

# Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)



# FEMA

## SAFER Veterans Hiring Program

America's veterans have and continue to serve our country well. They have made countless sacrifices to ensure the freedoms and security of their fellow citizens. Now you can further honor their service, thank them for their dedication, and give them yet one more opportunity to serve the Nation.

There may be no better way to say thank you, while at the same time benefit your fire department, your fellow firefighters and your community, than hiring a veteran to join your ranks. America's Veterans have a proven track record of dependability, teamwork, individual problem solving, and a deep commitment to public service that makes them ideally suited to the role of firefighter.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is committed to supporting military veterans and strongly encourages applicants to seek, recruit, and hire veterans to increase their ranks within their departments.

FEMA is encouraging fire departments applying for FY 2012 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) hiring grants to make the recruitment and hiring of veterans a priority and focus of their hiring policies and recruitment efforts. FEMA has developed several strategies and incentives that will be available to grantees that hire military veterans. Of the \$320 million authorized for the FY 2012 SAFER grant program, \$50 million in grant funds will be set aside specifically to fund SAFER firefighter positions that are filled by military veterans who are new employees not currently employed in the fire service.

As stated in the FY 2012 SAFER program guidance, hiring grant applicants that have a policy in place addressing their intent to implement strategies to support the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 and have recruiting efforts aimed at hiring post-9/11 Veterans will receive additional consideration. To receive this additional consideration, the applicant must describe their specific policies and recruiting efforts in the application's Narrative Statement. Each SAFER firefighter position that is filled by a military veteran will be eligible to receive full funding for three years instead of the usual two years.

SAFER hiring grant applicants should complete their applications as usual and submit them before the August 10, 2012, deadline. Hiring grant budgets should be prepared assuming that the firefighter positions will be filled for two years only. All grantees receiving awards for new hires will have 90 days to recruit the number of firefighters for which they are awarded. Third year funding for SAFER firefighters who are veterans will be approved on a case-by-case basis through a post-award amendment process.

Materials explaining the procedures to be followed are being developed and will be distributed shortly.