

New York State
Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services
Office of Fire Prevention and Control

2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

*Last Updated May 27, 2015
(New and/or Updated FAQ's are Highlighted in Red;
Please Check the DHSES Website Frequently for Updates)*

I. Due Date and Application Instructions

- 1) **Question: What is the application due date for the 2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program?**

Answer: Applications are due to the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services- Grants Program Administration on Thursday, June 11, 2015, by 11:59pm. Applications that are submitted past this date will be disqualified. No extensions will be given.

- 2) **Question: How do I submit my application for the 2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program?**

Answer: Applications, to include the required "2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program Application Worksheet" and the "Notice of Endorsement" form, must be submitted as attachments to the following email: grants@dhses.ny.gov. Applications that do not address all required sections of the RFA will be disqualified.

- 3) **Question: Can I complete the application by hand rather than electronically?**

Answer: To ensure standardized and legible application packages, please complete the application electronically using the application format provided in the Application Worksheet. Applicants are encouraged to prepare the narrative separately from the application and cut and paste the narrative text into the application prior to submission.

- 4) **Question: What will happen if I fail to answer all of the required sections of the application?**

Answer: Applicants are required to answer all of the questions in this worksheet. Failure to answer all of the required questions will lead to a reduction in your score for the section being reviewed and could lead to an unfavorable overall score by the review panel.

5) **Question: What are the consequences of requesting budget items that are not allowable?**

Answer: If you request budgetary items that are not allowed under the 2014 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program, those items will not be considered. Please refer to the *pages 7-9* of the 2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program RFA for more details on allowable and non-permissible costs.

6) **Question: What will happen if I submit for more funding than is allowable under the RFA?**

Answer: Please ensure your budget does not exceed the funding cap. Requests for raising the funding cap will not be considered.

7) **Question: When completing Section IV: County Fire Coordinator/Emergency Manager Verification of the Notice of Endorsement form, who should be completing this section?**

Answer: All prospective applicants (whether representing fire, EMS or both communities) must have a county-level endorsement by either the County Fire Coordinator (CFC), Emergency Manager (EM) or another county-wide officer that oversees the delivery of the services provided by the applicant.

8) **Question: When applying on behalf of multiple agencies, does each agency need to complete the Notice of Endorsement?**

Answer: Yes. The agency applying would be considered the “submitting” partner, meanwhile, each agency represented and benefiting from the proposed projects within the proposed application would be considered a “participating” partner, and would need to sign the Notice of Endorsement form.

II. Eligibility and Non-for-Profit Vendor Pre-Qualification Process

1) **Question: Who is eligible for the 2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program?**

Answer: Only eligible organizations that are located within, and serve, the State of New York may apply. Funds will be awarded competitively based on the submission of applications by eligible volunteer fire departments, volunteer emergency service organizations and statewide organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters and/or volunteer emergency services personnel. Please reference Section III.A. of the RFA for specific eligibility guidance.

2) **Question: My agency represents volunteer EMS personnel and I am not associated with a fire district/organization. Am I still eligible?**

Answer: Yes, volunteer EMS agencies do not need to be attached/associated with a volunteer fire district/organization in order to be eligible to submit an application.

3) **Question: Who is required to meet the NYS Non-for-Profit Pre-Qualification requirements?**

Answer: Organizations incorporated under §1402 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law are no longer required to prequalify in order to be eligible to apply for grants offered by the State of New York, enter into a contract with the State, amend an existing State contract or make a purchase with State funds. These organizations must still provide all of the information required by the grant-making State agency to demonstrate their fiscal integrity and organizational capacity.

All Not-for-Profit Volunteer EMS agencies and Not-for Profit Organizations who represent the interests of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency service personnel are required to go through the pre-qualification procedures. These organizations must submit an online Pre-Qualification Application through NYS Gateway. Please use the instructions in Section III.C. of the RFA for guidance to meet this requirement.

Applicant Type	Do I Need to Pre-Qualify?
Non-for-Profit incorporated under §1402 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law	NO
Non-for-Profit not incorporated under §1402 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law	YES
Eligible Municipalities (must be comprised of 50% or more of volunteers)	NO

4) **Question: I thought the State suspended Pre-Qualification requirements for non-for-profits responding to RFA's or RFP's?**

Answer: The State provided a brief suspension to the pre-qualification requirement process for all non-for-profits responding to RFA's or RFP's between July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014, but pre-qualification requirements have resumed starting October 1, 2014 for any non-for-profit that is **not incorporated** under §1402 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law .

5) **Question: How long does the Pre-Qualification process take?**

Answer: Organizations that submit all the appropriate documentation should expect to have their information reviewed and approved within a few days. ***It is important that you select the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) as your agency for filing, in order for prompt notification of your pre-qualification documentation.*** For the purposes of this grant opportunity, we strongly encourage you to complete and submit your pre-qualification documentation vault a week prior to the RFA application deadline in order to ensure time for your information to be reviewed. ***Applications received from not-for-profit applicants that have not Registered and are not Pre-Qualified in the Grants Gateway on the application due date listed on the cover of this RFA cannot be evaluated. Such applications will be disqualified from further consideration.***

Note: You will be notified via email on whether you have been pre-qualified (approved).

6) Question: Do I need to submit my application in the NYS's Grants Gateway system?

Answer: At this point, this grant opportunity is only being advertised within NYS Grants Gateway system and does not need to be submitted through this system. Prospective applicants must submit their applications for this grant opportunity, to include the required "2015 Recruitment and Retention Grant Program Worksheet" and "Notice of Endorsement" form, as attachments to the following email: grants@dhses.ny.gov. Please refer to the following link for the application materials and additional instructions: <http://www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc/recruit-retain-grant/index.cfm>

7) Question: Where can I find more information on the NYS's Grants Gateway and Vendor Pre-Qualification initiatives?

Answer: Please use the following link for more information on these Initiatives: <http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/>.

III. Regional Partnerships

1) Question: Is a regional partnership required to submit an application?

Answer: No. While applicants are encouraged to pursue regional partnerships, a goal articulated in the RFA and highlighted in Section IV "Regional Partnership Development and Support" it is not a requirement for submitting an application.

2) Question: What qualifies as a region?

Answer: For the purposes of this grant program, "regional" is defined as two or more eligible entities or a county submitting on behalf of all entities within the county. One of the participating regional partners is required to serve as the "submitting partner" while all other partners will be considered "participating partners." *Note:* Eligible entities that are participating as a region do not have to be contiguous.

3) Question: If I am part of a regional application, may my organization apply separately with an individual application?

Answer: Yes, for the purposes of this grant program, an eligible organization may submit one *individual application* and participate as a **Submitting** or **Participating** partner in one additional *regional application*.

IV. Permissible Costs

1) Question: Can I purchase fitness memberships under this grant program?

Answer: While a fitness membership in and of itself is not a permissible cost, a program that would be developed between the fitness center and department that included specific and measurable objectives for the improvement to firefighter health and wellness would be considered under this grant opportunity.

2) Questions: Can I purchase distance learning equipment under this grant program?

Answer: Distance learning equipment will be considered an eligible cost through this grant opportunity provided that your application articulates specific targets for member retention through this project.

3) Question: Can I purchase property under this grant program?

Answer: The purchase of property is not an eligible expense under this grant opportunity.

V. Other

1) Question: I have additional questions that were not addressed in this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) bulletin. Who should I contact?

Answer: Questions should be directed in writing to the following email address: grants@dhses.ny.gov. This FAQs bulletin will be updated regularly based on questions that are submitted by prospective applicants. Please check the DHSES website (<http://www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc/recruit-retain-grant/index.cfm>) frequently for updates.