

# Washington State Department of Natural Resources

## Volunteer Fire Assistance

### 2024 Phase I Grant Program

## Introduction

The **Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)** program is funded through the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS). The objective of the VFA program is to improve the capacity and capability of rural and volunteer fire protection districts that protect rural communities and play a substantial cooperative role in the suppression of wildland fires within or near federally managed lands. The Phase I grant program helps accomplish this by providing eligible Washington State Fire Districts/Fire Departments personal protective equipment (PPE) and other fire equipment at a 50% reduced cost through the Washington DNR Fire Cache.

To participate Districts/Departments must meet the eligibility requirements listed below. Eligible Districts/Departments may apply by submitting an order through the DNR “Phase I Order” shopping cart (see submittal directions below). **The maximum order amount allowed is \$3,300.00. Orders will be filled as they are received until funding is depleted.**

Order prices/totals in the “Phase I Order” shopping cart will reflect a 50% price reduction and already include state sales tax, this will be the cost to the District/Department. USDA VFA grant funds will be utilized to cover the remaining 50%. Districts/Departments may request to will-call pick up completed orders at the DNR Fire Cache in Tumwater, WA or have the order shipped. The cost of shipping is the Districts/Departments responsibility and will be added to the order total.

*\*\*Please note: Do not remit payment before receiving an invoice/statement via email or postal service. Prices are subject to change and shopping cart totals will **NOT** reflect any shipping costs. \*\**

## Eligibility

Districts that meet the following requirements are eligible to apply for Phase I grants:

- Established Districts/Departments under the laws of the State of Washington or a Federally recognized Tribal entity.
- 70% volunteer firefighter membership or greater. As an example, for a Fire District with a total of 30 firefighters (counting both paid and volunteer), 21 must be volunteers, and
- Provide service to:
  - a rural area or a rural community with a population of 10,000 or less, or
  - a community with a population greater than 10,000 that includes service to a rural community of 10,000 or less (funding must be used to benefit the rural community)

## Phase I Order Process

- Phase I orders will be accepted February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, through March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, or until funding is depleted, whichever occurs first. Orders submitted after 5:00 PM on March 29, 2024, will not be considered for funding. Districts are encouraged to submit orders as soon as possible once the grant period opens on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.
- The maximum shopping cart order allowed is \$3,300. The shopping cart order total plus any applicable shipping (for orders not picked up at the DNR Fire Cache) is the responsibility of the District/Department.
- Orders are submitted through the “Phase I Order” online shopping cart available on the DNR [Fire District Assistance](#) webpage. The shopping cart requires Districts/Departments to create a new account *each year* prior to placing orders. After submitting an order through the shopping cart, Districts/Departments will receive an email confirming their order(s). This email confirmation is not a bill. **DNR will bill the District/Department separate of the email confirmation.**
- Information requested to “create an account” must be filled out completely and will be used in determining eligibility.

- A District/Department may submit multiple orders as long as the cumulative total of all orders does not exceed \$3,300. However, each order will be filled as it is received, independent of previous orders by the District/Department.

## Award Notice & Order Delivery

- Email confirmation of your order serves as the notice of grant award. DNR reserves the right not to fund an order if it is determined that funding is no longer available, or that a District/Department does not meet eligibility requirements, or if the order by itself, or combined with previous orders from the same District/Department exceeds \$3,300.
- DNR will bill the District/Department separate of the email confirmation (i.e., email confirmation is not your bill).
- Orders are typically shipped within 2-4 weeks.
- Questions regarding the grant program and/or the award process should be directed to Dan Boyle (360-480-0490).
- Questions specific to the available equipment/PPE in the shopping cart and/or order status should be directed to the Washington DNR Fire Cache (360-586-0361/360-586-0362).

