



OREGON FIRE SERVICE CAPACITY PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. If my agency already has a current SAFER Grant, does it make our agency ineligible for this staffing grant?

With a current SAFER Grant in place, that may be considered in the application scoring for the Oregon Fire Service Capacity Program. However, it does not make the application ineligible.

2. How is OSFM defining 'operational budget'?

The operational budget is the entire fire service agency budget from all sources. There is a space to include a narrative to explain any items the applicant may want to clarify. For general obligation funds for one-time capital projects or special one-time equipment purchases, you may exclude them from this project. Please clarify whether you are doing so in the "comments" section of the budget question.

3. Can these funds be used to hire existing volunteers? Or can these funds only be used to hire new permanent personnel?

Yes. These funds can be used to hire existing volunteers as permanent staff. If personnel outside the agency that might require training, those are acceptable models to include in the application. In addition, the funding can pay for training for newly hired personnel.

4. Are joint applications going to be considered?

Local partnerships can be considered; however, one agency must act as the grantee or fiscal agent for the partnering agencies.

5. Is this grant part of or an extension of the supplemental staffing grant from the summer of 2022?

No. The Oregon Fire Service Capacity Program is a separate grant program to promote permanent capacity in the Oregon fire service.

6. Does salary include benefits, PERS, payroll costs, etc.?

Yes, it does include benefits or associated personnel costs.

7. Would stipend staff count as full-time or part-time staff members?

No, they would be counted as a volunteer for the purposes of this grant.

8. When is the application due, and when will the review start?

The applications are due November 30, 2022. Application review will begin on December 1, 2022. The scoring criteria will be made publicly available.



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9. Is there an expectation on when the new employees will be hired?

There is an expectation that hiring processes will take time, depending on local realities. Therefore, applicants should reflect anticipated hiring time in their budget proposal.

10. How should volunteer 'soft match' be calculated in the grant application?

The match amount can be calculated by considering the salary equivalent or estimated labor costs of the fire service agency's volunteers.

11. In the application, the question states: "Total requested funds for both FF and FPP. Do not include administrative costs." Does one include only the funds that are being included? Or the total cost for that position, including the local match?

Only include what is being requested for the personnel. There is a different section dealing with local matches.

12. What is the timeframe of the grant?

If awarded, the grant will begin whenever both parties have signed the Agreement. We anticipate this will be January 2023 due to timing for the first year; in subsequent years, a grant year is a calendar year.

13. Does the percentage continue to change each year even if you are keeping the same people on during the duration of the grant? I think what I am asking is if we bring on one person during the first year, are they part of the language that contains "new hires" for the second and third years to mean that the 25% and 50% matches do pertain to them?

The first year is a 10% match for all personnel costs anticipated. You may prorate those costs assuming that there will be several months taken up with hiring processes. In the second year, there is a 25% match of all personnel costs anticipated for that year based on your total anticipated budget for personnel. In the third year, there is a 50% match for all personnel costs for that year based on your total anticipated budget for personnel for that year.

14. Is there a template for a letter of intent?

No. OSFM will not be providing a template.



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15. How to indicate a soft match in the application?

In the places where it says "local match" you can put "0" (zero) and that will indicate you are using a soft match.

16. During the course of this grant for 3 years, is it required to use PERS or can we select another retirement fund platform? As some new recruits may not have come from public service they may have a need to tie into an existing 401k plan. And if retained after the 3 years switch to PERS?

The grant requirements are silent on the exact details of the benefits package. We leave benefit decisions to local agencies. The only requirement of the grant is that the personnel are classified as permanent employees.

17. Can we use the grant to retain employees?

Yes, you can use the funds to help sustain the position. Be aware that part of the application (the letter of commitment) asks how you plan to sustain the position (s) beyond the grant.