

STATEMENTS OF POLICY

Title 4—ADMINISTRATION

PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

[4 PA. CODE CH. 114]

Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (Agency) has adopted a statement of policy regarding the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program to read as set forth in Annex A. This program provides grants to improve and enhance the capabilities of volunteer fire companies and ambulance services to provide either firefighting, ambulance or rescue services to the citizens of this Commonwealth under the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Act (Act 66 of 2000).

In compliance with Act 66 of 2000, the Agency is required to publish program guidelines, schedules and application procedures in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and *Pennsylvania Code* within 30 days of the effective date of Act 66 of 2000. The guidelines are needed for the administration of the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program. For this reason, the Agency announces the availability of grant funds and the following guidelines, schedules and application procedures that eligible applicants must follow to apply for those grant funds.

Fiscal Impact

Appropriation of \$25 million provided in Act 21A of 2000.

Paperwork Requirements

The guidelines will require applicants to complete the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Application and Grant Agreement (Form VFCVASGPL-1).

Effective Date

The guidelines contained in this statement of policy shall take effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

DAVID L. SMITH,
Director

Fiscal Note: 30-54. No fiscal impact; (8) recommends adoption. Twenty-five million dollars was appropriated in Act 21A of 2000 for this grant program. There will be no additional costs.

(Editor's Note: The regulations of the Agency, 4 Pa. Code, are amended by adding §§ 114.1—114.8 to read as set forth in Annex A.)

Annex A

TITLE 4. ADMINISTRATION

PART V. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

CHAPTER 114. VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY AND VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE SERVICE GRANT PROGRAM—STATEMENT OF POLICY

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§ 114.1. Introduction.

(a) The VFCVASGP provides one-time grants to improve and enhance the capabilities of volunteer fire companies and volunteer ambulance services throughout this Commonwealth to provide firefighting, ambulance and rescue capabilities. VFCVASGP funds may be used for projects that are in accordance with the act. Eligible projects are defined in § 114.3(a)(2) and (b)(2) (relating to eligibility).

(b) Assistance from the VFCVASGP is in the form of one-time grants from the Commonwealth to eligible volunteer fire companies and volunteer ambulance services for projects which, in the judgment of the Agency, comply with the act, are in accordance with the program guidelines in this chapter and meet all Volunteer Fire Company-Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Application criteria found in the application.

(c) Grants will be at least \$2,500 and not more than \$15,000 per applicant volunteer fire company or \$10,000 per applicant volunteer ambulance service, except as noted in § 114.3(a)(3).

(d) Applicants should be aware that the VFCVASGP will create a large pool of applications for a limited appropriation from the General Assembly. As such, it is possible that not every application can be fully funded, in which case grants will be awarded on a pro rata basis.

(e) VFCVASGP expenditures will be charged to the State fiscal year July 1, 2000, to June 30, 2001.

§ 114.2. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Act—The Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Act (35 P. S. §§ ____).

Agency—The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

Application—The Volunteer Fire Company-Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program Application.

Basic life support services—The prehospital or interhospital emergency medical care and management of illness or injury performed by specially trained and certified or licensed personnel.

Commissioner—The State Fire Commissioner.

Facility—

(i) A structure or portion thereof intended for the purpose of storage or protection of firefighting apparatus, ambulances or rescue vehicles and related equipment and gear.

(ii) The term does not include meeting halls, social halls, social rooms, lounges or any other facility not directly related to firefighting or the furnishing of ambulance or rescue services.

Final report—The report to be filed as provided in § 114.6 (relating to procedures) by the volunteer fire company or volunteer ambulance services detailing the expenditure of the funds granted.

Grant program—The Volunteer Fire Company Grant Program established in section 301 of the act (35 P. S. § ____ and the Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program established in section 501 of the act (35 P. S. § ____).

Invalid coach—

(i) A vehicle which is primarily maintained, operated and intended to be used for routine transport of persons who are convalescent or otherwise nonambulatory and do not ordinarily require emergency medical treatment while in transit.

(ii) These vehicles are not to be considered ambulance or emergency medical service vehicles.

