



IAFF Peer Support Training Program Grant Guidance

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Training and Equipment is a great opportunity to apply for grant funding to bring the **IAFF Peer Support Training Program** to your department and fund **short-term clinical training/consultation** to build and reinforce the peer program during a critical phase of its growth.

FEMA continues to emphasize the importance of training and fire fighter health and safety in the AFG grants program and has determined the highest benefit is derived from instructor-led training that is hands-on and leads to a national or state certification. Therefore, applications focused on national or state certification training, including train-the-trainer initiatives, receive a higher competitive rating. Instructor-led training that requires students to demonstrate academic competence and/or practical proficiency for certification will receive a high competitive rating. Proposed training projects that will receive highest consideration (and have a competitive edge) are those that benefit the highest percentage of applicable personnel within a fire department or are open to other departments in the region.

To learn more about the AFG application process click [here](#). You will find several resources to assist you in preparing your application, including:

- AFG Application Information Get Ready Guide
- AFG Narrative Get Ready Guide
- AFG Program Guidance

If FEMA has not yet posted the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), application link, or start dates of the application, you can sign up to [receive email alerts](#) when FEMA releases that information.

Eligible uses of training funds include but are not limited to:

- Tuition, exam/course fees, and certifications/certification expenses

- Purchase of training curricula and training services (instructors)
- Overtime expenses paid to career fire fighters to attend training or to cover colleagues who are in training
- Training/consulting fees to subject matter/clinical experts

Ineligible Activities:

- Construction of facilities
- Site preparation to accommodate any training activity or facility
- Purchase or lease of real estate
- Remodeling not directly related to grant activities

Training is categorized as a High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L) funding priority; within each category (H, M, L), listed activities have an equal funding priority. Fire fighter safety and survival is categorized as a HIGH priority.

Other Scoring Considerations:

- Multiple departments trained
- Number of firefighters trained
- Instructor-led vs. media-led
- Population served
- Call volume

Once you access the online application for the AFG program, you will begin by completing the first six sections of the applications with demographic information specific to your department. ***It is recommended that you review these sections as soon as possible so you can begin to gather the required information.*** It is also helpful to first type responses in a Word document outside of this application and then copy and paste into the written field. ***Otherwise, the AFG application can time out and you will lose what you have written.***

Sections 1-3: Contains Department Specific Information.

Section 4: (Applicant Characteristics I) includes a section where you must describe your organization and/or community that you serve. There is a 4,000 character limit.

Discuss:

- Date department was founded
- Number of residents served

- Number of square miles protected
- Number and types of responses
- Describe the area you protect
- Critical infrastructure protected by your organization
- Firefighter I and II training and certification – Remember, this is a high priority for the AFG program. If your organization has not trained all fire fighters to this level and you are not requesting funds to do so, you will need to discuss your plans for doing so.
- What are your community’s greatest needs, risks and challenges and how does your request address these.
 - What is your community’s risk for critical incidents and associated post-traumatic stress for first responders?
 - What is the availability of behavioral health services for the whole community, including fire fighters and their families?
 - What are some statistics related to behavioral health for your community? (For stats, see:
 - <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/node/20>
 - <http://www.suicidology.org/resources/facts-statistics>
 - http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html

Section 5: (Applicant Characteristics II) includes a section where you must describe your organization's need for Federal financial assistance. There is a 4,000 character limit. Your answer should address why your organization has been unable to fund your request locally, including such details as:

- What are your funding challenges?
- Provide attempts to acquire funding from other sources
- Describe operating budget limitations
- Economic times, explain budget cuts, staffing reductions etc.
- What does the future look like? Are revenues likely to increase or decrease and why
- List primary sources of revenue, average annual operating budget over the last several years, how much is dedicated to personnel costs etc.
- What are the consequences for not receiving the award?
- Will you be able to provide this critical training without this award?
- Will this place fire fighter lives at risk?
 - What are the risks of untreated PTSD and other behavioral health disorders?

Section 6: Department Specific Call Volume Data

Section 7: (Request for Information) is where you begin to complete the information specific to the IAFF Peer Support Training Program.

