

# Fiscal Year 2021 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)

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## 1. What is the purpose of the FY 2021 HSGP Program?

The fiscal year (FY) 2021 [Homeland Security Grant Program \(HSGP\)](#) is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the ability of state, local, tribal and territorial governments, as well as nonprofits, to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from terrorist attacks. These grant programs are part of a comprehensive set of measures authorized by Congress and implemented by DHS to help strengthen the nation's communities against potential terrorist attacks.

## 2. What legislation authorizes funding for the FY 2021 HSGP?

Sections 2002 to 2004 of the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Pub. L. No. 107-296), codified as amended (6 U.S.C. §§ 603-605) and the *Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2021* (Pub. L. No. 116-260).

## 3. Where is the FY 2021 HSGP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) located?

The FY 2021 HSGP NOFO is located online at [www.fema.gov/grants](http://www.fema.gov/grants), as well as [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

## 4. Who is eligible to apply for FY 2021 HSGP funds?

The State Administrative Agency (SAA) is the only entity eligible to submit HSGP applications to FEMA, including those applications submitted on behalf of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) applicants. All 56 states and territories, which includes any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, are eligible to apply for State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funds. Tribal governments may not apply directly for HSGP funding; however, funding may be available to tribes under SHSP and OPSG by applying through the SAA.

Eligible high-risk urban areas for the FY 2021 UASI Program have been determined through an analysis of the relative risk of terrorism faced by the 100 most populous metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the United States. Subawards will be made by the SAA to the designated urban areas identified in the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO. In the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the FY 2021 Appropriation for DHS, Congress again expressed its intent that the Secretary fund up to 85 percent of nationwide risk in the UASI Program. In accordance with that intent, the Secretary designated 31 urban areas eligible for funding under the UASI Program. This is a decrease from the 32 urban areas eligible in FY 2020.

Under the FY 2021 OPSG Program, subrecipients that are eligible to apply for and receive a sub-award directly from the SAA are divided into three tiers.



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- Tier 1 entities are local units of government at the county level or equivalent and federally recognized tribal governments that are on a physical border in states bordering Canada, states bordering Mexico, and states and territories with international water borders.
- Tier 2 eligible subrecipients are those not located on the physical border or international water border but are contiguous to a Tier 1 county.
- Tier 3 eligible subrecipients are those not located on the physical border or international water border but are contiguous to a Tier 2 eligible subrecipient. The tier structure is only applicable regarding eligibility. OPSG funding allocations are based on the assessed border security risks as determined by the U.S. Border Patrol.

**5. What are the key dates associated with the FY 2021 HSGP?**

- February 25, 2021: Release date for the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO.
- May 14, 2021, 5 p.m. ET: Applications for the FY 2021 HSGP due to FEMA.

**6. What is the FY 2021 HSGP period of performance?**

The period of performance is 36 months.

**7. How much funding is available under the FY 2021 HSGP?**

Per the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2021 (Pub. L. No. 116-260), \$1.12 billion is available for funding under the FY 2021 HSGP.

**8. What are the changes in funding levels between FY 2020 and FY 2021?**

The funding level for SHSP in FY 2021 is \$415 million, the same funding level as FY 2020. The funding level for UASI is \$615 million, the same funding level as FY 2020. The funding level in FY 2021 for OPSG is \$90 million, the same funding level as FY 2020.

HSGP Programs	FY 2021 Allocation
State Homeland Security Program	\$415,000,000
Urban Area Security Initiative	\$615,000,000
Operation Stonegarden	\$90,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,120,000,000</b>

**9. How will the FY 2021 HSGP funds be allocated?**

The FY 2021 allocation process for SHSP, UASI, and OPSG will be as follows:

**SHSP Allocations**

For FY 2021, FEMA will award SHSP funds based on risk as determined by FEMA’s relative risk methodology pursuant to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 as amended. Each state’s allocation is published in the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO.



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## UASI Allocations

For FY 2021, FEMA will award UASI funds based on risk as determined by FEMA's relative risk methodology pursuant to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 as amended. Each eligible urban area's allocation is published in the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO.

## OPSG Allocations

For FY 2021, FEMA will award OPSG funds based on risk and the anticipated effectiveness of the proposed use of grant funds. The FY 2021 OPSG risk assessment is designed to identify the risk to border security and to assist with the distribution of funds for the grant program. Entities eligible for funding are state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies that are located along the border of the United States. Final award amounts will be based on FEMA's evaluation of the effectiveness of proposed investments and projects.

