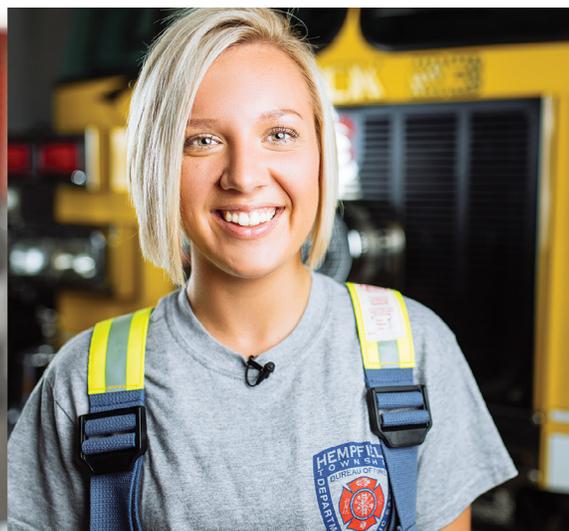


The Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs Foundation was awarded a Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant in September 2024 for

\$1,396,820.

The primary goal of the SAFER grant program is to increase the staffing levels across Rhode Island's Volunteer/Combination Fire Departments to ensure timely, effective emergency response and the protection of property and citizens.



The RIAFC Foundation SAFER Grant consists of:

> NEW MEMBER COSTS

RIAFC will help offset the onboarding costs of new recruits by offering reimbursement for the following:

- *Physicals*: NFPA 1582 compliant entry level physical up to \$500 for each new recruit.
- *Firefighter Training*: First Responder, EMT and FF1 training expenses (including travel) up to \$2,500 per new recruit.
- *Personal Protective Equipment*: A full set of structural or wildland PPE up to \$4,500 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 with a focus on recruiting women, minorities and younger generations. 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 statewide. Up to \$2,500 reimbursement per conference per leader for attendance fees and travel expenses.

> TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Volunteers serving a recognized Volunteer or Combination Fire Department in the State of Rhode Island are eligible to receive up to \$5,000 for tuition reimbursement for higher education (including books, lab fees, and student fees). Tuition will be reimbursed for coursework provided by an accredited college, trade, or technical school.

> FIRE SERVICE ASSOCIATION AND/OR NVFC MEMBERSHIP DUES

This grant program provides RIAFC and/or NVFC dues subsidies for departments who cannot afford to purchase membership.

> RECRUITMENT MARKETING

To assist with the recruitment of new members, the RIAFC Foundation 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 region.

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 Rhode Island. 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! You may also request candidate reporting to help track applications received in your County/State.
3. Attend and provide feedback at RIAFC Foundation's Leadership/R&R Workshops.
4. Respond to all surveys conducted by RIAFC Foundation's SAFER Grant Manager.

For more information, please visit

VOLUNTEERFIREFIGHTER.ORG | RIFIRECHIEFS.COM

or contact Aletia Flaherty - RIAFC SAFER Grant Manager

aletia@volunteerfirefighter.org