- Select a program for which you are applying – Operations and Safety
- Will this grant benefit more than one organization? Before you make your selection here, remember - Proposed training projects that benefit the highest percentage of applicable personnel within a fire department, or that will be open to other departments in the region receive a high competitive advantage.
- Describe the number of personnel that will receive this training and the population served.
 - 30 staff varying ranks and positions will go through the initial training
 - 100% of the department will receive peer support training and services
- Discuss the economic savings and the cost benefit of providing this training on a regional versus local basis.

Section 8: (Request Details) is where you begin to enter the budget information. You must first select the “view details” hyperlink across from the “training activity” and then select “Add fire dept/fire district training program.”

1. You should be answering yes question #1 relating to active FF’s training to FFII or equivalent.
2. Question 2: Select Firefighter Safety and Survival Training from the drop down menu. You will have 500 characters to further describe the type of training you selected. Discuss how training is comprised of the following concepts:

- Instructor-led
 - Instructors are from the fire service and experienced with peer support programs
- Requires students to demonstrate skills with both academic competence as well as practical proficiencies
 - Must complete IAFF Behavioral Health Awareness Course (online course which includes knowledge checks) prior to the training.
 - Two-day training includes activities that help participants become proficient in skills.
 - Continued clinical training/consultation enables monitoring and improvement of peers’ skills
- Train-the-trainer program
 - After the training, IAFF Trained Peer Supporters are qualified to mentor new recruits and provide behavioral health and stigma prevention education to their department.

- Reflects best practice
 - Peer support is demonstrated to be an effective method to provide support in occupational groups.
 - Funded by a FIRE Act grant, curriculum was developed by subject matter experts from the behavioral health field, the IAFF, and well-established peer programs in the fire services.
 - Is a hands-on training and includes role plays of behavioral health situations

 - Applies the lessons learned by IAFF support teams deployed following 9/11, Katrina, Boston Marathon attack and other traumatic events during the last fifteen years.

 - Encourages clinically-sound and a sustainable peer program through continued clinical training/consultation by qualified behavioral health professional
3. Generally this program can be best categorized as: - select- Training that is tested and results in a nationally sanctioned certification
- Fire personnel will be certified as IAFF Trained Peer Supporters by the International Association of Fire Fighters.
4. What percentage of applicable personnel will be trained by this program? – Remember, proposed training projects that benefit the highest percentage of applicable personnel within a fire department or that will be open to other departments in the region receive a high competitive advantage.
- 100% of the department will receive peers support training and services
5. Generally, the training program provided under this grant: - Select - Will bring your department into compliance with recommended applicable NFPA or other standards. You will have 500 characters to explain your answer on how the Peer Support Training program relates to federal regulations and national standards:
- Addresses two of sixteen Fire Fighter Life Safety Initiatives: (1) Cultural Change, and (13) Psychological Support
 - Reflects the National Fire Protection Association consensus standards
 - NFPA 1500, Chapters 11 – 12
 - 2018 edition of NFPA 1500 will specify key role of peer support programs
 - Fulfills Federal recommendations for employee training that covers conflict resolution, stress management, managing anger and relaxation techniques.

- DOL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Safety and Health training for employees
- CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's prevention strategy to minimize risk of workplace violence.
- Addresses several of the 32 core capabilities identified by FEMA in the National Preparedness Goal
 - Community Resilience
 - Long-Term Vulnerability Reduction
 - Risk and Disaster Resiliency Assessment
- Adheres to the guidelines, competencies and standards for general peer programs set forth by:
 - International Association of Peer Supporters
 - <https://inaops.org/national-standards/>
 - Federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration Core Competencies for Peer Workers in Behavioral Health Services
http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/core-competencies.pdf

6. Will this training enhance your ability to perform mutual aid? – Select yes. You will have 500 characters to explain your answer.