For additional information, see pages 10-13 of the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO.

### 10. What other resources are available to address programmatic, technical, and financial questions?

- For additional program-specific information, applicants may contact the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk (CSID) help line at (800) 368-6498 or [ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov). CSID hours of operation are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.
- For support regarding financial grant management and budgetary technical assistance, applicants may contact the DHS/FEMA Award Administration Help Desk via e-mail at [ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov).

### 11. How do we ensure that we are receiving the latest information, updates and guidance from FEMA on the status of the preparedness grants?

All communications will be sent to our state and urban area partners via the [ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov) e-mail address and posted on the [www.fema.gov/grants](http://www.fema.gov/grants) website. If you are not receiving these e-mails, please send a request to your assigned Preparedness Officer or directly to the [ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov) e-mail address and you will be added to the distribution list.

## National Priority Area Projects

### 12. What are the National Priority Areas for the FY 2021 SHSP and UASI programs?

A fifth National Priority Area was added in FY 2021 to the four National Priority Areas that were introduced in FY 2020 for SHSP and UASI. The five National Priority Areas are:

1. Cybersecurity;
2. Soft Targets/Crowded Places;
3. Intelligence and Information Sharing;
4. Domestic Violent Extremism (new); and
5. Emerging Threats.



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**13. Are states, territories and eligible urban areas still required to submit Investment Justifications (IJs) for each of the five National Priority Areas for SHSP and UASI with their applications?**

Yes. States, territories and eligible urban areas must submit one IJ with at least one respective project for each of the five National Priority Areas (Cybersecurity, Soft Targets/Crowded Places, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Domestic Violent Extremism, and Emerging Threats) with their application. All projects related to the National Priority Area **must** be included in the IJ. However, complete project-level information will not be required until states, territories, and eligible urban areas submit their first Biannual Strategy Implementation Report (BSIR), which is due on **January 30, 2022**.

**14. Are states, territories, and eligible urban areas still required to demonstrate a minimum spend for each of the five National Priority Areas for SHSP and UASI with their applications?**

Yes. Each of the IJs covering the five National Priority Areas must account for a minimum percent of the applicant's total SHSP and UASI allocations as identified below:

- Cybersecurity – 7.5 percent;
- Soft Targets/Crowded Places – 5 percent;
- Intelligence and Information Sharing – 5 percent;
- Domestic Violent Extremism – 7.5 percent; and
- Emerging Threats – 5 percent.

**15. Can I still submit project level details for the five National Priority Area IJs with my SHSP and UASI application on May 14, 2021?**

Yes. All projects submitted by the application deadline will undergo a federal review to ensure the effectiveness of the proposed projects in addressing the National Priority Areas. The goal is to have the federal review for effectiveness completed before funds are awarded to minimize the amount of funding on hold related to the National Priority Areas. If the federal effectiveness review determines that one or more projects are not effective in addressing the National Priority Areas, then funding will be placed on hold for those projects, and FEMA will work with the grantee to revise those projects until they are deemed effective and the funding holds removed.

**16. If I don't submit complete SHSP and UASI project-level information with my application on May 14, 2021, when is this information due?**

All project-level information for the FY 2021 SHSP and UASI Programs must be submitted with the BSIR report due by January 30, 2022. However, any state or urban area that elects to submit project-level details at the time of the BSIR submittal will have funding related to the National Priority Areas placed on hold (30% of the total SHSP and UASI award) until after the effectiveness reviews have concluded in early 2022.

**17. If one or more of my FY 2021 SHSP or UASI National Priority Area projects is deemed ineffective, will I lose funding?**



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No. However, recipients and subrecipients will not be permitted to expend funding under the National Priority Areas until the effectiveness of the proposed projects has been reviewed and confirmed by FEMA. FEMA will work with states and urban areas to address deficiencies identified in the effectiveness review.

**18. Will funding for the projects not included as part of the five National Priority Area IJs for SHSP and UASI be available at the time of award?**

Yes, funds for these projects will be available for use at the time of award. However, as in past years, project-level information for these funds must be provided with the first BSIR report, which is due on **January 30, 2022**. FEMA may place a hold on those funds at that time should any of the projects be deemed ineffective during their review.

**19. Are SHSP and UASI applicants required to include at least one election security project in their investments under the Enhancing the Protection of Soft Targets/Crowded Places National Priority area IJ and in their investments under the Enhancing Cybersecurity National Priority area IJ as part of their applications?**

No. SHSP and UASI applicants are not required to provide election security projects in FY 2021.

