

Questions and Answers after Grant Application Posting

This document consists of questions received regarding 2014-15 PSAP Operations Grant. Questions have not been altered, except to provide clarity and anonymity to counties.

1. Q: Our County received a correspondence dated August 28th with our tentative award for the 2014-2015 PSAP Operations Grant. In filling out the "Budget" section of the grant I am well above this projection.

Will the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services entertain larger requests that what has been projected? If the request is larger than what is slated as the county award can the county at least budget for the tentative award in our strategic planning?

A: During the process of filing out the budget information sheet, County can use a tentative amount provided in the Letter mailed to the County, the total amount in a budget sheet does not have to be exact and can be larger. After award announcements are made, each successful county will receive an award letter, which will include request for budget sheet revision to reflect the actual award amount. Please remember, the performance period of this grant is one calendar year, from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, please plan accordingly.

If a County not sure what is the amount of a tentative award, please contact your DHSES grant representative or send e-mail to grants@dhses.ny.gov and we will provide you the information.

2. Q: The application requests "call volume" broken down by "emergency calls" and "administrative calls." The descriptive introduction requests incoming call volume per county, "911 calls and 7-digit calls." It is easy to assume that "emergency calls" are those that come in on 911 lines. Please provide clarification on the data that you seek in regard to "administrative calls". By administrative lines do you wish to include those incoming calls from field personnel? What about "abandoned calls"? Do you want abandoned calls counted or not counted as part of the incoming calls?

A: The formula for the grant award calculation takes into consideration the workload of PSAPs in a County. From this perspective, administrative or non-emergency call is a call that does not require dispatching of emergency services. Any call (9-1-1 or 7-digit) that requires dispatching of emergency services should be considered as an "Emergency Call." Incoming calls from field personnel that does not require dispatching would fall under category of "Administrative Calls". Abandoned calls should not be counted as "Emergency Calls", if they did not require dispatching of emergency services and should be counted as "Administrative Calls". If abandoned call required dispatching of emergency services, it should be counted as "Emergency Call."

During our preliminary research, prior to grant announcement, we were advised that several counties do not separate “Emergency” and “Administrative” calls in their statistics. Therefore, the first year of the grant application process we are assessing capability of counties to produce verifiable and auditable set of data. If all counties will be able to provide separate values for “Emergency” and “Administrative” calls, only “Emergency” calls will be considered in the formula calculations. All future grant applications will require providing “Emergency Call Volume” ONLY and all counties will be required to comply with this requirement.

3. Q: We were recently advised of tentative allocation to our county under this grant. Since we have not yet provided some of the Tier 2 criteria (e.g., PSAP call volume, PSAP incidents/events recorded in CAD, consolidation information, implementation of NG-911 technologies), is there any chance that the dollars allocated to our county might change?

A: Yes, the amount of award might change depending on a data provided by counties and quantity of applications received for this grant. All \$10 million will be distributed among eligible applicants. However, we do not anticipate significant fluctuations from tentative amounts.

4. Q: Does the amount budgeted need to match the amount listed in the notification that we received from the NYS DHSES? In other words, can we ask for more in the event that any of the eligible counties do not apply?

A: During the process of filing out the budget information sheet, County can use a tentative amount provided in the Letter mailed to the County, the total amount in a budget sheet does not have to be exact and can be larger. After award announcements are made, each successful county will receive an award letter, which will include request for budget sheet revision to reflect the actual award amount. Please remember, the performance period of this grant is one calendar year, from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, please plan accordingly.

5. Q: What is the definition of “Personal Services?”

A: Personal services are salaries, including fringe benefits.

6. Q: Is maintenance of land mobile radio system an eligible expense?

A: Purchase of Land Mobile Radio equipment and related maintenance is a non-permissible cost. The central purpose of the Public Safety Answering Point Operations Grant is to allow State support through reimbursement of operating expenses in a PSAP.

