirements for Consideration

To be eligible for consideration, requests must be submitted via the eGrants system. Requests should be submitted no earlier than 120 days but no later than 60 days prior to the end of the award's period of performance.

- In accordance with FEMA policy, extensions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and typically granted for no more than a six-month time period. Extension requests will be granted only due to compelling legal, policy, or operational challenges. The review process can take up to 30 days or longer. This review period should be factored into the timing of when to submit a request for an extension.

Example: Recipients may request an extension when not adjusting the timeline for liquidating obligations would constitute a verifiable legal breach of contract by the recipient with vendors or sub- recipients; or where a specific statute or regulation mandates an environmental review that cannot be completed within this timeframe; or where other exceptional circumstances warrant a discrete waiver.

Appendix A – FY 2017 AFG Program Updates-

Appendix A contains detailed information on changes between FY 2016 and FY 2017 to the AFG Program.

New for FY 2017

Equipment/Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The FY 2017 NOFO revises and, in some places changes, the priorities for applications submitted for equipment and PPE acquisitions under the Operations and Safety Activity. Under these changes, the FY 2017 NOFO and application now include questions designed to solicit pertinent information from the applicant with regard to the purpose of the request. The criteria are designed to be easier to understand and will assist FEMA in obtaining the necessary information to assess the application request. The numerical scores for each activity line item requested are based on objective criteria in order to reduce the subjectivity of the category itself. The following changes for 2017 are as follows:

- The purposes for applicant's request to acquire equipment have been revised. These new purposes for FY 2017 are ranked by priority as follows:
  - Obtain equipment to achieve minimum operational and deployment standards for existing missions (high),
  - Replace inoperable/broken/damaged to current standard (high),
  - Replace obsolete/non-compliant to upgraded technology (medium),
  - Increase supply for minimum service requirement due to community growth (low),
  - Obtain equipment for new mission (low).
- The purposes for an applicant's request to acquire personal protective gear have been revised. These new purposes for FY 2017 are ranked by priority as follows:
  - Replace damaged broken inoperable equipment to current standard (high),
  - Replace obsolete/non-compliant to upgrade technology (medium),
  - Increase supply for new hires and/or existing firefighters that do not have one set of turnout gear (PPE) or allocated seated positions (high).
- Call volume is a consideration, but only between like departments, i.e. career, combination, and/or volunteer. Additional consideration for call volume can contribute to the justification of a new risk and/or the primary first due response area or region.
- Age of equipment terminology changed from "medium" to "intermediate". This was done to avoid confusion within similar name in other parts of the NOFO, i.e. (Medium) priority.
- Vehicle mounted exhaust systems are now listed under the equipment activity.
- Fire departments and SFTA will have separate lists of allowable equipment that each type of entity may apply for and acquire with AFG funds.
- The following items are now considered a "medium" priority for fire department applicants: Props, simulators, mobile data terminals (MDT), and computers used in training and mobile computing devices used on scene.

- EMS training aids with an age category of “short" (5-7 year life expectancy) are now eligible expense for FY 2017 (i.e., CPR mannequins, airway training equipment, IVs, etc.).
- Monitoring and sampling devices are now categorized as “Sampling Devices”. This was done to avoid confusion within similar specialized monitoring devices, for use in “medium” and “low” priorities.
- Tow vehicles are now listed under a separate chart in the equipment section to clarify the priority levels between application types, i.e. fire department and SFTA.
- Nozzles, appliances, foam inductors are all high priorities and listed in one category. These items were combined and defined with an age category of “long.”

Wellness and Fitness Micro Grants

- Wellness and Fitness activities are now eligible when applying for a Micro Grant.
- Cancer screening is now available under the Wellness & Fitness activity.
- All NFPA 1583 training has been moved to Wellness & Fitness. This request was previously requested under “Training”.

Vehicles

- Quint apparatus has been added as a high priority in the Vehicle Acquisition activity.

