



# Homeland Security and Emergency Services

## Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant Program

### 2016-17 Local Planning & Training Grant

#### Frequently Asked Questions

(as of 2/24/16)

1. What is the period of performance for the grant?
  - a. The 2016-17 HMEP period of performance is from September 30, 2016-September 30, 2017.
2. Who is eligible to apply for HMEP funds?
  - a. All counties and the City of New York are eligible to apply for funding.
3. In previous years the eligibility to apply was restricted to active LEPCs. Why did this change?
  - a. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act reauthorized and modified the HMEP grant program, including removing the requirement that the state pass through funding to LEPCs. Additionally, the state is no longer required to certify compliance with EPCRA as a condition of funding; therefore sub-recipients are also no longer required to certify compliance with EPCRA.
4. Is there a match requirement for HMEP?
  - a. Yes, a 20% match is required on the total project cost (not 20% of federal funds received). Match may be either cash or in-kind, however, any match used must be an allowable expense under the HMEP Grant Program. The salary/fringe of a county employee that is not funded by federal funds (and is not being used as match on another federal grant) may be used as match for your HMEP funds for the amount of time devoted to an HMEP funded project.
5. How do I calculate the correct match?
  - a. To determine the amount of match required, multiply the federal funds requested by 0.25 (Match= 0.25 X federal funds).

6. Can my county use HMEP funds for salary for a county employee?
  - a. Maybe. HMEP funds may not be used for salary for an existing employee. If someone is being hired temporarily to work on an HMEP specific project, that may be allowable, but it will require specific details and a review by DHSES and potentially by US DOT. Salary and fringe for purposes other than HMEP related work, including operations, are not allowable.
  
7. I didn't apply for 2015-16 HMEP funds. Why is DHSES using reimbursement contracts for the HMEP Grant Program when contracts were previously not utilized?
  - a. DHSES transitioned administration of the HMEP Grant Program from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to the Grants Program Administration (GPA) unit of DHSES beginning with the 2014-15 award. GPA will administer the HMEP Grant Program in the same manner that other federal grant programs (SHSP, UASI, and EMPG) are administered. Awards for less than \$10,000 will be made through a Letter of Agreement.
  
8. Can my county use HMEP funds to pay for refreshments and/or a working lunch for an LEPC meeting?
  - a. No, HMEP funds may not be used for refreshments and/or a working lunch for an LEPC meeting.
  
9. Can my county use HMEP funds to pay for a lunch during a HazMat exercise?
  - a. Maybe. Recipients must justify in writing why a lunch should be approved and must document circumstances that would be too disruptive to the exercise if the meal were not provided. Prior approval is required. No retroactive approvals will be granted.
  
10. We'd like to hold an exercise involving the release of a noxious substance on a bus or train. Is this eligible under the HMEP Grant Program?
  - a. No, even though the scenario would involve the response of a HazMat team to a bus or train, it is not an eligible expense. Eligible activities must relate to the transportation of hazardous materials. For example, a scenario involving an overturned tanker hauling diesel fuel is allowable, but a scenario involving leaking diesel fuel from a school bus accident would not be allowable.
  
11. Can I use HMEP funds to purchase response equipment?
  - a. No, HMEP funds are intended to support planning and training activities.
  
12. Can we purchase HazMat training props with the HMEP grant funding?
  - a. Training props will be reviewed on a case by case basis and require a justification at the time of application.

13. Can I use HMEP funds to conduct a training session?
  - a. Maybe. Training expenses as outlined in the RFA are eligible costs for the 2016-17 HMEP Grant Program. Any requests for training classes must be justified and also be approved by OFPC (DHSES will coordinate the review and approval process). A detailed justification must be provided at the time of application.
  
14. Will my county receive more money than it applied for?
  - a. No. Due to the time application timeline for 2016-17 funds, DHSES is unable to administer a supplemental funding round. However, additional funding was made available to increase the basic award being offered to all applicants compared to the 2015-16 HMEP Grant Program.
  
15. Can my county submit a regional application in partnership with other counties?
  - a. Yes, regional applications are encouraged, and the fiduciary agent for the regional application will administer the pooled award on behalf of the region.
  
16. Can my county use HMEP funds to conduct a WMD exercise?
  - a. No, HMEP funds may not be used for WMD exercises. Eligible exercise costs must have a nexus to the transportation of Hazardous Materials.
  
17. I don't have an active LEPC. Can I still apply or participate in a regional partnership? What if my LEPC is active but it isn't compliant with EPCRA/SARA Title III?
  - a. Yes, you are eligible to apply.
  
18. My regional HazMat partnership has four counties in total, two of those counties are compliant with SARA Title III, one county does not have an active LEPC, and one county has an active LEPC but that LEPC is not compliant with SARA Title III. Can all the counties participate in an HMEP regional application? How much money can the regional fiduciary agent apply for?
  - a. The regional Fiduciary Agent may apply for up to \$20,688(the \$5,172 allocation per eligible applicant (for a total of four counties in this example).
  
19. In previous years, counties had to submit information related to LEPC activities with the application. How will that information be gathered going forward?
  - a. DHSES GPA must collect information from counties related to LEPCs and SARA Title III compliance to submit to US DOT as a condition of funding. GPA will continue to require that counties submit this information to DHSES. DHSES anticipates using the Survey Monkey tool to create a data collection template to collect any other data required.