



# ***VIRGINIA FIRE PROGRAMS EMERGENCY FUND***

## **POLICY & APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS  
VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD**

**Grants Section**

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# VIRGINIA FIRE PROGRAMS EMERGENCY FUND

## LOAN PURPOSE

The Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund is established by the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) and administered by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VD FP). The purpose of the fund is to provide financial assistance to localities and fire service organizations for the repair and replacement of essential fire fighting equipment and facilities following damage incurred by a natural or man-made disaster. The awarded monies are designed for immediate use pending the receipt of other financial assistance and support.

## FUND POLICY

### I. MANAGEMENT

#### A.) DEFINITION:

The Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund provides non-interest accruing loans to localities for subsequent distribution to fire services agencies to provide for the immediate recovery of fire protection and hazardous materials equipment and facilities following the loss of such due to a natural or man-made disaster.

#### B.) DISTRIBUTION:

Award of loans shall be made following application to VD FP for processing, evaluation, and presentation for decision to the Executive Committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board (herein referred to as the "Executive Committee"). Applying localities **must** demonstrate that they are unable to qualify for relief through the Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Relief program administered by the Virginia Department of Emergency Services (DES) or from federal disaster relief.

#### C.) CONCEPT OF OPERATION & ADMINISTRATION:

1. Damages to localized fire fighting and/or hazardous materials equipment and facilities will not be of sufficient scale to qualify for application for relief under the Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Relief program or from federal sources. The damage must be such that the fire service organization is unable to provide the served community with fire protection without immediate assistance to restore its fire fighting and/or hazardous materials capacity.
2. In the event two or more fire fighting organizations from the same locality submit applications, the Executive Committee will prioritize the applications based on the following information in order:

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- 1) Volunteer Agencies v. Paid/Career Agencies: Volunteer organizations may receive consideration over Paid/Career departments.
  - 2) Severity of damage and the extent of loss of immediate fire service protection to the community will be considered.
  - 3) Fire fighting equipment repair and replacement shall take precedence over funding of hazardous materials equipment. Hazardous materials equipment shall take priority over the repair of facilities or infrastructure.
  - 4) Proximity of agencies: It may be necessary due to a limited supply of funds to consolidate needs into one package and provide shared, mutual aid resources.
3. Monies awarded from the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund are non-interest accruing loans which must be re-paid in part each quarter as specified by the Virginia Fire Services Board; however, full reimbursement shall occur no later than two (2) years following the loan receipt by the fire service agency and/or locality. A one (1) year extension in repayment may be granted by the Virginia Fire Services Board only in cases of financial hardship.

**D.) ELIGIBILITY & AWARD CRITERIA:**

Agency eligibility and the award of grant funds shall be based on the following criteria:

- ❖ All fire services organizations as defined by the *Code of Virginia*, whether volunteer or paid, shall be eligible. The damage to fire fighting or hazardous materials equipment, or the facilities in which they are housed, must be so crippling that the fire service agency cannot adequately support the served community's fire suppression needs or manage hazardous materials safely.
- ❖ The aggregate cost of the damage incurred by the fire services agency does not meet the minimal qualifications specified by DES within the Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Relief program and by federal disaster relief sources (\$4.00 per community member served).
- ❖ The damage is in excess of \$1,000 and **cannot** be supported by the locality of community the fire service agency protects. Local governing authorities will be required to submit a hardship statement verifying that money is not immediately available from any other source.
- ❖ The locality and/or fire service agency must possess and maintain insurance coverage on its facilities and equipment and/or be self-insured.
- ❖ If a facility is subject to frequent flooding and/or water damage, the fire service agency which owns the facility, or the locality in which the facility is located, shall have participated in the National Flood Insurance Program prior to loss, or agree in writing to enroll in such a program within six (6) months from the date of filing the emergency grant application, and obtain special flood insurance coverage.

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**E.) LOAN AMOUNT:**

The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility of determining the actual dollar amount of the emergency grant loan.

Due to limited funds available for emergency financing, and in consideration for other localities that may also have suffered from a catastrophic event, no single loan shall exceed \$100,000. Furthermore, the Executive Committee reserves the right to approve an amount that is less than the total amount of requested dollars.

**F.) FUND USE:**

The Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund is designated for catastrophic equipment and/or facility damage that requires immediate repair or replacement to restore fire fighting services lost due to a natural disaster. The loan is not to be used to augment insurance recovery, nor is it to be allocated for the expansion of facilities that suffered damage. Other prohibited uses include daily operating costs, salaries, and benefits. It is intended solely to assist with the restoration of necessary fire fighting and hazardous materials equipment and facilities to ensure the provision of community fire protection services.