Appendix B –Programmatic Information and Priorities

Appendix B contains detailed information 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 EIN but sharing the same facilities as being two separate organizations for the purposes of AFG eligibility. If two or more organizations share facilities and each submits an application in the same program area (i.e. Equipment, Modify Facilities, Personal Protective Equipment, 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:

- While 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 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- 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 USC § 2229(a)(7).
- 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.
- 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. 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

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).

Metro Department is a metropolitan fire department that has minimum staffing of 350 career firefighters as defined by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). AFG 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 Response Area is the geographical area in proximity to a fire or rescue facility and normally served by the personnel and apparatus from that facility in the event of a fire or other emergency.

C. Community Classifications

The information the applicant organization supplies in Department Characteristics I and II of the AFG 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: http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/urbanruralclass.html.

FY 2017 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%
Number of stations per square mile within primary first due response area	<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:

- National Fire Protection Association (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.
- 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 not 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.

E. Restrictions on Use of Award Funds

- No AFG 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.
- 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 cascade system under Personal Protective Equipment, or 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, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy Training Priorities	
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				
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		H	H	H
Fire inspector	1031	H	H	H
Fire investigator	1033	H	H	H
Fire educator	1041	H	H	H
NIMS/ICS	1561	H	H	H
Emergency scene rehab	1584	H	H	H
Critical Incident debriefing	1500/1583	H	H	H
Any training to a National/State or NFPA standards		H	H	H
Compliance with federal/state-mandated program		H	H	H
Rescue Technician	1006/1670	H	H	H
Emergency Medical Technician		H	H	H
Advanced EMT to Paramedic		H	H	H
Paramedic to Community Paramedic		H	H	H
Vehicle rescue	1670	H	H	H
Other officer	1021	H	H	M
NFPA (ARFF)	1003/402	H	H	M
Weapons of Mass Destruction (awareness, operations, technician, other/specialized)	472/1072	H	H	L
Mass casualty		H	H	L
Hazmat (technician)	472/1072	H	H	L
Training to address a local risk not elevated to a national or state		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

AFG 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 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 Emergency Medical Technician (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	• 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 Type 3 Incident Management Teams (IMT) attending position development/mentoring assignment with national Type 2 or Type 1 IMTs
• Travel expenses associated with attendance at a formal training course or conference (mileage, hotel/lodging expenses); note: Food and beverages are ineligible • Compensation to volunteers (Fire and nonaffiliated EMS) for wages lost to attend training; there is no overtime or backfill for volunteers	• 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

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	• 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 • Purchase of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and Drones • Food and beverages

Eligible Nonaffiliated EMS Training Activities include but are not limited to:	
• Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) • Emergency Medical Technician (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), no meals.	• 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 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 Eductors	Appliance(s)/Nozzle(s)/ Foam Eductors
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
H	Intermediate	Generator – Portable	Generator – Portable
H	Intermediate	Hose (Attack/Supply)	Hose (Attack/Supply)
H	Short	IDLH Monitoring Equipment	IDLH Monitoring Equipment
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 - M	Props - H
H	Intermediate	RIT Pack/Cylinder	RIT Pack/Cylinder

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
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)
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	Intermediate	Pagers (limited to number of active members)	Pagers (limited to number of active members)
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)	Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)
EMS EQUIPMENT			
H	Short	Airway Equipment (Non-Disposable)	Airway Equipment (Non-Disposable)
H	Short	Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) BLS Level	Automated External Defibrillators (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
EXTRICATION			