VFCVASGP—The Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program.

Volunteer ambulance service—

(i) Any nonprofit chartered corporation, association or organization located in this Commonwealth, not associated or affiliated with any volunteer fire company or hospital and which is regularly engaged in the provision of emergency medical services, including basic life support or advanced life support services and the transportation of patients.

(ii) The term does not include any corporation, association or organization that is primarily engaged in the operation of invalid coaches which are intended for the routine transport of persons who are convalescent or otherwise nonambulatory and do not ordinarily require emergency medical treatment while in transit.

Volunteer fire company—A nonprofit chartered corporation, association or organization located in this Commonwealth which provides fire protection services and which may offer other voluntary emergency services within this Commonwealth. Voluntary emergency services provided by a volunteer fire company may include voluntary ambulance and voluntary rescue services.

§ 114.3. Eligibility.

(a) *Volunteer Fire Company Grant.*

(1) *Eligible applicants.* A volunteer fire company as defined in § 114.2 (relating to definitions) is an eligible applicant. However, to receive grant funds under this act a volunteer fire company shall have actively responded to one or more fire emergencies since July 1, 1999.

(2) *Eligible projects.* VFCVASGP funds may be used for projects that are consistent with the act. Eligible projects shall improve and enhance the capabilities of the volunteer fire company to provide firefighting, ambulance or rescue services. Eligible projects include:

(i) Construction or renovation, or both, of the fire company's primary structure facility and purchase or repair of fixtures and furnishings necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the company to provide fire, ambulance and rescue services.

(ii) Purchase of firefighting, ambulance or rescue equipment or repair thereof.

(iii) Debt reduction associated with already completed projects of subparagraph (i) or (ii).

(3) *Consolidation by fire companies.* When two or more fire companies have consolidated their use of equipment, firefighters and services between July 1, 1998 and June 13, 2000, the consolidated entity may be deemed eligible to receive a one-time grant not to exceed the amount of

the combined total for which the individual companies would have been eligible had they not consolidated.

(b) *Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant.*

(1) *Eligible applicants.* A volunteer ambulance service as defined in § 114.2 is an eligible applicant.

(2) *Eligible projects.* VFCVASGP funds may be used for projects that are consistent with the act. Eligible projects shall improve and enhance the capability of the ambulance service to provide ambulance, emergency medical, basic life support or advanced life support services. Eligible projects include:

(i) Construction or renovation, or both, of the volunteer ambulance service's primary structure facility and purchase or repair of fixtures and furnishings necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the company to provide fire, ambulance and rescue services.

(ii) Purchase of ambulance or rescue equipment or repair thereof.

(iii) Debt reduction associated with already completed projects of subparagraph (i) or (ii).

§ 114.4. Program requirements and instructions.

(a) The following requirements apply to VFCVASGP:

(1) Project applications shall be submitted using the Volunteer Fire Company-Volunteer Ambulance Service Application and Grant Agreement. The Agency will provide applications for grants under this act to every volunteer fire company and every volunteer ambulance service in this Commonwealth. Applications will also be available from the Office of the State Fire Commissioner and on the Agency's website. Addresses and phone numbers are listed in § 114.5 (relating to application submission and approval procedure).

(2) The Agency reserves the right to:

(i) Request additional information regarding an organization's eligibility.

(ii) Request additional information regarding proposed use of funds.

(iii) Verify non-Agency funding sources.

(iv) Require explanation or revision of the project's budget.

(v) Require clarification of the project's narrative.

(3) Incomplete applications may be rejected. An applicant shall follow the detailed instructions for completing the Volunteer Fire Company-Volunteer Ambulance Service Application and Grant Agreement when applying for a VFCVASGP grant, especially with regards to the completion of Appendix A, Project Narrative and Budget.

(4) The project narrative shall provide a detailed and comprehensive description of the project and include:

(i) Problems to be addressed.

(ii) Description of the projects.

(iii) Benefits to be realized from the project.

