

FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING GRANT



A grant to assist localities in reporting emergency incidents to the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS)

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS

and the

Virginia Fire Services Board

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1. PURPOSE

This document describes the practices consistent with the *Code of Virginia* and current policy guidance from the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB / Board) by which the Department of Fire Programs (VDFP / Agency) administers grants to jurisdictions for the title purpose.

The purpose of the grant program is to assist localities in reporting emergency incidents to the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS).

2. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Grant disbursements to eligible jurisdictions are to be administered by the *Department of Fire Programs* from the Commonwealth's *Fire Programs Fund* as provided for in the *Code of Virginia* [§38.2-401:D] and consistent with policy guidance provided by the *Virginia Fire Services Board* as wholly set forth within this document. All grants shall first be authorized by the *Virginia Fire Services Board*.

The national reporting format – NERIS (National Emergency Response Information System), is designed for collecting, analyzing, and reporting injuries and losses of life and/or property caused by fire and similar hazard.

- Prospective GRANTEEES are required to timely file a formal FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING GRANT Application.
- Timeliness of filing the properly completed application and subsequent receipt by the Agency of such are solely the applicant's responsibilities.
- ***The filing of an application does not bind the Board to award nor the Agency to pay any grant.***
- All grants are disbursed upon award determination to jurisdictions – never directly to a department or fire service organization and as such, it is the jurisdiction that is responsible for compliance to terms.
- Such disbursements are made almost exclusively as an electronic funds transfer / EFT (EDI) to each locality's *account-of-record*.
- The GRANTEE (as award recipient) is required to commence incident reporting within six (6) months of receipt of any award.
- ***Awards are forfeitable – whole or in part, for any failure in compliance.***

3. CODE OF VIRGINIA CITATION

§38.2-401 and §9.1-203 of the *Code of Virginia* as amended – “Fire Programs Fund,” is incorporated herein by reference.

4. PRECEDENTS OF LAW & DISCLAIMER

Nothing contained within this document shall or be construed to supersede the applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the event of a conflict, the applicable law shall supersede the conflicting provision of this policy statement.

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Grantor – The Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Fire Programs consistent with any applicable policy guidance from the Virginia Fire Services Board.

Fire Incident – Such as defined for the purposes of this grant as the following types of calls: structure fire; outside of structure fire; vehicle fire; trees, brush, grass fire; refuse fire; explosion, no after-fire; outside spill leak with ensuing fire; other fires; or other incidents that are reportable to NERIS.

Grant Acceptance Period – Upon notification to a jurisdiction of any award, up to six (6) months from the effective date of the award.

Grant Application Period – Nominally July 1st through August 31st of the fiscal period for which an award is being granted.

Grantee – Any of the independent Cities, Counties or Towns incorporated.

Eligible Jurisdiction – Localities within the Commonwealth of Virginia otherwise eligible (§38.2-401 et al) to receive *Aid to Localities*.

6. TERM OF THE GRANT

Consistent with Board guidance to the Agency, all awards granted for the title purpose shall be disbursed by the Agency to the GRANTEE after the acceptance of the grant.

Upon receipt, the GRANTEE is thereafter responsible for the use of such funds consistent with all terms & conditions as enumerated within this document.

7. AWARD AMOUNT

There shall be a cap on the maximum amount of funds to be awarded in any single grant to a department. An amount of **\$10,000** per department shall generally be allowed in computing any Locality's award, potentially subject to a maximum amount for each jurisdiction as may be determined by the BOARD and thereafter uniformly applied to all award recipients for that fiscal period.

8. MAKING APPLICATION FOR A GRANT

All prospective GRANTEES must submit a properly completed application executed by competent authority, within the Grant Application Period.

Upon the timely receipt of an application, the Agency shall review that application and make a determination as to completeness, eligibility, and verification / mathematical consistency of the amount requested.

All such completed applications – those received by the deadline, shall then be forwarded to the Board for deliberation and any award(s) determination.

The filing of an application neither binds the Board to award nor the Agency to pay any such grant.

9. SIGNATORY (GRANTEE)

All documents requiring execution by the GRANTEE must be signed by competent authority.