## Additional Requirements

By submitting an order through the Phase 1 Shopping Cart, the Fire District/Department agrees to comply with the following:

1. Fiscal records pertaining to the Phase 1 Shopping cart order will be kept for seven years after payment of the order or any dispute resolution.
2. Provide access to grant/financial records for inspection by the DNR or by any duly authorized audit representative of the state of Washington or the USDA Forest Service for a period of three years after payment of the order or any dispute resolution.
3. Federal regulations relating to equipment and supplies acquired by state and local governments ([§200.313 Equipment](#)) and other provisions identified as follows:
  - a. Cost Principles. By accepting Federal assistance, the Sub-recipient agrees to abide by the applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars including, but not limited to federal regulation 2 CFR Part 200 sections A-F as well as appendixes, revisions and additional sections as supplemented by the funding agency in the expenditure of federal funds and performance under this program.
  - b. Audit Requirements. Non-federal entities that expend \$750,000 or more federal awards in a year are required to obtain an annual audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996. Recipients expending less than \$750,000 in a year are exempt from federal audit requirements but must make records available for review or audit by federal agencies and/or DNR.
  - c. Executive Compensation. Sub-recipients must report the names and total compensation of each of the Sub-recipient's five most highly compensated executives for the Sub-recipient's preceding completed fiscal year if: In the Sub-recipient's fiscal year, the Sub-recipient received:
    - i.) 80 percent or more of its annual gross revenues from federal procurement contracts (and sub-contracts) and federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act (and sub-awards); and
    - ii.) \$25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from federal procurement contracts (and sub-contracts) and federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, (and sub-awards); and
    - iii.) The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. §§ 78m(a) 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Refer to complete instructions for reporting, exemptions and definitions as contained in federal regulation 2 CFR 170

d. Trafficking in Persons. Sub-recipients are prohibited from trafficking in persons as detailed in federal regulation 2 CFR-Grants and Agreements.

e. Eligible Workers. Sub-recipient shall ensure that all employees complete federal form I-9 "Employment Eligibility Verification" to certify that they are eligible for lawful employment under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 USC § 1324a). Sub-recipient shall comply with regulations regarding certification and retention of the completed forms. These requirements also apply to any subsequent sub-award under this agreement.

f. Debarment and Suspension. Sub-recipient certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions by any federal department or agency. Sub-recipient shall immediately inform the Federal funding agency and DNR if they or any of its principals become excluded, debarred, or suspended from entering into covered transactions with the federal government. Additionally, should Sub-recipient or any of its principles receive a transmittal letter or other official federal notice of debarment or suspension they shall notify the Federal funding agency and DNR without undue delay. This applies whether the exclusion, debarment or suspension is voluntary or involuntary.

Sub-recipients are prohibited from contracting with or making sub-awards under covered transactions to parties that are suspended or debarred or whose principals are suspended or debarred. "Covered transactions" include those procurement contracts for goods and services awarded under a non-procurement transaction (e.g., grant or cooperative agreement) that are expected to equal or exceed \$25,000 or meet certain other specified criteria. All non-procurement transactions (i.e., sub-awards), irrespective of award amount, are considered covered transactions.

When a Sub-recipient enters into a covered transaction with an entity at a lower tier, the Sub-recipient must verify that the entity is not suspended or debarred or otherwise excluded. This verification may be accomplished by checking the System for Awards Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>, collecting a certification from the entity or adding a clause or condition to the covered transaction.

g. Non-Discrimination. During the performance of activities under this award, the Sub-recipient shall comply with all federal, state and local non-discrimination laws, regulation and policies. In the event of the Sub-recipient's non-compliance or refusal to comply with any non-discrimination law, regulation or policy, this award may be rescinded, cancelled or terminated in whole or in part, and the Sub-recipient may be declared ineligible for further awards from DNR.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Department of Interior (DOI) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

USDA – To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964.

DOI – The formal complaint should be filed by you or your representative, using Department of the Interior Form DI-1892, with the Bureau or Office EEO Officer where the alleged discriminatory incident occurred or with the Director, Office for Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street N.W., MS-1442 MIB, Washington, D.C. 20240. The DI-1892 form may be obtained from the EEO Counselor or the Bureau EO Office.

If you are filing a complaint against another agency, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/complaints/index.html>, for more information.

h. Lobbying. Sub-recipient shall not use funds from this award to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress, in connection with the

awarding of any federal contract; the making of any federal grant; the making of any federal loan; the entering into of any cooperative agreement; and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this award, the Sub-recipient shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying, in accordance with its instructions.

Sub-recipient shall include the above language in documents for all sub-awards under this Agreement at all tiers.

i. Other Grant Specific Requirements. For further information related to federal requirements that may apply to Sub-recipients, go to: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>