**20. Should the five National Priority Area IJs include all related projects?**

Yes. All projects aligned with the National Priority Area **must** be included in the relevant National Priority Area IJ, and meet the minimum spend requirement as a percent of the SHSP and UASI allocation. As a reminder, applicants are not required to submit project-level detail at time of application, and instead can submit this detail as part of the BSIR due **January 30, 2022**. However, any state or urban area that elects to submit project-level detail with the BSIR will have all funding related to the National Priority Areas placed on hold (30% of the total SHSP and UASI award) until after the effectiveness reviews have concluded.

**21. Is there additional guidance to define what types of projects could fit into Emergent Threats (similar to CISA guidance provided under Soft Targets/Crowded Places)?**

Page 7 of the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO lists several core capabilities and sample project types for the emergent threats investments for applicants to use as a guide in developing their IJs.

**Application Development and Submission**

**22. Is there a stand-alone fusion center IJ required in FY 2021?**

No, there is no requirement to provide a stand-alone fusion center IJ this year for SHSP and UASI. However, all fusion center projects must be included in the Intelligence and Information National Priority Area IJ. The Intelligence and Information Sharing IJ should be labeled as the Fusion Center IJ in the Grant Reporting Tool (GRT) submission.



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**23. Should the additional effectiveness information delineated on pages 45-46 of the NOFO be input by applicants under the Project Description field in the GRT?**

Yes. However, because the GRT's project description fields are limited to 4,000 characters, states and territories may submit narrative addenda that can be uploaded to ND Grants. There is a two-page limit per project and addenda should meet the following criteria:

- Font: Arial or Times New Roman
- Font Size: 11 point (11 pt.) or larger
- Page Dimensions: Page dimensions must be 8.5" x 11" or smaller
- Margins: All margins (top, bottom, left, and right) must be at least 1"
- File Name: File names should be in the following format: State\_Urban Area\_IJ #\_National Priority\_Project Title

**24. Is it still a requirement that any state that retained a portion of an UASI allocation (up to 20%) for projects that directly support the urban area must include an IJ for the state-retained funds FY 2021?**

Yes. The state must create an IJ for state-retained funds as part of the applicable UASI's IJ submission, except if the state proposes to use funding under one of the five National Priority Areas (Cybersecurity, Soft Targets/Crowded Places, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Domestic Violent Extremism, and Emerging Threats). Those projects shall be included in the applicable National Priority Area IJ, ensuring the project name includes the word "STATE" to indicate the activity is a proposed state-funded UASI project.

**25. Since FY 2018, FEMA has required states and urban areas to submit one consolidated Emergency Communications IJ. This IJ included all emergency communications investments and describes how such activities align with their Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP). Will FEMA still require states and urban areas to submit one Emergency Communications IJ even if projects align with one of the five National Priority Areas (Cybersecurity, Soft Targets/Crowded Places, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Domestic Violent Extremism, and Emerging Threats)?**

In FY 2021, states and urban areas are not required to submit one consolidated Emergency Communications IJ. States and urban areas may still submit an Emergency Communications IJ; however, Emergency Communications projects that fall under one of the five National Priority Areas (Cybersecurity, Soft Targets/Crowded Places, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Domestic Violent Extremism, and Emerging Threats) should be included under the applicable priority's IJ.

**26. How will FY 2021 HSGP applications be submitted?**

Applying for an award under the HSGP is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Applicants are encouraged to register early as the registration process can take four weeks or more to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the ability to meet required submission deadlines. Please refer to Section D *Application and Submission Information* in the FY 2021 HSGP NOFO for detailed information and instructions.



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- Eligible applicants must submit their initial application through the grants.gov portal at least seven (7) days before the final application deadline at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants needing grants.gov support should contact the customer support hotline at (800) 518-4726.
- Eligible applicants will be notified by FEMA and asked to proceed with submitting their complete application package in the Non-Disaster (ND) Grants System. Applicants needing technical support with the ND Grants System should contact [ndgrants@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ndgrants@fema.dhs.gov) or (800) 865-4076, Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET.

## 27. Who do I contact if I have questions?

You may reach out to your assigned Preparedness Officer or contact the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk via email at [ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:ASKCsid@fema.dhs.gov), or by telephone at (800) 368-6498, Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. ET.

## Application Reviews

### 28. Will all projects undergo an effectiveness review, or will only those submitted under the five National Priority Areas receive this review?

