

FIREFIGHTER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT GRANT PROGRAM



A grant to provide firefighter personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS

and the

Virginia Fire Services Board

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1. PURPOSE and AUTHORITY

This policy document describes the practices by which the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP or the Agency) executes the administration of funds, as approved by the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB or the Board), related to the Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Grant Program pursuant to § 38.2-401 and the adopted budget (2024-2026 Virginia Budget Item 406A).

2. ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CRITERIA

The eligibility of localities and the awarding of grants through the Firefighter PPE Grant Program Assistance will be determined based on the following criteria:

The grant allocation will prioritize localities that:

1. Score above average or high on the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) fiscal stress index, and are classified as double-distressed according to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's (VEDP) Commonwealth Opportunity Funds Distressed Localities Assessment according to the latest published edition during the grant application period.
2. Demonstrate a clear need for protective non-vehicular equipment. Each locality receiving funding must report to the Department on how the allocated funds are intended to be used.

The review of funding requests will be based on the following criteria:

- Previous grant history
- Completeness of the application
- Timeliness of the application submission
- The impact if the grant is not awarded
- The number of programs affected
- Demonstrated need for funding

Funds will be prioritized for primary sets of personal protective equipment.

The Virginia Fire Services Board will determine the individual award amounts for the Firefighter PPE Grant Program based on evaluations and recommendations from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) in accordance with the criteria outlined above. VDFP will assess applications based on the quality of the application and the supporting documentation related to the objectives of the grant program. The Virginia Department of Fire Programs reserves the right to verify any or all information provided in the application the Administration, Policy, and Finance Committee will receive the individual applications along with VDFP's recommendations for review and acceptance.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

“Eligible equipment” means structural firefighter personnel protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus.

“Self-contained breathing apparatus” means a respirator worn to provide an autonomous supply of breathable gas in an atmosphere that is immediately dangerous to life or health from a gas cylinder.

“Structural firefighter personnel protective equipment” commonly referred to as turnout gear or bunker gear, means the protective ensemble utilized by a firefighter in the performance of their duties at a fire. This includes boots, pants, jackets, helmets, Nomex hoods, and other protective equipment.

4. PRECEDENCE OF LAW & DISCLAIMER

Nothing contained within this document shall be construed to supersede the Code of Virginia. In the event of a conflict, the Code of Virginia shall supersede the conflicting provision of this Policy document.

5. GRANT APPLICATION

The requesting locality shall submit a completed application by the required deadline. Such form to be executed by the:

- County Administrator / Executive, City Manager, Town Mayor / Town Administrator; Deputy or...
- Other duly authorized official whereby the application is accompanied by a copy of an ‘Ordinance’ or other such formal instrument clearly granting that party such authority.

Only those applications submitted by a locality will be accepted for consideration.

No single locality (city, town or county) shall be eligible for more than one award per grant cycle.

Required Supporting Documentation to the Application

- Any quotes/price information
- Current Inventory to include age of the existing inventory.

As available each fiscal period year, the application period for the Virginia Fire Services Board Firefighter PPE Grant Program shall be from July 1st through August 31st inclusive; for receipt at:

Grants Unit
Virginia Department of Fire Programs
Attn: Firefighter PPE Grant Program
1005 Technology Park Drive
Glen Allen, VA 23059-4500

Completed applications must be postmarked by August 31st.

6. REPORTING

Grant projects shall be completed within twelve (12) months following receipt of an award. No funds shall be carried over and all funds shall be spent during the twelve-month period. Awarded localities shall submit a written report to VDFP within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the grant's twelve (12) month cycle. This report shall describe the fund's use and benefit to fire services agencies and/or the community served by such organizations. It will also allow the localities to comment on the Virginia Fire Services Board Firefighter PPE Grant Program. Additionally, within 30-calendar days after the conclusion of the grant term, all unexpended funds – including any interest accrual remaining – shall be returned to VDFP.