(5) The project budget shall include a breakdown of all funds to be used for the project, a list of all budget/purchase items for the project, and accompanying documentation to support the itemized budget/purchase items. Debt reduction projects must list the name, address and phone number of the bank or other financial institution or organization that loaned the project moneys to the applicant.

§ 114.5. Application submission and approval procedure.

(a) The Agency will mail VFCVASGP applications to volunteer fire companies and volunteer ambulance services throughout this Commonwealth on or before July 7, 2000. The application will also be available by calling the Office of the State Fire Commissioner, or on the Agency's website www.pema.state.pa.us. Applications should be submitted to the following address: Office of the State Fire Commissioner, 2605 Interstate Drive, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9364, (800) 670-3473.

(b) A volunteer fire company or a volunteer ambulance service seeking a grant under this program shall submit a completed application to the Agency on or before September 1, 2000.

(c) The Agency will act to approve or disapprove the application by October 4, 2000. Applications received by the Agency on or before September 1, 2000, which have not been approved or disapproved by the Agency by October 4, 2000, will be deemed approved, subject to the provisions of sections 303(b)(2) and 503(b)(2) of the act (35 P. S. §§ ____ and ____).

(d) Applications submitted after the September 1, 2000, deadline shall be accepted by the Agency and grants may be awarded, at the discretion of the Agency, from the reserve grant fund set aside by section 504 of the act (35 P. S. § ____).

(e) The Agency shall reserve an amount not to exceed 3% of the funds appropriated for the VFCVASGP for the purpose of awarding grants to volunteer fire companies and volunteer ambulance services that submit applications after September 1, 2000, that would have otherwise been eligible for and been awarded a grant under the grant program. A volunteer fire company or volunteer ambulance service may not receive a grant from reserve funds in an amount greater than the amount that it would have received had it applied in a timely manner. Applicants may not apply more than once during the 2000-2001 Fiscal Year.

(f) The Agency reserves the right to reject, without notification, applications received after October 31, 2000.

§ 114.6. Procedures.

(a) VFCVASGP grant award notifications will be made by letter.

(b) The applicant shall maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project. The Agency will have free access to these records, including invoices of material and services, and other relative data and records, as well as the right to inspect all project work. The applicant shall furnish upon request of the Agency all data, reports, contracts, documents and other information relevant to the project.

(c) The applicant shall, upon completion of the project but no later than September 3, 2001, file a final report with the Agency.

(1) The final report shall provide a detailed description and accounting of all expenditures made using grant award funds.

(2) Final reports detailing expenditures for construction or renovation, or both, or purchase or repair, or both, of fixtures and furnishings or purchase of firefighting, ambulance or rescue equipment or repair thereof shall have attached copies of all invoices or other payment related documents necessary to report the expenditures made.

(3) Final reports detailing debt reduction shall include evidence from the lender that the funds were applied to the debt reduction.

(4) Any grant funds not expended by the applicant for the project shall be returned to the Agency prior to or with the filing of the final report.

(5) Failure to file a final report will be grounds for the Agency to seek the return of all grant funds awarded.

§ 114.7. Program limitations.

(a) This section identifies program limitations that may result from the misuse of the grant funds.

(b) An applicant may not make or authorize any substantial change in an approved project without first obtaining consent of the Agency in writing.

(c) The applicant shall agree that noncompliance with the conditions of this grant shall be grounds for the recapture of funds provided to the applicant. If the applicant fails to refund the moneys, the Commonwealth, in addition to any rights or remedies it may have at law or in equity, reserves the right to offset the amount due against any existing or future sums of money owed the applicant by any Commonwealth agency or department, including the Agency.

(d) The Agency, or its authorized representative, will have access to the records of the applicant for the purpose of auditing financial transactions, determination of compliance with grant terms, and an evaluation of project performance. The applicant shall maintain a separate and segregated project account for all funds received under this grant.

(c) The applicant agrees to retain all cost supporting records and documentation for 3 years from the date that it receives its final grant payment from the Agency.

§ 114.8. Contact information.

Applicant inquires should be directed to:

Office of the State Fire Commissioner
2605 Interstate Drive
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9364
Toll free (800) 670-3473
E-mail—fire@state.pa.us

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