**G.) FUND MISUSE:**

Should any audit reveal expenditures not affiliated with the immediate repair and replacement of essential fire fighting equipment and facilities following damage incurred by a natural disaster, the award recipient shall submit a written explanation to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and be subject to an investigation of improper use by the Virginia Fire Services Board. Any agency believed to have provided false, misleading, or improper information will be subject to an investigation by the Board and possibly other authorities. The Office of Attorney General will be consulted regarding these matters as is necessary.

If any awarded locality is deemed to have misused any monies, in whole or in part, of the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund, such funds shall be re-paid to the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund within twelve (12) months from the date of determination of misuse. Said locality shall be ineligible to receive financial assistance for a period of five (5) years from the date of the original award. Criminal prosecution for deliberate and/or malicious misuse of monies from the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund shall be pursued by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and Virginia Fire Service Board as is appropriate.

**H.) MODIFICATION OF LOAN:**

Modification of fund use may be permitted following a written request by the receiving fire services agency to the Executive Director of VDFP. The Executive Director shall have the authority to allow adjustments of the loan so long as the purpose of awarded funds continues to serve the immediate fire protection needs of the affected locality. The Executive Committee shall be notified of any modifications to a loan in a timely manner.

**I.) EXTENSIONS:**

The Executive Committee may extend the loan repayment schedule of an award recipient by one (1) year if an unforeseen circumstance prevents the locality from fulfilling its reimbursement obligation on time. Requesting localities are required to submit a written appeal for an extension to the Executive Director of VDFP explaining in detail the financial hardship that will prevent the timely repayment of funds. The Executive Director shall forward this information to the Executive Committee within five (5) working days of receipt. The Executive Committee shall then deliberate and render its decision to the Executive Director within ten (10) working days. The Executive Director will submit written notification of the decision to the requesting agency within five (5) working days of the decision.

**J.) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Within thirty (30) days of the final repayment of loan funds, the award recipient shall submit a written report to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs describing the repairs to facilities and/or equipment and any replacement purchases, which were required to immediately restore the organization's fire fighting capacity. It will also provide the affected agency with an opportunity to comment on the administration of the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund and indicate how the program might be improved. The Executive Director will submit all documentation to the Executive Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Virginia Fire Services Board.

**II. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS:**

**A. APPLICATION:**

The requesting locality shall submit a completed application on forms provided by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

**B. VERIFICATION:**

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs shall reserve the right to verify any or all information recorded on the application for financial assistance, and shall review the application for completeness and compliance with grant policy. The Executive Director of VDFP will direct an on-site evaluation to assess the damage. The findings will be presented to the Executive Committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board within five (5) working days.

**C. ADMINISTRATIVE NOTIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION:**

Upon receipt of a completed application, the Executive Director of VDFP shall immediately notify the Chairman of the Virginia Fire Services Board to convene a meeting of the Board's Executive Committee. The Virginia Department of Fire Programs shall submit copies of the received application to members of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Virginia Fire Services Board on the same day of notification, whether by facsimile or overnight carrier.

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**D. SUMMONS:**

Within seven (7) days of notification by the Executive Director of VDFP, the Chairman of the Virginia Fire Services Board shall convene an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee for application review and consideration of grant award. Decisions by this committee, as with any other emergency matter, shall be on behalf of the VFSB.

**E. EVALUATION:**

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for evaluation of an emergency grant request. Consideration of grant award shall be based on all criteria specified within the document and any other criteria the Committee deems necessary. Decisions by the Executive Committee, as with any other emergency matter, shall be made on behalf of the Virginia Fire Services Board. The Board will be notified of the Committee's deliberations at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**F. AWARD:**

Following approval for grant disbursement by the Executive Committee, VDFP shall submit all appropriate forms for the release of funds. Actual disbursement of finances shall be made via electronic transfer in a timely manner to the locality requesting financial aid. The Chief Financial Officer of the affected locality will be contacted to arrange for the transfer of funds.

**G. MODIFICATION OF LOAN:**

Award recipients may ask for a modification of the loan by submitting a written request to the Executive Director of VDFP justifying the need for change. The requested adjustment must continue to serve the immediate fire protection needs of the affected locality. The Executive Director will study the request and render a decision within seven (7) working days.

**H. EXTENSIONS:**

Agencies requiring an extension in the loan repayment schedule must submit their request in writing to the Executive Director of VDFP explaining in detail the financial hardship that will prevent completion of the timely repayment of loan funds. Because the Executive Director and Executive Committee must be allowed adequate time to meet and deliberate on such matters, extension appeals must be received by the Executive Director no later than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the expiration of the loan.

