

# WestCoFire3 SAFER Grant

Physicals, Training and PPE Reimbursement  
for Volunteer Emergency Responders

## Administrative Guide



Hosted by Forbes Road VFD

SAFER Grant for Recruiting New Volunteer Emergency Responders

12/22/2024- 12/21/2028

The Westmoreland County Fire (WestCoFire) PPE, physicals & training award program was developed to recruit and retain volunteers in response to a critical need identified by our county's volunteer fire departments and emergency medical services providers. The main goal is to increase from 1,120 VFFs to 1,646 VFFs over the 4-year POP. All funds earmarked for this program shall be maintained to ensure available funding for department participants through the conclusion of this program.

#### Program Description

#### **Recruitment: Physicals/PPE**

One of the objectives of this program is to attract and recruit new volunteer emergency responders to the Westmoreland County fire service. Westmoreland County will offer grant awards for approximately 80 newly recruited volunteer emergency responders throughout the 4-year grant program to field the costs of physicals and equipment.

Each eligible volunteer emergency responder recruited after September 23, 2024 who is selected by the Grant Committee for this award, may receive reimbursement for their NFPA 1582 compliant physical and PPE. The volunteer must commit to membership at a Westmoreland County volunteer or combination fire department for at least 24 months.

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

1. WestCoFire3 Reimbursement Request Form
2. "Fit for Duty" Sign Off and invoice for the physical referencing the volunteer. \$516 is a set negotiated rate with [Mobile Health Services](#). Call to book your appointment. You may also use your personal physician and submit for costs up to the maximum allowable amount of \$800.
3. Invoices & receipts for PPE up to \$3,725 referencing the volunteer.
4. Proof of enrollment in or certificate of completion in firefighter training.

Each department is allowed 1 physical and 1 set of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Should a department wish to apply for an additional set, they will be placed on a waiting list. Failure to submit a request for Physical/PPE reimbursement by June 2028 may result in forfeiture of their allocation. If a department fails to utilize the grant funds, departments on the waiting list will be informed, and their requests will be processed in the order they were received.

**Retention: Training**

In effort is to increase the number of well-trained Volunteer Firefighters that respond to emergencies in Westmoreland County, PA. The WestCoFire Grant Committee will reimburse Essentials, FF1 and FF2 training expenses including travel to attend training and meals in exchange for a 2-year commitment to a recognized volunteer fire department in Westmoreland County. We will reimburse either the individual or the department expenses incurred up to \$1,000.00 from 12/22/2024- 12/21/2008. 30 Volunteers per year will qualify.

**Required documents and reporting in order of submission for Training:**

1. WestCoFire Training Reimbursement Request Form
2. Invoices & receipts for classes.
3. Invoices/receipts for hotel (GSA rate)
4. Include a round-trip map for mileage (GSA rate)
5. Certificate of completion in firefighter training

**Program Eligibility**

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

1. Provide proof of membership to a Westmoreland County volunteer or combination fire department or emergency services agency.
2. Newly recruited volunteers must be at least 18 years old.
3. Volunteers must remain active and in good standing with the Sponsoring Department/Agency.
4. Volunteers must commit to completing their firefighter training within 24 months of becoming a volunteer.
5. Applicant's Chief/Commissioner/Director must sign the Reimbursement Form to collect reimbursement for physical/training/PPE expenses.
6. Applications must meet criteria guidelines to be considered for an award.

**Award Selection Criteria****General Eligibility:**

The WestCoFire Advisory Committee will review all applications and documents to approve or decline award eligibility. Being accepted into membership of the sponsoring department does not guarantee the volunteer will be awarded a scholarship under the WestCoFire3 grant program; satisfying these criteria simply makes them eligible for an award.

March 2025

**Leadership Development Train-the-Trainer**

We will send 20 selected fire service leaders to 1 of the following three conferences each year:

- FDIC International
- VCOS- Symposium in the Sun
- NVFC's R&R Leadership Conference

The selected WestCoFire3 fire service leaders who attend each conference will be responsible for organizing and executing a group Retention & Recruitment training for our fire service leaders from all WestCoFire3 stations.

20 Leaders up to \$2,000 each for travel and conference registration.

**Program Contacts:**

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**WestCoFire Advisory Committee Members:**

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**Physical**

Mobile Health Services    412-374-2800    [info@mobilehealthservices.org](mailto:info@mobilehealthservices.org)  
<https://www.mobilehealthservices.org/>

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 disperse all reimbursement funds by this date.

*\*All applicable local, state or federal laws and regulations shall supersede the procedures and conditions outlined in this administrative guide. These guidelines are subject to change without notice.*

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