

Assistance to Firefighter Grant

Grant Example for Road Safety – Fire Department

This guide and example covers the narrative parts of the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG). Each section has many questions that are asked, especially in the demographics area. You will need to do research to find accurate information to complete all sections of the grant. You cannot have any unanswered questions. All grants that are missing information will be automatically rejected in the first round by the computer. Only those grants that have answers to every question move on to the second stage of evaluation. Your information must be accurate and complete. It is important that your grant reflects your department; this is what the strength of your grant will be.

All of the narrative that is below is suggested language and may not apply to your department or situation. Change, delete, or add any language to make the grant reflect accurately your service and situation. The most important thing is to be accurate and to fully explain what you are doing and why you need financial assistance. Please replace all XXX with your department information.

Department Characteristics (Part I)

Department Description

XXX Fire Department is the sole provider of fire protection and basic and advanced life support for XXX County/City. XXX Fire Department serves a population of XXX,XXX according to the 2016 US Census. The median household income is \$XX,XXX compared to the state average of \$XX,XXX. XX% of persons living in XXX County/City lives below the poverty line compared with XX% statewide and 14.3% nationally. XXX Fire Department has XXX employees and according to our dispatch records from 1/1/2016 until 12/31/2016 we responded to XX,XXX total calls and XX,XXX medical calls.

(Completely describe how your system works here. Who first responds to calls and who transports patients? Do you provide mutual aid to other agencies? How are disaster responses handled? Are there cooperative agreements between other response agencies and yours?)

(List all Critical Infrastructure in your jurisdiction here including: government buildings, power generation stations and plants, electrical substations, high voltage transmission lines, hydro electric power facilities, public drinking water facilities, water treatment plants, public safety radio towers, public television stations, public radio stations, Emergency Broadcast System components, microwave towers, military installations including National Guard facilities, major telephone switching stations, stadiums, universities, community colleges, civic centers, special laboratories or other specialized facilities, manufacturing plants, miles of interstate highway, miles of US and state highways, airports, hospitals, trauma centers, bridges, public and private schools, bus stations, train stations, rivers, and any other specialized asset that is unique to your area.)(This is one of the most important areas of the grant application.)

Department Characteristics (Part II)

Budget Narrative

The total XXX Fire Department budget for 2016 was \$X,XXX,XXX. This is down from last year by \$XX,XXX. With the recession and diminishing property values, overall taxable assessments are down. Our department has adjusted non-essential services down to accommodate the overall budget shortfall. We have placed a request in our budget for this equipment, but with limited funds it has not been funded or approved. With so many people out of work and without health insurance, we find more and more individuals that cannot pay their tax bill.

Our focus in these tough economic times has been on providing firefighters in the streets. Our call volume continues to rise with no additional funding available. Capital expenses, such as this vehicle monitoring system for safety, while vital, are secondary to operating funds. XX% of our budget goes to personnel costs. Additionally, other costs such as fuel and supplies have skyrocketed. All of these factors combined have made it impossible to introduce new capital projects. Grant funding is the only way to make a purchase such as this.

We expect property values to continue to fall and this will result in a continued decrease in tax revenues. State and local governments are cutting taxes and this affects our operation directly. Our population and call volume continues to grow however our funding availability does not.

Why do you need Federal Assistance?

In the past five years we have had XX vehicle accidents in our department with XX,XXX in property damage and XX injuries to personnel and others. It is vital that we get to emergency scenes safely and in an expeditious manner. While we provide driver training, there is currently no program to monitor safe driving and to provide feedback in real time to drivers on their performance. An in vehicle system needs to be in place so that drivers receive constant feedback on their driving performance and administration can monitor how drivers are doing in respect to driving. Vehicle accidents cause vehicle damage, injuries, down time for ambulances and fire trucks, workman's compensation claims, patient care delays, and response delays. This is a serious issue that must be addressed. No funds are currently available for this project and we certainly could never purchase this driving monitoring equipment using our funding. Our only other option would be to purchase one set of vehicle equipment at a time over a period of many years. Of course this course of action would lead to disparity of available services between units so that it would be difficult to guarantee that drivers were driving safely and that standards were being met. An advantage of equipping all vehicles with a safety system of this nature is that it will provide consistent safe driving reinforcement, proactively creating a culture of safety to be shared by all vehicle operators and other crew members. Total personnel days out of work due to injuries from accidents are XXX. Total workman's compensation costs for these employees are \$XXX,XXX. Total downtime for vehicles damages in accidents for the past five years has been XXX days.

Backfill costs for injured employees has cost our department \$XX,XXX. Due to accidents, XX calls had delayed responses.

Request Details

Fire Equipment

Section #1 Product Description

This project proposes to purchase equipment that would be placed in each apparatus that would dramatically increase driving and crew safety by reducing the aggressive driving of apparatus drivers by providing immediate direct feedback to the apparatus operator when they exceed the parameters set forth by the agency. The system consists of a box that measures forces placed on the vehicle. When excessive force in accelerating, braking, turning, or other vehicle moves occurs a tone will sound to warn the driver. This tone allows the driver to modify their driving to drive in a safer manner to avoid potential accidents. Other tones are utilized that also have a direct effect on safe driving. Those tones are related to vehicle speed, seatbelt usage, and proper use of a ground guide when the vehicle is backing. The data will also determine the proper use of devices such as emergency lights and siren, allowing further coaching on safe vehicle operation. Driving habits of the driver are recorded and downloaded back at the station so that supervisors can see driving performance on all employees. Drivers are provided training and feedback on their performance so that they can improve.