**I. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Awarded agencies shall submit a written report to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs within thirty (30) days of the final repayment of loan funds. This report shall describe the repairs to facilities and/or equipment and any replacement purchases, which were required to immediately restore the organization's fire fighting capacity. It will also allow the agency to comment on the benefits and challenges of the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund and indicate for the program might be improved.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

***SPECIAL NOTE: The attached application is meant to be reviewed and completed by both the appropriate Fire Services representative and the Chief Financial Officer of the respective local governing body.***

**APPLICATION # -- To be assigned by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs following receipt of the application.**

**DATE** – Date the application is completed.

**AGENCY NAME** – Official name of the fire department.

**MAILING ADDRESS** – Street address of the agency.

**CITY** – City or town in which the agency is located.

**COUNTY** – The county in which the agency is located.

**FDID #** – The Fire Department Identification Number assigned to the agency.

**AREA #** – The VDFP Area in which the agency is located.

**DESCRIPTION OF LOSS** – Describe the extent of injury the agency suffered and indicate what items were damaged or destroyed. Use another sheet if necessary.

*(Example: "... Winds from the hurricane toppled two (2) oak trees across the engine bay roof resulting in a collapse of the entire gabled structure. Damage to out apparatus was extensive as the trees and weight of the roof debris crushed the driver and passenger compartments of the chassis on our only engine and ladder truck...")*

Please attach any available photographs to assist VDFP in understanding the loss suffered by the department. **Do not submit black & white photocopies of pictures, as such images tend not to reproduce well or provide sufficient illustration.**

If possible, obtain two (2) or more corporate estimates of the cost to repair and/or replace injured equipment. The Area Manager shall perform an on-site evaluation to assess the damage and present findings to the Director or Training. The Director of Training will notify the Executive Director, who shall then forward all relevant information to the Executive Committee of the Virginia Fire Services Board.

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**ESTIMATION OF ELIGIBLE COSTS TO...EQUIPMENT** – List by quantity and item the fire fighting and/or hazardous materials equipment damaged or destroyed. Provide an estimation of the cost necessary to replace such equipment. Continue on an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

*(Example: QUANTITY - “4”; ITEM – “Full Turnout Gear”; EST. COST – “\$3,200.00)*

**ESTIMATION OF ELIGIBLE COSTS TO... FACILITY** – Identify the facility (or agency) that suffered structural damage and provide an estimated cost of repair.

**RESTITUTION COORDINATOR** – Individual responsible for the coordination of salvage and equipment recovery. If this person holds an office within the fire department, indicate the title by which he/she should be addressed. Please also include day and evening telephone numbers.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER** – Individual serving as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the local government served by the affected agency. Please indicate the address if the local governing body the CFO represents and all appropriate telephone numbers at this location. (Disbursements from the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund will be made to the affected local government via electronic transfer, not to the fire services agency requesting financial aid.)

**CERTIFICATION DOCUMENT** – Attach a statement certifying that the organization and/or locality is not eligible for another form of aid and/or assistance. This document should further stipulate that insurance coverage will be sufficient (once it is released) to share the burden of damage expenses. If damage is the result of flooding, and the fire services agency is located within a flood plain, the certifying document should also specify the type and amount of flood insurance owned or to be applied for by the agency.

**PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE** – The full name and signature of the individual authorized on behalf of the agency to complete this application. Please indicate the date of which the application was signed.

***Please review this application and all attached information for accuracy prior to submission.***

**MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:**

Grants Section  
Virginia Department of Fire Programs  
1005 Technology Park Drive  
Glen Allen VA 23059-4500  
Tel: 804/371-0220  
Fax: 804/371-0219

**DISCLAIMER & STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL UNDERSTANDING:**

1. Disbursements from the Virginia Fire Programs Emergency Fund will be made from the Fire Programs Fund (§38.2-401 of the *Code of Virginia* as amended) consistent with the practices set forth within this document under policy guidance provided by the Virginia Fire Services Board.
2. Disbursements shall be made via electronic transfer to the applicable locality, rather than the requesting fire services agency.
3. All applications, including attachments and subsequent information, become the property of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and, upon determination of eligibility, become public information subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act and all other similar statutes.
4. **Nothing contained within this document shall be construed to supersede the applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Should such conflict or question arise, or appear to arise, the applicable law or regulation shall supersede any such questionable provision or province.**