Priority	Age Category	Fire and Fire Regional	SFTA
H	Intermediate	Cutter/Spreader	Cutter/Spreader
H	Intermediate	Vehicle Extrication Equipment	Vehicle Extrication Equipment
HAZ-MAT			
M	Intermediate	Basic Haz-Mat Response Equipment	Basic Haz-Mat Response Equipment
M	Intermediate	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment
M	Short	Sampling Devices (Haz-Mat)	Sampling Devices (Haz-Mat)
INVESTIGATION			
L	Short	Cameras	Cameras
L	Intermediate	Investigation Tools	Investigation Tools
L	Intermediate	Lights	Lights
L	Short	Sampling Devices (Investigation)	Sampling Devices (Investigation)
SPECIALIZED			
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
M	Intermediate	Skid Unit	Skid Unit
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	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	Intermediate	Pagers (limited to number of active members)	Pagers (limited to number of active members)
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)	Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)
EMS EQUIPMENT			
H	Short	ALS/BLS Equipment	ALS/BLS Equipment
H	Short	Airway Equipment (Non- Disposable)	Airway Equipment (Non- Disposable)
H	Short	Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) BLS Level	Automated External Defibrillators (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	Pulse Oximeters	Pulse Oximeters
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)
HAZ-MAT			
M	Intermediate	Basic Haz-mat Response Equipment	Basic Haz-mat Response Equipment
M	Intermediate	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment	Decon, Clean-Up, Containment and Packaging Equipment
M	Short	Sampling Devices (Haz-Mat)	Sampling Devices (Haz-Mat)

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy 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.
H	Replace inoperable/broken/damaged to current standard	Applies to equipment that is no longer usable because it is inoperable due to being broken, damaged, and/or for some other reason deemed unusable. Replacement equipment requested under a grant must meet the most current and appropriate standards for that type of equipment.
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 Hazardous Materials (HazMat) capability or Swift Water Rescue capability.
M	Increase supply for minimum service requirement due to community growth	Applies to requests for equipment supplies or inventories that are intended to fulfill minimum service requirements as a result of community growth. For example, this may include, but is not limited to, development of new high rise or commercial structures or the expansion of service into new areas.
L	Replace obsolete/incompliant to upgraded technology	Applies to equipment that is deemed obsolete and/or is out of compliance with current and appropriate standards for that type of equipment. Equipment requested under this reason for purchase has not been deemed inoperable, and while it may not be in compliance with current standards it is not broken, damaged, or otherwise unusable.

Additional Considerations for Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy 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 Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA])

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy 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 State Fire Training Academy Equipment Activities include but are not limited to:	
• Construction of facilities, such as buildings, towers, sheds to house communications, or • All fixed non-mobile repeaters or fixed site amplifiers • Sirens or other outdoor warning devices • Signage of any kind • Phones (telephone/satellite/cell) • Subject to waiver, any new communications projects or expanding existing communications; projects that operate on 700 MHz per FEMA Information Bulletin #386 • 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) • Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (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)

IMPORTANT: Recipients that do not have authority to operate in the 700 MHz public safety broadband spectrum (e.g., via FCC regulatory action and/or agreement with FirstNet) should not submit requests for, and will not be permitted to use, FEMA AFG funding for broadband-related acquisition and deployment until they have such authority to operate in the spectrum. Any 700 MHz narrow band items purchased with AFG funds needs to have the ability to be used in broadband as well. Information regarding 700MHz broadband may be found in the FY2017 SAFECOM Guidance Document.

- The only eligible AFG 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 2017 SAFECOM Guidance on Emergency Communications Grants is available at:

https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/FY%202017%20SAFECOM%20Guidance%20for%20Emergency%20Communications%20Grants_060717_FINAL508.pdf. 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 the FEMA upon request.

- AFG 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.

G. Operations and Safety - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Overview

AFG 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 obsolete or damaged 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 obsolete, the items must be a minimum of 2 NFPA cycles and 10 years of age or older from the date they were manufactured.

