



FACT SHEET of Changes to SAFER Grant Program

What is SAFER?

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program was created to provide funding to fire departments to hire additional fire fighters to help ensure compliance with staffing, response and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

What Has Changed?

The rules governing the use of SAFER funds have changed. The IAFF wrote and lobbied to also make SAFER grants available to rehire fire fighters who have been laid off and bring back positions that are not being filled as a result of the current financial crisis. In addition, SAFER grants apply to municipalities that issue layoff notices before the close of the grant application period on September 17, 2010, effective within 90 days of the close of the application period. Grants will be expedited in order to deliver funds as soon as possible.

For a position to be eligible for funding under the rehiring initiative, it must have been the object of a layoff action that was effected between January 1, 2008 and September 17, 2010. The new rules will NOT require your jurisdiction to match any of the federal funds or to provide maintenance funding for the positions.

Grantees that are unable to back-fill positions that were vacated due to documentable economic hardship may petition the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for a waiver of staffing maintenance requirements. In order to qualify, the economic hardship must affect the entire public safety sector in your jurisdiction, and not only the fire department. Waivers will not be granted for layoffs.

Who Can Apply?

Management must file for the grants, but the IAFF is available to assist your community in applying for the grants.

The FY 2010 SAFER award conditions do not apply to previous SAFER grants, nor will they remain in effect beyond 2010.

When Can You Apply?

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will begin accepting applications for Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants beginning August 16, 2010. The application period will close September 17, 2010.

Applications for \$420 million in SAFER funding are available through the Assistance to Firefighters (FIRE Act) web site at www.firegrantsupport.com, along with program guidance.

For additional information or assistance, contact Jennifer Stewart at (202) 824-8631 or grants@iaff.org.