



STAFF REPORT

Report To: Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: May 21, 2020

Staff Contact: Sean Slamon, Fire Chief

Agenda Title: For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding the proposed submittal of a grant application to the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program to hire an additional nine firefighter / paramedics. (Sean Slamon, sslamon@carson.org)

Staff Summary: The SAFER Grant provides funding for three years to hire additional firefighter / paramedics providing 100% of the total cost of salary and benefits based on a first-year (entry level) firefighter / paramedic.

Agenda Action: Formal Action / Motion

Time Requested: 15 minutes

Proposed Motion

I move to approve submittal of the grant application.

Board's Strategic Goal

Safety

Previous Action

May 7, 2020 - The Board of Supervisors voted to not submit a SAFER Grant application in May 2020 mostly due to the current state of the economy and significant cost share required to be funded by the City, \$1,753,538 over the three-year grant period.

Background/Issues & Analysis

The SAFER Grant was created to provide funding directly to fire departments to help them increase or maintain the number of trained "front line" firefighter / paramedics available in their communities. The goal of this grant is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with national recommended standards related to staffing, response, and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720). When the initial application for the SAFER Grant was released, it provided funding for three years to hire additional firefighter / paramedics through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and would cover 75% of an entry level firefighter / paramedic's salaries and benefits for the first two years and 35% the third year based on the first year salary and benefit totals. However, on May 14, 2020, FEMA released "Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin No. 450" waiving the cost share, position cost limit, supplanting, and minimum budget requirements for the FY 2019 SAFER Grant Program, as well as extending the deadline until May 27, 2020. Waiving the above requirements will allow economically impacted fire departments, many of which have not been able to maintain funding at the statutorily required levels, to apply for and receive FY 2019 SAFER funding. The City would still be required to fund salary and benefit increases in year 2 & 3 that are above the year 1 baseline amounts.

Layoffs that would reduce the staffing maintenance level established at grant award are not allowed during the grant period without an approved economic hardship waiver. There is no obligation to keep grant employees after the three year SAFER Grant funding period.

In 2019, the Audit Committee recommended that the Carson City Fire Department apply for a SAFER Grant for additional firefighter / paramedics and study the impacts of overtime reduction in the Fire Department. Carson Fire estimates that the additional nine employees hired through the SAFER Grant will save \$300,000 to \$400,000 in overtime costs per year. Additional benefits are increased emergency response efficiency as there will be more personnel responding to incidents.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation

NFPA 1710, 1720 Standards for effective and efficient organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to protect citizens and the occupational safety and health of fire department employees.

Financial Information

Is there a fiscal impact? Yes

If yes, account name/number: If the SAFER Grant application is awarded by FEMA and the Carson City Board of Supervisors (BOS) approves the grant award, the Grant Fund would house Expenses and Revenue of the program, with City funding amounts transferred from the following Funds:

Operations Department (savings in OT):	1012512 - General Fund Transfers out
EMS (Ambulance) Department:	5012525 - Ambulance Transfers out

Is it currently budgeted? No

Explanation of Fiscal Impact: There is no cost to apply for the SAFER Grant.

If the SAFER Grant is awarded by FEMA and the Board approves acceptance of the grant, the total estimated fiscal impact based on nine additional firefighter / paramedics:

SAFER Grant Funding	2021	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2021	\$0
SAFER Grant Funding	2022	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2022	\$118,664
SAFER Grant Funding	2023	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2023	\$249,617
9 Additional: SAFER Grant 3 Year Funding		\$3,613,713
9 Additional: Carson City 3 Year Funding		\$368,281
SAFER Grant Funding	2024	\$0
Carson City Funding	2024	\$1,598,734

Alternatives

Do not authorize submittal of the grant application.

Attachments:

[SAFER_Advisory_051420.pdf](#)

[FY_2019_SAFER_Application_and_Submission_Changes_IB_450_5.14.2020_final_508AB2 \(002\).pdf](#)

[SAFER Grant Funding.pdf](#)

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Aye/Nay

(Vote Recorded By)

Application Period Extended, Cost Share Waived and Other Changes for FY19 SAFER Grants

In recognition of the economic hardships facing local jurisdictions and fire departments across the country as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Chad F. Wolf has waived the cost share, position cost limit, supplanting, and minimum budget requirements for Fiscal Year 2019 Staffing for Adequate Fire Emergency and Response (SAFER) Grant applicants. **In addition, the application period is being extended to May 27, 2020 at 5 p.m. ET.**

Please Note: Funds under the FY19 SAFER Hiring of Firefighters Activity must be used to hire new, additional firefighters, and the costs to hire those firefighters must be at the usual annual costs of a first-year (i.e., entry-level) firefighter. This requirement has **not** been waived.

Additionally, the waiver of the requirements identified above does **not** apply to the FY 2019 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) or to the FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID-19 Supplemental Program (AFG-S).

In consideration of the economic impact of the pandemic, Acting Secretary Wolf has also authorized waivers for certain provisions of the FY 2020 SAFER Grant Program. DHS/FEMA will provide more details on the FY 2020 changes soon.

Applicants no longer need to request an economic hardship waiver within the FY 2019 online application. If you have already submitted your FY 2019 application, no further action is needed at this time. The waiver of these provisions and the adjustments to the requested amount will be handled by the SAFER Program Office during their technical review of applications.

If you have not yet submitted your application, please note that the applications will continue to show the cost share/position cost limit. However, as stated above, there is nothing additional that applicants need to do regarding these provisions. The adjustment will be made by the SAFER Program Office.

The FEMA Grant Outcomes (GO) system automatically records proof of timely submission and the system generates an electronic date/time stamp when FEMA GO successfully receives the application. The individual with the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role that submitted the application will also receive the official date/time stamp and a FEMA GO tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission. Applications received by FEMA GO after the extended application submission deadline will be deemed as late and typically will not be considered for funding.