Only those projects designated as making up the minimum spend for each of the National Priority Areas will undergo the enhanced effectiveness review and could be subject to a hold for that purpose. However, as in past years, all applications are still subject to the review process described in the NOFO and highlighted in the remaining FAQs.

### 29. Pages 45-46 of the FY21 HSGP NOFO outline the effectiveness criteria that will be used to assess the National Priority Area IJs. Can FEMA provide additional details to help applicants better understand how success will be determined across the criteria?

FEMA recommends including as much supporting detail as possible to demonstrate how projects and IJs are addressing the National Priority Areas in an effective manner. Supporting details when drafting narratives could include:

- How the project/investment descriptions support and align to the proposed budget
- How/why a project has a nexus to terrorism
- How/why a project will influence/address the National Priority Area
- How/why the projects/investments/priorities align and build upon each other for an overall investment strategy that addresses the National Priority Area
- Current and future partners and external entities (government, tribal, for-profit, nonprofit) and their geographic area/scope (local, regional, state, federal) that will be engaged to address grant objectives and the National Priority Area
- How you currently engage and collaborate with partners and any efforts to improve and/or expand engagement in the future
- How you currently and/or will engage and collaborate with partners to address and overcome challenges (including what the challenges are)



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- How you measure and evaluate success, improvement, outcomes, impacts (quantitatively and/or qualitatively)
- How you use capability gaps, standardized targets, and other results identified in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)/Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) process to measure and evaluate improvement
- How you maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures through oversight processes and/or other strategies throughout the grant life cycle

**30. What are the administrative and eligibility criteria that FEMA will use to verify compliance for all proposed investments that are not in the National Priority Area IJs?**

FEMA will evaluate all applications for completeness, adherence to programmatic guidelines, and anticipated effectiveness of the proposed investments. This review applies to all projects, including those in the five National Priority Area IJs. In addition, for SHSP and UASI projects, FEMA’s review will include verification that each project:

- Has a demonstrated nexus to preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to acts of terrorism;
- Aligns with at least one core capability identified in the National Preparedness Goal;
- Demonstrates how investments support closing capability gaps or sustaining capabilities identified in the THIRA/SPR process; and
- Supports a National Incident Management System-typed resource, and whether those assets are deployable/shareable to support emergency or disaster operations per existing Emergency Management Assistance Compact agreements.

FEMA is also using the same administrative and eligibility review conducted in past several funding cycles. FEMA is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3354, as amended by the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, Pub. L. No. 116-117 (2020); 41 U.S.C. § 2313; and 2 C.F.R. § 200.206 to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. 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 awards; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

**31. Will projects be scored individually?**

Yes, projects will be reviewed and scored individually.

**Award Administration**

**32. Are SAAs still required to pass through at least 80 percent of the funds awarded under SHSP and UASI to local or tribal governments within 45 calendar days of receipt of the funds?**

Yes. To meet this requirement, the SAA must issue sub-awards to local or tribal governments in an amount that accounts for at least 80 percent of the SHSP or UASI award, in a manner consistent with the



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FY 2021 HSGP NOFO. The SAA may issue sub-awards for funding under one or more of the National Priority Areas during the 45-day period and apply that funding to the 80 percent pass-through requirement. The SAA may issue these sub-awards even if the effectiveness review has not been completed. The subrecipient, however, will not be permitted to expend SHSP or UASI funding under the National Priority Areas until that effectiveness review has been completed by FEMA.

For example, if an SAA receives a \$10 million SHSP award, it must pass through at least \$8 million to local or tribal governments within 45 days. If any of that \$8 million is subject to the National Priority Areas effectiveness review, the SAA would issue applicable subawards covering that portion, but the subrecipients could not expend that funding that remains subject to the National Priority Areas effectiveness review until the review is completed by DHS/FEMA.

**33. Once the effectiveness of a National Priority Area IJ or project is reviewed and confirmed by FEMA, may the recipient or subrecipient incur costs under that IJ or project dating back to the start of the award’s period of performance, even if those costs were incurred prior to the completion of the effectiveness review?**

Technically, yes; however, recipients and subrecipients are cautioned that they will only be reimbursed for National Priority Area IJs and projects that are deemed effective. If the recipient or subrecipient incurs costs prior to completion of the effectiveness review, it runs the risk that those costs will not be reimbursed with SHSP or UASI funds if that project or portion of the project is deemed not effective. Once the effectiveness of an IJ or project is confirmed by FEMA, recipients may charge allowable costs to the SHSP or UASI award that are incurred at any point during the award’s period of performance.



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