

Volunteer Strategic Assistance and Fire Equipment Grant Program

V-SAFE Pre-Application Checklist



Please ensure the following information is current/has been obtained **prior** to completing the V-SAFE grant application.

The V-SAFE grant cycle opens **Monday, January 10, 2022**. During the time **prior** to that date, we recommended you:

- UPDATE or OBTAIN a South Carolina Procurement Vendor number**
- SET UP direct deposit**
- ENSURE a Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement has been signed with SC Emergency Management Division**
- UPDATE your roster using the Fire Portal**
- CHECK your NFIRS reports have been timely submitted**
- OBTAIN a quote for needed equipment**
- REVIEW grant application questions**

SC Procurement Vendor Number

For the State of SC to send your fire department a check, you must be “approved” as a **SC Vendor**. To check to see if you have a vendor number, visit the link using the “wildcard” search method:

<https://webprod.cio.sc.gov/SCVendorSearch/vendorSearch.do>

NOTE: If you do not type in the NAME exactly as it appears in their database, you may not find a previously registered vendor number. Use the “wildcard search” method explained on the site.

- To obtain a **new** vendor number, visit: <https://procurement.sc.gov/doing-biz/registration>

Direct Deposit-State Treasurer’s Office

Are you set up to receive direct deposit? The South Carolina Treasurer’s Office recommends ending the use of paper checks. This allows your department to receive funds faster via a more secure format. To learn more and enroll in electronic payments, visit: <https://treasurer.sc.gov/what-we-do/for-businesses/electronic-payment-information/>.

NOTE: If you do not elect to receive funds electronically, any awarded funds are sent in an envelope from “SC Dept of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR).”

Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement- SC Emergency Management Division

Did you verify that you have an agreement on file? To do so, visit: <https://scemd.org/em-professionals/statewide-mutual-aid/>. For specifics, click on the third bullet point (Signatories). To make any updates, call Rhonda Moore at 803-737-8500.

Fire Portal Roster

Is your roster up-to-date? Does your roster indicate you have more than 50 percent volunteers on the roster? Click on [Fire Portal](#) to log in and update your roster. To be eligible for the grant, your roster must indicate your staff consists of more than 50 percent volunteers.

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

Have you been submitting your NFIRS reports? Are they up-to-date to the end of the calendar year? Every fire department is expected to report every call using the NFIRS. These reports provide essential data for grants. South Carolina fire departments must write/import incidents by the 15th of the next month at www.nfirs.fema.gov. All reports and any updates must be submitted before **July 1** of the following year (2020 reports must be in by July 1, 2021).

Account access, training, and assistance with reporting can be found at <http://statefire.llr.sc.gov/osfm/nfirs.aspx>. To email the State NFIRS program manager, click: SCFIRS@LLR.sc.gov.

Quotes - Best Practices

Does your procurement process require more than one quote? SC State Fire recommends obtaining more than one quote for needed equipment. Inform the vendor the quote is for a VSAFE grant purchase. SC State Fire continues to work with vendors and they are aware of the grant process.

Helpful Tips and Main Essay Questions

Application Questions

TIP: Copy and paste the questions into a Word document and work on the text. Once the grant application is available, you can easily copy and paste your responses.

Compile the following information:

- Fire Department's Annual Budget
- Population Served
- Number of Stations
- Size of Service Area (in square miles)

For each requested item, you will list from the equipment vendor's quote:

- Quantity
- Unit Cost (plus tax)
- Total Cost

TIPS: If requesting

- *Turnout gear - do not list items separately*
- *Washer/extractor – include installation costs*

ESSAY QUESTIONS:

Project Description

Include clear and concise details regarding your organization's project description and a description of the project budget. This includes providing a detailed plan for how your department will implement the proposed project. Further, please describe what you are requesting funding for, including budget descriptions of the budget items.

Cost Benefit

Please explain, as clearly as possible, what will be the benefits your department and community will realize if the project described is funded (i.e. anticipated savings and/or efficiencies)? Is there a high benefit for the cost incurred? Are the costs reasonable? Provide justification for the budget items, relating to the cost of the requested items. Demonstrate cost-benefit by describing, where applicable, how the grant will:

1. Enhance a regional approach that is consistent with current capabilities and requests of neighboring organizations or otherwise benefits other organizations in the region;
2. Implement interoperable communications capabilities with other local, state, and federal first responders and other organizations;
3. Allow first responder organizations to respond to all hazards, including incidents involving seismic, atmospheric, or technological events, or chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive incidents, as well as fire prevention and suppression.

Financial Need

Describe your department's financial need. This statement should include details describing any financial distress, budget constraints, etc.

Effect on Daily Operations

Describe how this award will affect the daily operations of your department (i.e. describe how frequently the requested items will be used or what benefits the items will provide your organization).

VI. Fire Department Description

Please describe the fire department and the community it serves. Items considered critical infrastructure, i.e. public water or power systems, major business centers, chemical facilities, nuclear power plants, etc. should be identified here.