7. Q: Our tentative award allocation under PSAP Operations grant program is smaller than previous Local Enhanced Wireless 9-1-1 (LEW 9-1-1) allocation. What is the reason for the change?

A: The main purpose of LEW 9-1-1 Grant Program was to accomplish Phase II capability in PSAPs across NY State and award distribution was based strictly on county population.

PSAP Operations Grant is a reimbursement grant and designed to sustain ongoing operations and improvements of PSAPs in NY State and seeks an equitable distribution of funding among counties based on quantifiable elements and relevant metrics, such as workload of PSAP, call volume, land area, crime index, etc. Please refer to 2014-15 PSAP Operation Grant Instructions for more information.

8. Q: Is the PSAP software side of Mobile CAD an allowable cost?

A: Yes, PSAP software side of Mobile CAD, as described, is allowable expense.

9. Q: We see on page six that under “B. Costs Not Permissible” that “New construction projects, such as new building constructions and capital project” are non-permissible costs. Could you tell us if consultants for such projects are permissible or non-permissible? If they are non-permissible, is there any part of a new construction project which would be permissible?

A: This grant is strictly for operational side of the PSAP and allows reimbursement for equipment, software, salaries, etc. Capital expenses, such as construction of new PSAP or capital improvement/reconstruction of the existing PSAP, are not allowed under this grant. However, expenses such as any new equipment, software or salaries required for operation of the new or existing PSAP are allowable expense. In addition, fit up and installation of new equipment, which might require minor construction / modifications, is allowable expense under this grant program.

Consultants’ cost for the construction or capital improvement projects of the PSAP building is not permissible. However consultants’ cost for developing specifications/design of operational equipment in a PSAP would qualify as permissible expense. As a reminder, PSAP and LMR capital projects are allowable expense under SICG competitive grant program.

10. Q: Does CAD and Phone maintenance support contract costs fall under the category of “PSAP operating expenses” for permissible costs?

A: CAD and PSAP phones maintenance support contract costs are permissible expenses under this grant program.

11. Q: In the possibility of additional funding becoming available; can an application budget sheet be submitted for additional monies?

A: Please see answer to Question 1 of this document.

12. Q: In the past, two hard copies of the cover page with applicant signature were required for submission. We did not see anything about hard copies in this RFA. Does the electronic scan of the cover page with signature replace this previous requirement?

A: Yes, an electronic submission replaces the paper copy. For 2014-15 PSAP Operations Grant, please print out the “General Information” tab from an Excel Worksheet, sign it per instruction provided on the same worksheet, scan it to pdf file and e-mail it us. Please note, completed 2014 -15 PSAP

Operations Grant Program Application Worksheet (Microsoft Excel Template) must be submitted as an Excel document.

13. Q: If I brought someone in to provide training for all my staff– such as Active Shooter or Customer Service – would that type of training be covered? Also, if I sent them away to similar training, would that be covered?

Under allowable expenses it also says, Basic Certification Training. Is that only the APCO or equivalent training or would that also cover Emergency Medical Dispatch training which we require for new hires? And if so, is that all expenses (course, travel, etc) or just the course itself?

A: Any educational expenses (manuals, material, in-service training, away training, overtime and travel for such a training, etc.) are permissible as long as they are related strictly to PSAP operations, examples includes basic training or training on a new equipment installed in a PSAP.

General business development or development of general managerial skills, materials and training for such are not a permissible expense under this grant program. Memberships are not permissible expenses under this grant program.

PSAP Operations grant program is to assist counties with operational expenses for PSAP sustainment and improvements.

14. Q: We are establishing a back-up PSAP, would the purchase of 7 desks to be used as workstations for dispatch be an allowable expense?

A: Yes. Dispatch workstations, including desks, necessary for PSAP operations, is allowable expense under this grant program. Please refer to Part III. Authorized Program Expenditures, Section A, page 5 of the 2014-15 PSAP Operations Grant Request for Applications for more examples of allowable expenses.