

# FY 2022 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Program Self-Evaluation Sheet: Recruitment and Retention Activity for Fire Departments

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This Self-Evaluation Sheet is designed to help you understand the criteria that you must address in your Narrative Statement when applying under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program – Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Activity for Fire Departments. A peer review panel will review all the criteria in the Narrative Statement to assess your department’s financial need, the degree to which your proposal best describes your fire department and community risks, the requirements you have listed that will reduce those risks, and how your application aligns with the SAFER Program priorities. The panel score is 70% of the total application score. Space for the Narrative Statement is limited to a maximum number of 3,000 characters per narrative element and 4,000 characters for the Financial Need.

## 1. Project Description (30%)

Applicants must describe in detail the unique problems and issues the department is experiencing in recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or the particular problems and issues with retaining current members. Applicants must describe the precise implementation plan, including the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. Applicants must describe the current marketing plan already in place, or the marketing plan to be put in place with or without grant funds. Applicants must describe how the program will be uniquely evaluated for its impact on the identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. The application must clearly explain how the effectiveness of the grant will be measured. Applicants must also describe the unique and specific services the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide for the fire department(s) and community. If the grant request will have a regional impact, applicants must discuss how the regional partners will benefit and which activities they will benefit from.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

**Strongly Agree:** The applicant clearly explains the unique recruitment and/or the particular retention problems and issues identified by the department. There is a clear explanation of the department’s precise implementation plan



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as well as clear details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and the anticipated timeline to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant clearly describes the current marketing plan already in place or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides a clear description on how they will uniquely evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program for its impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. The applicant clearly describes the unique and specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire department and community. If applicable, the applicant clearly discusses how the regional partners will benefit and from which activities they will benefit. I have a clear understanding of the project description.

**Agree:** The applicant adequately explains the unique recruitment and/or the particular retention problems and issues identified by the department. There is an adequate explanation of the department's precise implementation plan as well as adequate details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and the anticipated timeline to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant adequately describes the current marketing plan that is already in place or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides adequate information on how they will uniquely evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program's impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. There is an adequate description of the unique and specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire department and community. If applicable, the applicant discusses how the regional partners will benefit and from which activities they will benefit. I understand most elements of the project description, but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

**Neither Agree nor Disagree:** The applicant provides some explanation on the unique recruitment problems and/or particular retention issues identified by the department, but some details are lacking. There is some explanation of the department's precise implementation plan as well as the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant somewhat describes the current marketing plan already in place or the marketing program to be put in place. The applicant provides some information on how they will uniquely evaluate the overall effectiveness of the grant program for its impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues, but lacks the level of detail needed. The applicant somewhat addresses the unique and specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire department and community. If applicable, the applicant somewhat discusses how the regional partners will benefit and from which activities they will benefit. The project description is moderately described but more detail on most of the elements would have been helpful.

**Disagree:** The applicant provides minimal detail and explanation regarding the unique recruitment and/or particular retention problems and issues identified by the department. There is minimal explanation of the department's precise implementation plan as well as minimal details on the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and the anticipated timeline to directly address the identified problems or issues. Minimal details are also provided on the current marketing plan already in place, or the marketing program to be put in place. There is minimal explanation regarding how the overall effectiveness of the grant program will be uniquely evaluated for its impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. There is minimal discussion on the unique and specific benefits the new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire department and community. If applicable, the applicant provides minimal details on how the regional partners will benefit and from

which activities they will benefit. I do not have a clear understanding of the recruitment and/or retention problems or issues the fire department is experiencing, or how this grant would address their needs.

**Strongly Disagree:** The applicant provides no details or explanation of the recruitment and/or retention problems and issues. There is no detail on the department's implementation plan or the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues. The applicant does not provide information on the current marketing plan already in place or the marketing program to be put in place. There is no indication that the project will be evaluated for its impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. There is no discussion on the specific benefits the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or retention of current volunteer firefighters will provide to the fire department and community. If applicable, the applicant provides no details as to how the regional partners will benefit and activities from which they will benefit. I do not understand what the project proposes to accomplish.

## 2. Impact on Daily Operations (30%)

Applicants must describe with particularity and discreteness how the community and current volunteer firefighters in the department are at risk without the items or activities requested in the application. The applicant must also describe how that risk will be unequivocally reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant must also explain the definitive impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters will have on the department's National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliance.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

**Strongly Agree:** The applicant clearly explains the particular and discrete risk(s) to the community and current volunteer firefighters without the items or activities requested. The applicant clearly describes how those risks would be unequivocally reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides detailed information on how the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters will definitively impact the department's NFPA compliance. The applicant has clearly addressed how risks will be reduced, both to the current volunteer firefighters and the community, through the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters.