Training Requested for 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 pants, one coat, one helmet, two hoods, one pair boots, two pairs gloves, and one pair

suspenders, one pair 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 pants, one coat, one helmet, one pair boots, one pair gloves, one pair suspenders, and one pair goggles.
- FEMA considers a complete set of Wildland PPE Turnout Gear to be comprised of these NFPA 1977 compliant components: one pair pants, one coat, one jumpsuit, one helmet, one pair boots, one pair gloves, one pair suspenders, one pair goggles, one fire shelter, web gear, backpack, and canteen/hydration system.
- 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 State Fire Training Academy Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Priorities		
Priority		**Definitions**
H	Replace damaged/broken/inoperable equipment to current standard	Applies to PPE-Turnout Gear that is no longer usable because it is inoperable due to being broken, damaged, and/or for some other reason deemed unusable. Replacement PPE-Turnout gear requested under a grant must meet the most current and appropriate standards for PPE-Turnout Gear.
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.
M	Replace obsolete/non-compliant to upgrade technology	Applies to PPE-Turnout Gear that is deemed obsolete and/or is out of compliance appropriate standards for PPE-Turnout Gear. PPE-Turnout Gear requested under this reason for purchase has not been deemed inoperable, and while it may not be in compliance with current standards it is not broken, damaged, or otherwise unusable.

Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Priorities
Award will be based on the number of eligible seated riding positions in the department's vehicle fleet and age of existing SCBA, limited to one spare cylinder (unless justified within the application narrative. FEMA will fund one face piece per trained firefighter.

H	**Note:** FEMA considers SCBA (PPE) obsolete if, it is a minimum of two NFPA cycles and 10 years of age or older, from the date of manufacture. • Replace damaged broken inoperable equipment to current standard, NFPA 1981, 2002 Edition or prior. • 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 obsolete/non-compliant to upgrade technology.

Additional Considerations for Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (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.

Personal Protective Equipment List	
Structural/Proximity H	
• ANSI Traffic Vests • Boots • Coats • Complete Set of Turnout Gear • Gloves • Goggles	• Helmets • Hoods • Pants • Pass Devices • Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout System • Suspenders
Respiratory H	
• Air-Line Unit • Face Pieces • Respirators	• SCBA Spare Cylinders • SCBA (SCBA Unit includes: Harness/Backpack, Face Piece, and 2 cylinders)
Wildland H	
• Jumpsuits/Coveralls • Boots • Coats • Pants	• Goggles • Shelters • Web Gear/Backpacks • Canteens/Hydration Systems
• Suspenders	• Helmet

Personal Protective Equipment List	
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 Suites	• Extrication Clothing/Rescue Clothing • Proximity Suits • Splash Suits • Wet and Dry Suits

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS, Joint/Regional and State Fire Training Academy PPE Activities include but are not limited to:	
• American National Standards Institute (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 State Fire Training Academy 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. **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, or vehicle lettering that customizes awarded items (except customized helmet shields)

H. 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 four of the following Priority 1 H activities as discussed in the table below.

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

Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness Priorities

Priority 1 - Below are the four activities required for a complete Wellness and Fitness program.
Initial medical exams H (Priority 1).
Job-related immunization H (Priority 1).
Annual medical and fitness evaluation H (Priority 1).
Behavioral health H (Priority 1).

Priority 2 - Applicants may only apply for Priority 2 Items if the applicant offers or is requesting a combination of the four activities required under Priority 1.
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, any grant funded medical exams must meet current the DHS adopted standard, NFPA1582, Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments.

- Candidate physical ability evaluation.
- Cancer Screening Program/Equipment.
- Injury/illness rehab.
- Formal fitness, injury prevention.
- 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).

Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness Priorities

NOTE: Simultaneous requests for Priority 1 and Priority 2 activities will receive a lower funding consideration than requests that complete the bundle of the four Priority 1 activities.

Eligible Fire Department and Nonaffiliated EMS Wellness and Fitness activities include but are not limited to:

- The four 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.	• Purchase of medical equipment that is not used as part of the Wellness and Fitness program. • Contractual services with anyone other than medical professionals (e.g., health care consultants, trainers, and nutritionists) for programs such as smoking cessation.

