



*OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS
STATE FIRE MARSHAL*

JB Pritzker, Governor
James A. Rivera, State Fire Marshal

Small Equipment Grant Program Information Fiscal Year 2025 Application Cycle

APPLICATION DEADLINE

OCTOBER 1, 2024

A fillable application is provided for you online at <https://sfm.illinois.gov/iam/firedepartment/grants-and-loans.html>. You **must** utilize this electronic application.

Applications must be electronically submitted or postmarked no later than October 1, 2024. Do not submit both an electronic and mailed application. Electronically submitted applications should be sent to Makenzie.Evans@illinois.gov. Mailed applications should be sent to:

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal
Small Equipment Grant Program
1035 Stevenson Drive
Springfield, Illinois 62703

Questions about the program or the grant application should be directed to Roger Branson at (217) 785-4717 or at Roger.D.Branson@illinois.gov.

Program Overview

The Small Equipment Grant Program was established to provide grants of up to \$26,000 for the purchase of small firefighting and ambulance equipment. This program is an innovative approach to a problem that has long caused difficulties for the fire departments and not-for-profit ambulance services in Illinois, particularly those that have hardships in generating the necessary revenue for small equipment. The purpose is to allow eligible applicants the opportunity to purchase small equipment that they may otherwise not be able to purchase.

You may view the statutory authority, as well as the administrative rules governing the program by clicking on the links below.

- Statutory authority - [20 ILCS 2905/2.7 \(https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=357&ChapterID=5\)](https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=357&ChapterID=5)
- Administrative rules - [Title 41, Part 291 \(https://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/041/04100291sections.html\)](https://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/041/04100291sections.html)

Funding

\$4 million will be available for this application period.

Eligibility

Most Illinois fire departments, fire protection districts and township fire departments are eligible to apply for grants¹. Additionally, ambulance services that are not-for-profit

¹ Fire department, fire protection district and township fire department mean a unit of local government (as defined by Article VII, Section 1 of the Illinois Constitution of 1970 and in state law at 5 ILCS 70/1.28) that provides fire suppression within a geographical area.

emergency medical service provider is also eligible to apply. An ambulance service shall be a volunteer, non-profit, stand-alone emergency medical service provider not tied in any financial or legal manner to a fire department. Applicants in this category may have to provide additional documentation to verify eligibility. Units of local government that do not operate fire departments or ambulance services are eligible for grants under this program (e.g., a municipality that contracts for fire suppression or emergency medical service from another municipality, fire protection district, or for-profit or not-for-profit business); however, if a unit of local government contracts for fire protection service from another unit of local government that has applied for a grant under this program, the unit of local government contracting to receive the services is prohibited from receiving a grant under this program.

Fire departments that are for-profit entities, not-for-profit entities, associations and/or not-for-profit corporations (i.e., not a governmental body) are not eligible to apply.

Fire department, fire protection district and township fire department applicants must have participated in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (“NFIRS”) for a minimum of two years prior to the application for the Small Equipment Grant, except that fire departments that were issued a Fire Department Identification Number (“FDID”) by the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (“OSFM”) less than two years prior to the application are eligible to apply for a Small Equipment Grant if they have participated in NFIRS since the date their FDID was issued by the OSFM.

The two-year required reporting period will be from October 2022 through September 2024. Fire departments are required to report all incidents responded to, **including ambulance calls.**

An eligibility report will be posted to the grant’s webpage and updated throughout the grant period. The report will also be sent to our NFIRS email distribution list. To be added to this list, please contact us at the help desk email address below.

Please note that if you are not NFIRS compliant by the end of the application period you will not be considered for a grant.

If you have questions regarding NFIRS compliance, please e-mail our NFIRS help desk at SFM.NFIRSHelp@illinois.gov.

Evaluation of Applications

Applications will go through a pre-review process where initial eligibility will be determined. That review includes whether the applicant is NFIRS compliant and whether the applicant has received a grant in the past. Applicants that are not NFIRS compliant are removed from consideration. Applicants that have received a grant in the past will only be reviewed after all applicants who have not previously received a grant are reviewed and will only be considered as long as funding remains available.

After the pre-review applications are pre-ranked to determine an initial score for use in deciding what applications are reviewed by the committee. The office will divide each applicant's budget by the square miles served to determine the applicant's budget per square mile and will be ranked lowest to highest. The office will divide each applicant's budget by the population served to determine the applicant's budget per person and will be ranked lowest to highest. The office will average the two rankings to reach an overall ranking. Based on those rankings the office will forward applications that total 1.5 times the amount of available funding to the committee for review.

