The New England Association of Fire Chiefs (NEAFC) was awarded a Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant in September 2025 for

$3,376,399

The primary goal of this SAFER grant program is to increase the staffing levels for Volunteer/Combination Fire Departments across six States (Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont) to ensure timely, effective emergency response and the protection of property and citizens.



Or call: 855.VOL.FIRE

The NEAFC SAFER Grant consists of:

> New Member Costs

This SAFER program will help offset the onboarding costs of new recruits by offering reimbursement for the following:

- **Physicals:** NFPA 1582 compliant entry level physical up to $400 for each new recruit.
- **Firefighter Training:** First Responder, EMT, FF1, and FF2 training expenses (including travel) up to $2,500 for ***new and existing members***.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** A full set of structural or wildland PPE up to $4,125 for new recruits who have successfully passed an NFPA 1582 physical.

> Leadership Training

- *Leadership development workshops* for fire service leaders will be offered each year. Training topics include recruitment and retention, management skills, motivation techniques, and behavior health. Travel expenses for attendees are reimbursed.
- Fire service leaders will have the opportunity to attend FDIC International, VCOS - Symposium in the Sun, and/or NVFC's Recruitment & Retention Training Summit as part of the *Train-the-Trainer* program with the expectation of executing a group Recruitment & Retention training following each conference so training is provided to VFDs in all six States. Up to $2,500 reimbursement per conference per leader for attendance fees and travel expenses.

> Fire Service Association and/or NVFC Membership Dues

This grant program provides IAFC, NEAFC, State Fire Chiefs, State Volunteer Firefighters Association, and NVFC membership dues subsidies for departments who cannot afford to purchase membership.

> Recruitment Marketing

To assist with the recruitment of new members, the NEAFC will manage a multi-level *media marketing* campaign consisting of various tactics including digital ads, social paid advertising, radio, outdoor, event marketing, etc.

Print marketing will include the production of Recruitment Kits where fire departments can customize marketing materials such as banners, posters and handouts.

All marketing will direct interested candidates to VolunteerFirefighter.org where they can submit an application for review by fire service leaders in their State/region.

Period of Performance: 12/23/2025 - 12/22/2029

★ ★ ★ WHAT IS YOUR ROLE? ★ ★ ★

As a fire service leader, your role is significant in ensuring this SAFER grant program is optimized for success to ultimately aid with the recruitment and retention of Volunteer Firefighters throughout Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

You can help by doing the following:

1. **Become familiar with the many budget categories and opportunities available via this SAFER grant so your department can take advantage. We recommend reviewing the Administration Guide and all reimbursement forms.**
2. **Contact your SAFER Grant Manager to opt-in for E-Notify to receive volunteer candidate applications directly in your inbox!**
3. **Attend and provide feedback at Leadership/R&R Workshops.**
4. **Respond to all surveys conducted by NEAFC's SAFER Grant Manager.**

For more information, please visit

VOLUNTEERFIREFIGHTER.ORG | NEWENGLANDFIRECHIEFS.ORG

or contact Chris Barron - NEAFC SAFER Grant Manager - chris@volunteerfirefighter.org