I. Operations and Safety - Modifications to Facilities Overview

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

Requested activities may only retrofit existing structures (built prior to January 1, 2003) that do not already have the AFG eligible life safety features in place. Structures that were built prior to January 1, 2003 and that have been expanded/added on to, may be eligible for an award to retrofit areas. Eligible activities include source capturing exhaust, sprinkler, or smoke/fire detection systems.

The January 1, 2003, 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). However, the eligibility of certain minor interior alterations does not release the recipient from their EHP responsibilities resulting from those alterations.

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, or smoke/fire detection systems
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	• Interior remodeling not pertaining to the requested project(s)

Facility Considerations
H Full-time coverage 24/7
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

J. Regional

Overview

A Regional application is an opportunity for a fire department or a nonaffiliated EMS organization to act as a host and apply for funding on behalf of itself and any number of other participating AFG eligible organizations. 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.

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 submitting an application on behalf of their own organization for any AFG activity (Vehicle Acquisition or Operations and Safety) however, it cannot be for the same item. For example, a department cannot apply for PPE under their own organization and participate in a regional PPE application.

In the application narrative, a Regional host must include a list of all the AFG 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.

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 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.

K. Vehicle Acquisition

Overview

Vehicles purchased with AFG funds must be compliant with NFPA 1901 (Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus), NFPA 1906 (Standard for Wildland Fire Apparatus), or NFPA 1917 (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 to be 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 State Fire Training Academy 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	• Aerial • Ambulance • Pumper • Tanker/Tender • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium, or Heavy • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Quint	• Aerial • Ambulance • Brush/Attack • Pumper • Tanker/Tender • Non-Transport EMS (Community Paramedic/Healthcare) • Quint
M	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazardous Materials Unit • Air/Light Unit • Rehab Unit	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazardous Materials Unit • Air/Light Unit • Brush/Attack • Rehab Unit	• Command/Mobile Communications Vehicle • Hazardous Materials Unit • Air/Light Unit • Rescue Vehicle Light, Medium, or Heavy
L	• ARFF (Aircraft Rescue Firefighting) • Brush/Attack • 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 not designed or intended for use in the fire service Departments that have automatic aid agreements, mutual aid agreements, or both • 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 AFG activity, grant recipients must submit a copy of their vehicle purchase contract to the designated Regional Fire Program Specialist. To locate Regional Fire Program Specialists, 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 Fire Programs Specialist 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 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-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-funded equipment. For example, recipients may not use a vehicle funded with AFG funds as collateral for any type of financial loan.

Eligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations, Regional, and State Fire Training Academy Vehicle activities include but are not limited to:	
• Cost of vehicle • Physicals to meet current NFPA 1582/US Department of Transportation 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 Emergency Vehicle Operator Curriculum (EVOC), or equivalent • Travel expenses (air/rail transportation, mileage, hotel/lodging) to inspect a requested vehicle during production (if justified in the Vehicles narrative)

Ineligible Fire Department, Nonaffiliated EMS Organizations, Joint/Regional, and State Fire Training Academy Vehicle activities include but are not limited to:	
• Leasing 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	• Utility Vehicles (UTVs) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) are not eligible • Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (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 vehicles 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

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

Appendix C contains detailed information on AFG 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 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 will establish guidelines for determining what constitutes economic hardship and will publish these guidelines at FEMA's website www.fema.gov/grants. An award must be accepted before a hardship waiver for cost share or maintenance of effort can be submitted as an amendment request via the online eGrants system.

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
iii. A copy of the cancelled 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 grant writer or preparer information must be entered into the "Overview" section of the AFG application, whether that person, entity, or agent is compensated or not.

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 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 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 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.*

V. Subscription, Access, Membership, Rental, Lease, or User Fees

No subscription, access, membership, rental, lease, termination of services, or user fees, are chargeable to any AFG award.

VI. 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. 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.

- Excess funds cannot be used to support Fire Prevention and Safety activities.
- 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) which 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.

VII. Procurement Integrity

Through audits conducted by DHS OIG and FEMA grant monitoring, findings have shown that some AFG 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. Recipients who do not comply with procurement standards may have expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed.

