



IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

YOU CAN STILL APPLY FOR A FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2013 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT.

There is still time to submit an [application for the Department of Homeland Security's \(DHS\), FY 2013 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response \(SAFER\) Grants!](#) **Applications must be received by Friday, August 30, 2013, at 5 p.m. Eastern Time.**

The goal of SAFER is to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies, thus assuring that communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

SAFER Grants achieve this goal by funding: (1) the hiring of new firefighters, (2) the rehiring of firefighters that have been laid off, (3) the retention of firefighters facing imminent layoffs, or (4) the filling of positions that were vacated through attrition. Additionally, SAFER grants fund fire departments and national, state, local, or tribal organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters to assist with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

Per the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2013 (P.L. 113-6, Division D) and under authorities provided under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, (codified, as amended, at 15 USC §2229a et seq.) the following requirements are being waived for the FY 2013 SAFER Grants Program—

- Salary limits: There are no annual salary limits.
- Supplanting requirement: Grants may be used for the purpose of retaining firefighters currently employed who are facing imminent lay-offs or rehiring laid-off firefighters. If applying to retain firefighters facing lay-offs, applicants will answer questions within the on-line application as if these positions had already been laid off.
- Period of performance: For Hiring of Firefighters Category Grants, the period of performance has been reduced to two years.
- Maintenance of Staffing Requirement: Attrition of firefighters during the period of performance: At the time of award, grantees under the Hiring of Firefighters category must submit a current (pre-SAFER) roster listing paid operational/firefighting personnel in support of NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720, who are in full-time or job share positions. The program office will work with a grantee to establish the correct staffing maintenance number which combines the number of pre-SAFER and SAFER Hires. Once this is established, grantees must agree to maintain this number throughout the two year period of performance by taking active and timely steps to fill any vacancies.

Grantees who are unable (due to documentable economic hardship) to backfill firefighting positions that

were vacated through attrition (e.g., resignation, retirement) may petition FEMA for a waiver of staffing maintenance requirements. An approved waiver allows a grantee to decrease and reestablish the staffing maintenance number agreed to at the time of award by the number of positions that a grantee is unable to fill. In order to qualify for this waiver, the economic hardship must affect the entire public safety sector in a grantee's jurisdiction, not only the fire department. Waivers will not be granted for SAFER-funded Positions. Grantees who fail to maintain this level of staffing risk losing the federal funds awarded under this grant.

Additionally applicants should note the following:

- National, state, local, or tribal volunteer firefighter interest organizations are eligible applicants under the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters category.

No firefighter layoffs are allowed during the grant period. As a point of clarification, SAFER grantees under the Hiring of Firefighters Category *must agree to maintain the SAFER-funded positions, as well as the number of positions declared at the time of award, throughout the entire 2-year period of performance.*

How to apply. Applicants may choose from a variety of resources available on the [SAFER Grants Web page](#) to help them develop an application. Key resources include the following:

- [FY 2013 SAFER Grant Funding Opportunity Announcement](#)
- [SAFER Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [SAFER Get Ready Guides](#)
- [Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers Video](#)
- [Applicant Self-Evaluations](#)

Reminder: SAFER grants are competitive. Applications are evaluated based on the merits of the application relative to the established SAFER Grant funding priorities. The answers to activity-specific questions and the data in the Department Characteristics section of the application make up the initial score. That initial score is combined with the score the application receives at the peer review evaluation, with each score representing 50 percent of the total application score.

SAFER Help Desk. SAFER Help Desk Specialists can answer questions by telephone (toll-free at 1-866-274-0960) or by e-mail (firegrants@fema.dhs.gov.) The Help Desk hours of operation during the application period are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, but the hours may be extended based on volume and demand.

After you submit: Once your application has been submitted successfully and received, you will receive a confirmation e-mail message in the "Mail Center" of the e-Grant system. Applicants should print and keep on file a copy of the submitted application and the confirmation e-mail.

AFG Home Page:

www.fema.gov/firegrants

AFG Help Desk:

E-mail: firegrants@fema.dhs.gov
Telephone Toll-Free: 1-866-274-0960

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