DHS/FEMA will not review applications that are received after the extended deadline or consider them for funding except in cases where a technical problem outside of the applicant's control prevented submission of the application by the deadline.



FEMA

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs, Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs Division:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov
- Tribal Affairs (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov
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FEMA

Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin

No. 450

May 14, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Eligible FY 2019 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Applicants

FROM: Bridget Bean
Assistant Administrator
Grant Programs Directorate

SUBJECT: **Modifications to the Fiscal Year 2019 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity**

I. Purpose

This Information Bulletin (IB) modifies the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program application and submission requirements contained in the FY 2019 SAFER Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) released on April 7, 2020. FEMA acknowledges that fire departments across the nation are facing significantly increased call volumes due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency, which is straining municipal budgets and existing first responder personnel across the country. In response, FEMA is waiving the cost share, position cost limit, supplanting, and minimum budget requirements for the FY 2019 SAFER Grant Program, as well as extending the application deadline until May 27, 2020 at 5 p.m. ET.

Waiving the above requirements will allow economically impacted fire departments, many of which have not been able to maintain funding at the statutorily required levels, to apply for and receive FY 2019 SAFER funding. The extension of the application deadline will provide applicants additional time to submit applications that account for the waived requirements.

Applicants no longer need to request an economic hardship waiver within the online application. No further action is needed by applicants at this time. The waiver of these provisions and the adjustments to the requested amount will be handled by the SAFER Program Office during their technical review of the applications.

II. Applicability

This IB applies to FY 2019 SAFER applicants.

III. Guidance

- A. The terms of the original FY 2019 SAFER NOFO released on April 7, 2020 required recipients under the Hiring of Firefighters Activity to contribute non-federal funds subject to a position cost limit (salary cap) and a cost share, as discussed on pages 6-8 of the FY 2019 SAFER NOFO, which can be found on the FEMA [website](#). As directed by this Information Bulletin, these requirements are waived for the FY 2019 SAFER program. Note that recipients under the FY 2019 SAFER Hiring of Firefighters Activity must use SAFER funds to hire new, additional firefighters and the costs to hire those firefighters are limited to the usual annual costs of a first-year (i.e., entry-level) firefighter.
- B. The terms of the original FY 2019 SAFER NOFO required recipients of SAFER grants to meet a minimum budget requirement, as discussed on page 5 of the FY 2019 SAFER NOFO, and required that recipients may not use SAFER funds to supplant or replace funds that would otherwise be available from state or local sources or the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as defined on page 33 of the FY 2019 SAFER NOFO. As directed by this Information Bulletin, these requirements are waived for the FY 2019 SAFER program.
- C. The application submission deadline for the FY 2019 SAFER NOFO is extended to May 27, 2020.

IV. Questions

Any questions regarding this IB may be directed to your SAFER Preparedness Officer (PO) or the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Help Desk at firegrants@fema.dhs.gov or (866) 275-0950, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. ET.

Safer Grant Funding: 9 Additional Firefighter/Paramedics

8

Firefighter/Paramedic

Position Number 236

Position Number 236	Hours	Step 233/1	Step 233/2	Step 233/3	Step 233/4
FY20 Wage - 233/1	2912	\$ 67,345.24	\$ 72,524.37	\$ 78,101.15	\$ 84,107.13
\$23,1268					

* Doesn't factor in potential yearly cost increase

	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	Total FY21 Salary	Total FY22 Salary	Total FY23 Salary	
FFA SUPPRESSION UNIFORM					69,365.60	74,700.10	80,444.18	\$ 86,630.34
GROUP INS-FF+FFAM					71,446.57	76,941.10	82,857.51	89,229.25
MEDICARE					73,589.96	79,249.34	85,343.24	91,906.13
PERS PS ER PAID *								94,663.31
WC - HEART AND LUNG *								
WORKERS COMP - FIRE *								
Total benefits					64,476	70,085	76,233	82,974
Total Wages + Benefits					133,841	147,026	161,576	177,637

Total Cost 9 Additional Employees	9	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4
		\$1,204,571	\$1,323,235	\$1,454,188	\$1,598,734

Total Cost Based on 9 Additional Firefighter / Paramedics - Original Funding Matrix

SAFER Grant Funding	2021	YR1	75%	\$903,428
Carson City Match	2021	YR1	25%	\$301,143
SAFER Grant Funding	2022	YR2	68%	\$903,428
Carson City Match	2022	YR2	32%	\$419,807
SAFER Grant Funding	2023	YR3	29%	\$421,600
Carson City Match	2023	YR3	71%	\$1,032,588

9 Additional: Safer Grant 3 Year Funding	\$2,228,456
9 Additional: Carson City 3 Year Funding	\$1,753,538

Safer Grant Funding	2024	YR4	0%	\$0
Carson City Funding	2024	YR4	100%	\$1,598,734

Total Cost Based on 9 Additional Firefighter / Paramedics - Cost Share Waived

SAFER Grant Funding	2021	YR1	100%	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2021	YR1	0%	\$0
SAFER Grant Funding	2022	YR2	91%	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2022	YR2	9%	\$118,664
SAFER Grant Funding	2023	YR3	83%	\$1,204,571
Carson City Funding	2023	YR3	17%	\$249,617

9 Additional: Safer Grant 3 Year Funding	\$3,613,713
9 Additional: Carson City 3 Year Funding	\$368,281

Safer Grant Funding	2024	YR4	0%	\$0
Carson City Funding	2024	YR4	100%	\$1,598,734

NOTE: The SAFER Grant does not cover cost of living or merit increases. The annual funding amount is based on year 1 salary and benefits.