Grant applications will be evaluated by a committee using a blind review process. In its evaluation, the committee looks at equipment need and financial need. Committee members will assign points to an application based on pre-established criteria. Applicants that rank the highest will be offered grants, with the total number of awards determined by available funding.

The review criteria and point system are outlined below.

- Equipment Need – 50 possible points.
 - Considerations
 - Applicant does not currently own the requested item.
 - Applicant currently owns one of more of an item being requested.
 - Applicant is unable to acquire the equipment without a grant, cannot borrow the equipment on a consistent or need basis (due to geographical distance, availability, etc.) or the item represents a unique need for the applicant.
- Financial Need – 50 possible points
 - Considerations
 - Total budget of the applicant
 - Cost of the equipment is prohibitively expensive given the applicant's total budget.

For the current application cycle, the Committee has established the following items as priority items when evaluating equipment.

- Personal Infection Control Items (examples include anti-microbial wipes, boot covers, face shields, goggles, gowns, infection control kits, medical gloves, N-95 masks, UV and sanitizing equipment [vehicle use only])
- Fire Fighter Safety Equipment (examples include flashing beacon lights for personal wear, flashlights, PASS device, portable foam equipment, portable handheld radios and or charger stations, PPE, reflective vests, rescue pants, R.I.T. bag system, SCBA, SCBA cylinder tanks, SCBA cylinder fill stations, SCBA scrubber, thermal imaging cameras, turnout gear, turnout gear washers and dryers)
- EMS Emergency Response Equipment (examples include AED machines, ambulance based O2 bottles, backboards, cardiac monitors, cardiac “thumper,” mass casualty gear, oxygen regulators, portable handheld radios and/or chargers, portable suction units, power cots, stair chairs)
- Vehicle Rescue Equipment (examples include air lifting bags, extrication tools, extrication tool mounting brackets, forcible entry/overhaul tools, Halligan bars, portable generators, reciprocating saws and blades, K12 saws)

Requests for equipment not included in the categories described above may be made, but such requests will not be considered until applications that include the priority equipment described above have been considered.

Requests for Reconsideration

Applicants that are denied a grant may request that their grant application be reconsidered. Requests for reconsideration must be filed within 30 days of the postmark on the letter of denial and should be submitted to:

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal
Small Equipment Grant Program
1035 Stevenson Drive
Springfield, Illinois 62703

Grantee Responsibilities

The recipient of the grant, in addition to the requirements contained in the grant agreement, must agree to the following terms:

- Submission of a valid W-9 form. The name and legal status contained on the W-9 form must match IRS records associated with the FEIN submitted on the W-9 form.
- Grant recipients shall submit to OSFM an expenditure report, on a form supplied by OSFM, which shall be due not later than nine months following receipt of the grant. The expenditure report must be returned, including copies of all receipts for requested purchases with proof of a zero balance or a copy of your cancelled check. Unused funds are to be returned to OSFM within 45 days.
- Equipment purchased under this grant program will not be given to, granted to, transferred to, leased to, or sold to any person or entity that is not eligible to participate in the grant program as an applicant.
- Retain grant files and supporting documentation for the term of three years after the conclusion and final payment of the grant.
- Ensure that all procurement actions on new equipment are conducted in a manner that provides, to the maximum extent possible, open and free competition. In doing so, you must follow your established procurement processes when purchasing small equipment with the grant funds. If you do not have established procedures, you should obtain at least two quotes/bids for the small equipment you are procuring and document the process in your files.
- Recipients are also encouraged to take advantage of groups or bulk purchase programs.
- Continue to provide information, through established reporting channels, to NFIRS.
- Small Equipment Grant Program proceeds are to be returned if any other funding (State or Federal) is received for the same purchase and is not supplementing the overall primary purchase. For example: the intended purchase costs \$25,000 and the recipient receives grant approval (\$20,000) and a grant from the federal FIRE Act Program (\$5,000). No money needs to be returned. However, if the purchase costs \$25,000 and your department receives full grant approval and a FIRE Act Grant, then you must reimburse the Small Equipment Grant Program in the amount of the FIRE Act Grant. The refunded amount shall be at least equal to the amount of the additional funding.