This system would provide a wide variety of benefits to our department. The first and foremost is the increased safety of our firefighters as they respond to scenes and when they return on critical EMS calls. Responding under emergency situations provides a real threat each time a vehicle is driven or a red light is breached. One of the most frequent causes of firefighter injury is a vehicle collision. Driver training is a good first step, but this system monitors each driver's performance to provide them immediate feedback to remind them to maintain safety and reduce accidents. This crash prevention is vital in many aspects. As you can see from the costs and injury figures provided above this is a serious issue. First this system will help avoid accidents which will reduce costs due to vehicle damage. In addition to vehicle damage costs, when a vehicle is in an accident, many times it is down for a period of days or weeks. This directly affects our operation. Next is the reduced potential for injuries in accidents. Injuries of course directly affect our operation and the lives of our firefighters. Pain and suffering, costs of injury and employee replacement, workman's compensation costs, and insurance costs are all issues that negatively affect our department. If this system prevents even one injury to a firefighter, it is well worth it. Another effect of this monitoring system is lowered vehicle maintenance costs. If drivers are driving with less force on the vehicles and in a safer manner, vehicle fuel mileage increases, brake wear decreases, and there is less stress on the vehicle in general. Many fire departments that have installed one of these systems in the past have experienced reduced costs in all of the above areas and improved safety of personnel. This meets the goals of everyone in the department from administration to the individual drivers of apparatus. This system exceeds all standards in the industry including standards as administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Section #2 Cost/Benefit

We are requesting a total of \$XXX,XXX for this system and we estimate that with reduced accidents and reduced maintenance costs, we will save \$XX,XXX each year for many years to come. It is impossible to place a cost on the increased safety that this system will bring and the prevention of injuries to our personnel. Driving is a daily occurrence and cannot be curtailed, however how we drive can be improved and safety can be increased. Keeping our firefighters safe is our highest priority. The benefit of reducing accidents, reducing injury, reducing vehicle damage, reducing vehicle downtime, reducing maintenance costs and more add up to a tremendous asset to the general operations of our department. The costs of backfill for injured personnel alone are tremendous.

In order for our department to help others in need, we need to get to the call first. Driving lights and siren through heavy traffic and against signals is always hazardous. Many times new employees do not understand all of these hazards and have not learned to drive in a responsible manner. Aggressive driving is an industry hazard when operating an emergency vehicle, mitigating that aggressive behavior increases safety and reduces vehicle operating expenses. This system will enforce low forces driving that potentially could save their life or lives of the general public. The training is reinforced by continuous monitoring that provides immediate feedback to the driver with audible tones so that the driver is aware that he or she is placing undue forces on the vehicle. In addition these tones are registered inside the device in the vehicle to provide feedback to supervisors on each driver's performance. This feedback to supervisors can lead to further training or positive feedback for drivers.

Section #3 Statement of Effect

This driving system will help our department meet or exceed all standards for safe vehicle operations of our apparatus in our community. This will improve our overall operations by helping to protect our staff and the citizens we serve in the community. Reducing accidents of fire apparatus will improve our standing in the community and will have the very real effect of saving lives, suffering, and money. Our operations are very negatively affected by fire apparatus accidents. Injuries, damage to vehicles, down time of important equipment, time spent on repair of vehicles, workman's compensation claims, loss of work time, disability, delays in responses to fires and medical calls, and so much more. Every accident that is avoided provides multiple positive effects for our operation. It is obvious that this would improve our department's ability to protect lives and property in our community.

Section #4 Other Issues Not Covered

The main purpose of this request is to ensure that our vehicle operators are operating fire apparatus in the safest manner possible following all department policies and procedures. Secondly this helps us keep personnel, vehicles, and equipment in optimal shape to respond to emergency calls when needed without any delays. Keeping personnel healthy and vehicles running allows us to respond in an appropriate and make the difference we want to make in the community. This system also helps us reduce operating costs.

Installing this system will be promoted within our community to show that we are working to keep our personnel and the general public safe. This will be positive publicity for our department and for the AFG grant process.

Budget

(In this section you will need to fill in all budgetary numbers to complete the project. Remember to include any installation costs, training costs, backfill, and of course all equipment costs. Your salesman should be able to provide you with quotes for equipment and estimates for other costs.)

Assurances

(Please read over all of the assurances in this section. You will need to sign off on all of these to complete the grant process.)

Grant Signature

(Whoever submits the grant will need to apply their electronic signature to complete the grant submission process.)

Other Information

Do not wait until the last minute to submit your grant. Many times the online government website will slow down significantly or crash because so many people are trying to submit grants in the final hours. If you can submit at least three days ahead of the final date, it would be best. When you submit your grant you should get an email at the one you submitted to confirm that your grant has been received.

Assistance to Firefighter Grants are awarded in phases over a period of months. Rejection notices are not usually sent out until all grants have been awarded. If you are not awarded a grant in the first few phases, there is still a chance you could be funded. They award grants based on scores and move down the list until the money runs out.

Once you have submitted your grant, contact your state Congressmen and Senators. Provide them a basic overview of your grant proposal and the grant number that was assigned to your grant and ask them to lobby for your grant. Do not underestimate how effect congressional lobbying can be on your behalf.

Make sure all areas of the grant are filled out before submitting it and make sure your grant states what you are trying to accomplish and matches what your department goals are. The most unique thing you have going for you is the uniqueness of your own department and how you serve your citizens. Good luck!!