



Volunteer Fire Company, Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program

2003 GRANT PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

The Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Act authorizes grants:
To the following eligible organizations:

- Volunteer Fire Company - A nonprofit chartered corporation, association or organization located in this Commonwealth which provides fire protection or rescue 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. (Grant awards shall be not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$15,000 for each eligible Volunteer fire company.)
- Volunteer Ambulance Service - Any nonprofit chartered corporation, association or organization located in this Commonwealth, which is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and is not associated or affiliated with any 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 within this Commonwealth. (Grant awards shall be not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$10,000 per volunteer ambulance service.)

For the following purposes:

1. Construction and/or renovation of the fire company's or ambulance services 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.
2. Repair of firefighting, ambulance or rescue equipment or purchase thereof.
3. Debt reduction associated with (1) or (2) above.
4. Training and certification of members.

IMAGINE PA

Since the last grant program, the Commonwealth has introduced *Imagine PA*, a system intended to streamline and standardize key business processes by incorporating state-of-the art technology. In order to receive grant funds, volunteer fire companies and ambulance services applying for grants this year will have to establish a vendor account as part of *Imagine PA*. This vendor registration process is a one-time requirement which will establish a vendor number that the organization will use in its future financial transactions with any Commonwealth agency.

Making sure that your organization has an *Imagine PA* vendor number is the first step in this year's grant application process. **Grant funds cannot be dispersed unless the grant applicant has an *Imagine PA* vendor number.**

We've enclosed an Internal Revenue Service W-9 form to use to facilitate the process of applying for or verifying your organization's vendor number. Please complete the enclosed W-9 form using:

- **The organization's charter name**
- **The organization's official address**
- **The Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned to the organization by the IRS.**

The completed W-9 form must be signed by an **authorized company officer** and returned to: [VFCVASGP, Office of The State Fire Commissioner, 2605 Interstate Drive, Harrisburg, Pa 17110](#), **no later than September 30, 2003.**



ONLINE GRANT PROCESS

The second step in the application process will involve gathering additional applicant information and verifying that applicant projects are eligible for grant funding.

To facilitate this second step, the OSFC is developing an online Web based process to gather additional information and verify project eligibility. This online process will be available no later than October 31, 2003. It will allow applicants to enter their grant project information online and receive verification that the information is complete, valid and has been entered into the grant system. It will also provide the applicant with ongoing information about the grant process.

The OSFC will provide written information to every volunteer fire company and ambulance service regarding the grant program guidelines and the availability of the online applicant information/project eligibility verification process no later than October 15, 2003.

While paper submissions are discouraged, they will be accepted. At the same time the availability of the online grant process is announced, the OSFC will provide information on how to obtain a paper form to submit the required applicant and project eligibility information. The OSFC will not be held responsible for lost or transposed information from paper submission.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2003 VFCVASGP

- September 30, 2003 – Return your completed/signed IRS W-9 to the OSFC to apply for/verify your *Imagine PA* vendor number (required to process grant funds).
- October 15, 2003 – The OSFC will send written instructions for accessing the online applicant information/project eligibility verification process, as well as for obtaining a printed form for submitting the information required for that process.
- October 31, 2003 - The online applicant information/project eligibility verification process (as well as paper forms) will be available.
- 4:00PM, Eastern Standard Time, December 31, 2003 – Completed grant applications must be received at the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.
- May 1, 2004 – Applications which have not been approved or disapproved by the agency shall be deemed approved.

Things to consider between now and October 31st to prepare for the grant application process:

- Determine what your grant project will be.
- Gather the information you will need to effectively describe your project and its cost.
- If your organization does not currently have access to a computer and/or the internet:
 - Consider purchasing or leasing a computer and internet access.
 - Identify a member that has a computer with internet access to do the online work.
 - Look for an individual/organization that has an older computer they will donate to you.
 - Look for an individual/organization that will allow you use a computer/internet connection.
 - Ask your local government to allow you to use a computer/internet connection.

Note: It will be necessary for applicants to be able to receive email messages from the OSFC throughout the application process. Individuals or organizations that agree to allow you to use a computer and internet connection/address should also be willing to notify you of incoming email regarding your grant application.

WATCH THE OSFC WEBSITE FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION UPDATES.

www.osfc.state.pa.us