The below highlights the federal procurement requirements for fire department, SFTAs, and nonaffiliated EMS organization 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 at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.326**. 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. § 200.317, 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 2 C.F.R. § 200.322 regarding procurement of recovered materials, and 2 C.F.R. § 200.326 regarding required contract provisions. All other non-federal entities must use their own documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable state, local, 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. § 200.319.

Among the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.319, 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. 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.
- Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

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 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.318 through 200.326, such as contract cost and price (§ 200.323) and solicitation of minority, women-owned, or small businesses (§ 200.321).

For non-federal entities other than states 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 entities other than states under at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.318 to 200.326.
- 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 AFG Program Office or Regional Fire Program Specialist.

To the greatest extent possible, FEMA recommends that federal grant funds be used for the purchase of goods and services manufactured, assembled, and distributed in the United States. This recommendation is not mandated by the procurement rules applicable to federal awards.

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.318(c)(1), recipients (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 (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. Organizational conflicts of interest means that because of relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization and 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 the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with applicable federal awarding agency's policy.

NOTE: For the purposes of conflicts of interest under procurements executed by the recipient, FEMA considers volunteers of an organization and grant writers to be employees, officers, and/or agents of the recipient. As such, no volunteer, member of an organization, or anyone involved in preparing the application for funding, can participate in, or benefit from, the procurement if federal funds are involved.

Recipients who purchase items with grant funds from vendors who employ any of their volunteers/members will have to clearly document how a conflict of interest was avoided during the procurement process (i.e., provide specific details regarding how the members/volunteers removed themselves, or how they were prevented from participating in the process). Recipients will be required to provide this documentation upon request. Recipients who fail to fully document purchases will find their

expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed. Remember, FEMA reserves the right to request and review any and all bids or specifications prior to purchase. Recipients may be subject to an audit at any time.

Documentation

Recipients 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.
- Other documents required by federal regulations applicable at the time a grant is awarded to a recipient.

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

- Specifications
- Solicitations
- Competitive quotes or proposals
- Basis for selection decisions
- Purchase orders
- Contracts
- Invoices
- Cancelled 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 cancelled checks for verification.

Recipients who fail to fully document all purchases will find their expenditures questioned and subsequently disallowed.

Specifications

When drafting bid specifications, recipients (excluding states) must ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition consistent with the standards of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.326. Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.319 (a), in order to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. 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. § 200.319 (b), the recipient (excluding states) must conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state, local, 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. § 200.313 (a)(2), recipients may not encumber equipment procured with AFG funding.

VIII. Payments and Amendments

AFG payment/drawdown Requests are generated using the eGrants system.

AFG 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 the eGrants system 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 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

AFG award amendments may be approved, 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, some excess funds requests, requests for economic hardship Cost Share waiver, and requests for maintenance of expenditure waivers.
- Cost over/under run (adding funds to award/non-closeout deobligation of funds)
- Economic Hardship Waiver.

Amendments will only be considered when submitted via the online eGrants system.

These requests must contain specific and compelling justifications for the requested change.
FEMA strongly encourages the timely expenditure of grant funds by recipients to be consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in AFG programs.

**A recipient may deobligate (return) unused funds (remaining funds drawn down via payment requests and/or remaining award funding that were never requested) to DHS prior to the end of an award's period of performance. To exercise this option, a recipient must submit a Cost Overrun or Underrun Amendment via the eGrants system and state in their request that the unliquidated funds (funds to be returned) are not necessary for the fulfillment or success of the grant's obligations or mission. The recipient must also indicate that it understands that the returned funds will be deobligated and unavailable for any future award expenses.*

The 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, the Program Office will hold the approved deobligation request for 14 calendar days as a period for recipient reconsideration before processing.

IX. Disposition of Grant Funded Equipment

A recipient must use, manage, and dispose of AFG-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 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-funded equipment, to include vehicles.