1. Return of Unexpended Funds by Check: Funds being returned to the Agency via a check:

- Must be made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia, and
- Forwarded to the attention of the Agency at the address specified in [H] above. (Funds are NOT to be sent directly to the Treasurer's Office or any other State agency.)

2. Direct Deposit: Funds may also be returned to the Agency via electronic transfer as may be provided for within the contractual agreement among parties.

7. DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE PROGRAM

1. Jurisdictions Eligible – Eligibility is restricted to jurisdictions within the Commonwealth of Virginia as provided in Code of Virginia [38.2-401.B](#). Fire Departments or fire service organizations are **not eligible** to directly receive funds from the program.
2. Maximum Allocations – The Virginia Fire Services Board determined that each locality shall receive a maximum allocation in a single fiscal year of \$100,000 from the program.
3. Authorized Use of Funds – Pursuant to the adopted budget, funds from the program shall only be used to purchase eligible equipment as defined according to policies developed by the Virginia Fire Services Board.
4. Distribution Calculation – The below distribution calculation shall be utilized when reviewing applications for the program:

- As provided in the adopted budget, localities that score both above average or high on the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) fiscal stress index **and** double-distressed according to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's (VEDP) Commonwealth Opportunity Funds Distressed Localities Assessment shall be considered first. These localities shall be contacted by the agency during the initial solicitation of grants each fiscal year in addition to public notice of the grant program.
 - Localities must demonstrate the need for such protective non-vehicular equipment via the prescribed form by the agency. Priority will be provided to departments who are replacing eligible equipment due to age, compliance with relevant safety standards, and the needs of the department and the community.
 - Grant funds will be released to localities that do not qualify under either the DHCD or VEDP indexes after grant awards are made to localities eligible under those programs each fiscal year.
5. Non-Authorized Use – Firefighting vehicles are not authorized for purchase using funds from the program. No funds shall be used to purchase equipment that is not necessary for the protection of firefighters responding to a fire. The agency reserves the right to verify any or all information recorded on the application for accuracy.
6. Review Process - Inquiries regarding the use of funds from the program are to be sent to the VDFP Grants Unit for review and consideration. VDFP will make an evaluation of the inquiry considering the Code of Virginia and the most current Firefighter PPE Grant Program Policy. Individual grant award amounts shall be decided by the Virginia Fire Services Board based upon the evaluation and recommendations of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs in accordance with the criteria contained in this policy. VDFP will evaluate applications based upon the substance of the application and supporting documentation relative to the objectives of the grant program.
7. Disbursement Options - A locality that submits a standard application will be eligible for reimbursement following the submission of a comprehensive closeout package. This package must include an after-action report, proof of payment, and accompanying invoices or receipts. If a locality can demonstrate financial hardship, immediate disbursement of the awarded funds may be authorized upon approval from the Virginia Fire Service Board. To qualify for this expedited option, the locality must adequately demonstrate the financial hardship and provide the necessary justification with the initial application.

8. GRANT AWARD ADMINISTRATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



Following approval for grant disbursement, VDFP shall submit all appropriate forms for the release of funds in a timely manner. All grants are awarded to the applicant locality. Actual disbursement shall be made via electronic transfer/EFT (EDI.) Grant awards shall only be used in accordance with this policy.

9. BURDEN OF PROOF & LIABILITY TO AUDIT

It is the responsibility of the jurisdiction to maintain all necessary fiscal records. Such records are subject to audit by this Agency or its assignees, for a period of not less than five (5) years following the date of the last transfer of award moneys to the grant recipient.

CERTIFICATION:

We the undersigned as Chairman of the VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD and Executive Director of the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS jointly adopt the foregoing Policy which supersedes all prior Policies/Policy Statements effective as of 6 June 2025.

	
Keith Johnson Chair Virginia Fire Services Board	L. Brad Creasy Executive Director Virginia Department of Fire Programs