- a) The Agency recognizes (without further qualification) the following titles for such execution:
 - **Independent Cities** of the Commonwealth – The City Manager or principal Deputy.
 - **Counties** of the Commonwealth – The County Administrator or principal Deputy.
 - **All Towns** incorporated within the Counties – The Mayor or Town Manager/Administrator.
- b) The Agency will also recognize another duly authorized official whereby the application / document is accompanied by a copy of an ordinance or other such formal instrument clearly investing that responsibility in and granting that party such authority.

10. ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CRITERIA

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

- Number departments involved
- Availability of matching funds (optional)
- Previous grants
- Proper application
- Timeliness of application
- Impact if grant not awarded
- Number of departments affected
- Demonstrated need

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 above. VDFP will evaluate applications based upon the

substance of the application and supporting documentation relative to the objectives of the grant program. The Virginia Department of Fire Programs shall reserve the right to verify any or all information recorded on the application. The Administration, Policy and Finance Committee will be supplied with individual applications with the VDFP recommendations to review for acceptance.

11. DESCRIPTION & ALLOWED USE OF AWARD

VDFP will disburse funds to awarded localities for the amount specified in the GRANTEE's application for the following uses:

- **Reporting Hardware:** The acquisition or upgrade of a computer, tablet, or other device and defined peripherals. This hardware must be compatible with the NERIS system.
- **Reporting Software:** The acquisition or upgrade of software or systems to assist in reporting fire incidents to NERIS. Examples include Imagetrend or ESO. *Funding will only be provided on an annual basis and must be reapplied for each grant cycle.*
- **Internet Connectivity:** The acquisition or upgrade of a facility or vehicle to provide internet connectivity. This option shall only be used for initial costs related to connectivity and must expressly be used for fire incident reporting to NERIS. *Funding will only be provided on an annual basis and must be reapplied for each grant cycle.*
- **Other Uses:** Other projects that improve fire reporting may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Virginia Fire Services Board with proper supporting documentation.

All such 'acquisition' actions shall be concluded AFTER the award date. (Any items procured prior to the award date are not eligible under the grant.).

12. PROJECT COMPLETION

Grant projects and/or program start-ups shall be completed within twelve (6) months following receipt of an award. Awarded localities shall submit a written report to VDFP, including invoices, within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the VFIRS Grant six (6) month cycle. This report shall describe the fund's use and benefit.

13. TIMELINESS OF REPORTING

The GRANTEE (as award recipient) is required to commence incident reporting within six (6) months of receipt of any award and continue thereafter.

14. FORFEITURE

- a) If the GRANTEE shall fail to commence timely reporting within the GRANT ACCEPTANCE PERIOD they shall irrevocably forfeit their entitlement to the award previously tendered. If in the judgment of the Agency there shall be

extenuating circumstance, then VDFP may temporarily suspend this provision until such time, in the sole judgment of the Agency, the GRANTEE shall have had opportunity to properly commence report input.

Payment of Forfeiture – A jurisdiction forfeiting any part of their award is required to reimburse VDFP within 30 calendar days of receipt of a formal demand for such from the Agency. (All decisions on the part of VDFP shall be final upon the expiration of the aforementioned 30-day period.

All reimbursements shall be marked payable to the *“Treasurer of Virginia”* and tendered to VDFP at the address – and none other, designated by the Agency in their notice.

Appeal – The GRANTEE may appeal to the Board any decision on the part of the Agency to impose forfeiture. Such appeal must be made in writing, executed by the competent authority for the jurisdiction, and received by the Board *no later than 15 days after receipt of the initial notification.*



15. AGENCY PROVIDED INSTRUCTION

It is solely the responsibility of the Grantee to commence and thereafter report incidents timely.

The Agency shall endeavor to provide ‘basic conceptual training’ both periodically and geographically disbursed throughout the Commonwealth to meet Grantees’ departmental needs.

CERTIFICATION:

We the undersigned as Chair of the VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD and Executive Director of the DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS jointly adopt the foregoing policy as such supersedes all such prior policy statements for the titled purpose; effective this 25th day of September 2025.

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