
ROCK CREEK SAFER GRANT

Physicals, PPE, & Training Reimbursement

Administrative Guide



**Rock Creek VFD - Four Mile VFD - Crawford VFD - Hotchkiss VFD -
Palisade VFD - Upper Pine - Yampa VFD - Paonia VFD - Rocky Ford
VFD**

2023 SAFER Grant for Recruiting & Retaining
New Volunteer Emergency Responders
Dec. 22, 2024 – Dec. 21, 2028

Introduction

Rock Creek Volunteer Fire Department in Eagle County, Colorado was awarded \$1,312,470 through a 2023 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Department of Homeland Security. This funding is earmarked for a comprehensive program designed to address the pressing need for personal protective equipment (PPE), NFPA 1582 physicals, and training. The program's primary aim is to actively recruit and retain Volunteer Emergency Responders in rural Colorado areas, a response to an identified critical need expressed by the area's fire departments and emergency medical services providers.

Program Description

Part 1 - **Recruitment: Physicals/PPE**

One of the objectives of this program is to attract and recruit new Volunteer Emergency Responders starting from December 22, 2024. Any eligible Volunteer Emergency Responder recruited by Rock Creek VFD, Four Mile VFD, Crawford VFD, Hotchkiss VFD, Palisade VFD, Upper Pine VFD, Yampa VFD, Paonia VFD, and Rocky Ford VFD will have the opportunity to receive grant awards, which will support the recruitment of approximately 75 new Volunteer Emergency Responders over the course of a 4-year grant program. Additionally, they may be eligible for reimbursement of up to \$450 for their NFPA 1582 compliant physical.

For Volunteers accepted under this program, the sponsoring Department/Agency will be reimbursed for each newly recruited Volunteer's NFPA 1582 compliant physical upon receipt of a NFPA 1582 Sign-Off Form. Once each Volunteer in this program passes their physical and are enrolled in or have passed their firefighter training, and their Fire Chief produces proof for both to the Rock Creek SAFER Grant project manager, the department is then eligible for a reimbursement of up to \$3,750 towards the cost of SAFER eligible NFPA compliant turnouts (PPE).

Required documents and reporting in order of submission for Physicals & PPE:

1. Reimbursement Request Form
2. 1582 Physical Sign Off and invoice (up to \$450) for the physical referencing the Volunteer.
3. Invoices/receipts or "Cancelled Check" for PPE up to \$3,750 referencing the Volunteer.

Part 2- Volunteer Emergency Responders Training

The Rock Creek SAFER Grant has \$154,000.00 dedicated to training members of our 9 VFDs. Approved courses (up to \$1,100 each). Proof of enrollment in training courses, invoices, and proof of payment (cancelled check) must be provided with a Reimbursement Request Form to the SAFER Grant Program Manager.

Program Eligibility

The following is a list of program guidelines set forth in the SAFER grant narrative and must be adhered to by all participants:

1. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old.
2. Volunteers must remain active and in good standing with the Sponsoring Department/Agency.
3. Volunteers must be enrolled in or have completed their firefighter training within 12 months of becoming a volunteer firefighter.
4. The applicant's Chief or governing body must sign the Reimbursement Form to collect reimbursement for physical/training/PPE expenses.
5. Applications must meet the criteria guidelines to be considered for an award.
6. Failure to comply may result in ineligibility for future benefits under the grant.

Service and Education Commitment

The Rock Creek SAFER Grant program is a federally funded FEMA grant. This fact means that the accepted applicant MUST follow and adhere to requirements set forth in the grant award package. The grant was awarded to recruit and retain Volunteer Firefighters within the counties of the nine departments participating in this SAFER Grant.

For an accepted applicant to receive any reimbursement from this SAFER grant DHS has required the following stipulations:

- *Turnout gear is only for newly recruited volunteer members (New Recruits) who joined their department after 9/24/2024.*
- *Newly recruited members must obtain and pass the physical prior to requesting grant funds for the gear. Documentation of completed physicals will be required prior to funds being disbursed.*
- *The newly recruited member(s) must be enrolled in or have completed firefighter training within 12 months or by the end of the Period of Performance 12/21/2028– whichever comes first.*
- *All PPE must be delivered to the department by 12/1/2028.*

Program Contact:

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Rock Creek SAFER Grant Committee Members:

Brita Horn, Fire Chief, Rock Creek Volunteer Fire Department

Doug Fritz, Fire Chief, Hotchkiss Volunteer Fire Department

Carly Baker, Rock Creek SAFER Grant Manager

Greg Redden, Adapt Grant Management

Brandy McNeill, Volunteer Firefighter Representative, Palisade Fire Department

The SAFER Committee has the right to rule on any conflicts and to revise these SOPs to meet the terms and budget of the SAFER grant.

IMPORTANT: This is a reimbursement program. All major requirements must be met before reimbursement can be made. The grant performance period ends 12/21/2028. We must disburse all reimbursement funds by this date.

Definition of Volunteer Firefighter-An amount not exceeding 20 percent of the total compensation that the employer would pay to employ a full-time firefighter (would be deemed a “nominal fee,” and therefore would not endanger the firefighter’s volunteer status. Fire departments can apply the 20 percent rule to evaluate whether a fee paid to volunteer firefighters is a nominal amount based on market information, including: • Compensation paid to a full-time firefighter on the fire department’s payroll • Information from neighboring jurisdictions, the state or the nation (including data from DOL’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov

**Receipt of grant monies in either capacity may have tax consequences*
Please consult your tax advisor PRIOR to participation in this program.*