**Agree:** The applicant provides an adequate explanation of the particular and discrete risk(s) to the fire department, including their communities and current volunteer firefighters, without the items or activities requested. The applicant provides adequate information on how those risks would be unequivocally reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides adequate information on the definitive impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the department's NFPA compliance. I understand the risks to the fire department and their current volunteer firefighters and communities, but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

**Neither Agree nor Disagree:** The applicant provides some explanation of the particular and discrete risk(s) to the fire department, including to the community and the current volunteer firefighters, without the items or activities requested. The applicant provides some information on how those risks would be unequivocally reduced if awarded grant funding. The applicant provides some information on the definitive impact the recruitment of new volunteer

firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on their NFPA compliance but has not included a sufficient level of detail needed to confirm this. There is some indication that recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk, both to the community and current volunteer firefighters. More details on most elements would have been helpful.

**Disagree:** The applicant provides minimal information about the particular and discrete risk(s) to the community and current volunteer firefighters without the items or activities awarded. It is unclear how the risks would be unequivocally reduced if awarded. The applicant provides minimal information on the impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the department's NFPA compliance. Without any additional detail, I believe there is little indication that recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk, both to current firefighters and the community.

**Strongly Disagree:** The applicant provides insufficient details regarding the risk(s) to the community and current volunteer firefighters without the items or activities awarded, nor is there any information on how the risk would be reduced. There is no information on the impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters and/or the retention of current volunteer firefighters would have on the department's NFPA compliance. I do not believe recruiting new volunteer firefighters and/or retaining current volunteer firefighters is linked to the reduction of risk to the fire department and the community.

### 3. Financial Need (30%)

Applicants must provide a detailed income versus expenses breakdown of the current annual budget. The applicant must include details about the department's precise budget shortfalls and its inability to address financial needs without federal assistance. The applicant must explain what other actions the department has taken to obtain funding elsewhere (e.g., state assistance programs, other grant programs), and how similar projects have been funded in the past. The applicant must discuss how the critical functions of the department are uniquely affected without this funding.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

**Strongly Agree:** The applicant clearly identifies and articulates an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant clearly describes their precise budget shortfalls and provides clear justification regarding why federal assistance is needed. The applicant provides clear information on other actions they have taken to obtain funding from other sources and clearly explains how similar projects have been funded in the past. The applicant provides clear details on how critical functions of their department are uniquely affected without federal funds. It is clear that the financial needs described by the applicant are beyond the applicant's control, and I believe their request shows a dire need for federal assistance.

**Agree:** The applicant adequately identifies and articulates an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant adequately describes their precise budget shortfalls and provides adequate justification of why federal assistance is needed. The applicant explains some attempts to obtain funding from other sources and adequately explains how similar projects have been funded in the past. The applicant provides adequate details on

how critical functions of their department are uniquely affected without federal funds. I understand the applicant's current budget and believe there is a need for federal assistance, but a greater level of detail on some aspects would have been helpful.

**Neither Agree nor Disagree:** The applicant provides some information on an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. The applicant briefly explains their precise budget shortfalls but the reasons why federal assistance is needed is lacking. The applicant briefly discusses their attempts to obtain funding from other sources and how similar projects have been funded in the past. The applicant provides some details on how critical functions of their department are uniquely affected without federal funds. I am unsure of the applicant's current budget and needs; therefore, I am unsure if there is an urgent need for financial assistance. More detail on most elements would have been helpful.

**Disagree:** The applicant provides minimal details on an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. There is minimal detail on their precise budget shortfalls or the need for federal assistance. There is minimal explanation on their attempts to obtain funding from other sources or how similar projects have been funded in the past. There is minimal information on how critical functions of their department are uniquely affected without federal funds. There is minimal information to understand the applicant's financial need; therefore, I believe there is no apparent need for financial assistance.

**Strongly Disagree:** The applicant provides no detail on an income versus expenses breakdown of their annual budget. There is no detail on their budget shortfalls or the need for federal assistance. There is no explanation on their attempts to obtain funding from other sources or how similar projects have been funded in the past. There is no information on how critical functions of their organization are affected without federal funds. There is no detail for the reviewer to understand the extent of the organization's financial situation or budget; therefore, I am unable to determine a financial need.

#### 4. Cost Benefit (10%)

Applicants must clearly describe the unique and specific benefits (e.g., quantifying the anticipated savings and/or efficiencies) the department and community will realize if awarded the items or activities requested in this application.

Below are the same scoring dimensions the peer review panel will use to rate each application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the peer reviewers might rate your application:

**Strongly Agree:** The applicant provides a clear and quantifiable explanation of the unique and specific benefits the department and community expect to achieve. I believe the benefits are well explained and likely to be achieved.

**Agree:** The applicant provides an adequate explanation of the unique and specific benefits the department and community expect to achieve. I believe the benefits are adequately described and may be achieved, though a greater level of detail would have been helpful.

**Neither Agree nor Disagree:** The applicant provides some explanation of the unique and specific benefits the department and community expect to achieve. I believe the benefits have not been clearly defined and I am unsure whether the benefits will be achieved. More detail would have been helpful.

**Disagree:** There is minimal detail regarding the unique and specific benefits the department and community expect to achieve. I am unable to determine whether the stated benefits would be achieved.

**Strongly Disagree:** There is no detail regarding the benefits the department and community expect to achieve. Because there is insufficient information, I do not understand what the project proposes to accomplish, and it is doubtful the benefits would be achieved.