- How does this training enhance your ability to perform mutual aid?
 - Peer teams can be deployed to help other departments following a traumatic event.
- Does it standardize training procedures for peer support programs?
 - Standardized curriculum and delivery of training
 - Highlights best practice SOPs
- Why is it important for all members to follow the same training for peer support programs?
 - Clarifies and limits the roles/scope of Trained Peer Supporter (vs. behavioral health professionals).
 - Ensures quality services and uniform expectations when peer teams are deployed following critical incidents.
- Are there other trainings for peer support that enhance mutual response capabilities and will this training do the same?
 - The IAFF Peer Support Training is specific to the fire service; developed by behavioral health experts and experienced peers; delivered by peers; and endorsed by the IAFF, the national body representing 300,000 career fire fighters.

- No other peer support training programs meet all of these important criteria.

7. Will this training include members from other departments? – Remember - proposed training projects that benefit the highest percentage of applicable personnel within a fire department or that will be open to other departments in the region receive a high competitive advantage.

8. Will this training be: Select instructor-led

This will now bring you to a new screen “Add Budget Item”

1.) For “item” select “Specialized Training”

Please provide the following information about the training you want funded.

Item – Other programs & Contract Instruction. You will have 500 characters to explain your selection. Discuss:

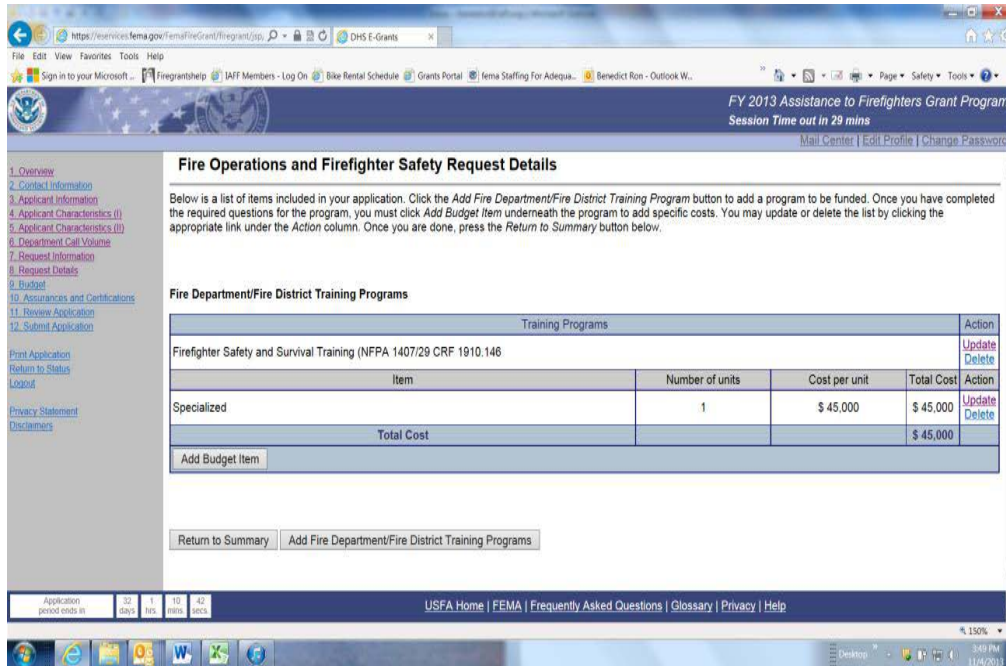
- Instructor-led
- Train-the-Trainer format to increase the number of personnel trained while minimizing cost
- Train all ranks within the department
- Includes classroom and hands-on instruction, all instructor and resource materials.
- Continued expert clinical supervision/training of peers facilitates:
 - High-quality and appropriate-level of peer services
 - Improved response to behavioral health emergencies
 - Guidance and support that minimizes behavioral health emergencies
 - Additional skill development, particularly during critical phase of peer program development
 - Enhanced use of community resources.

2.) Select Object Class: Contractual

3.) Number of units: - You have a couple of different options here.

- If you plan to host a class of the maximum number of 30 students (all members of your department) enter the number 30 for the number of units and \$250 as the cost per unit for item number 3.
- If you plan to host a class of the maximum number of students, but some members will come from other departments, enter the number 1 for the number of units and \$7,500 as the cost per unit for item number 3.

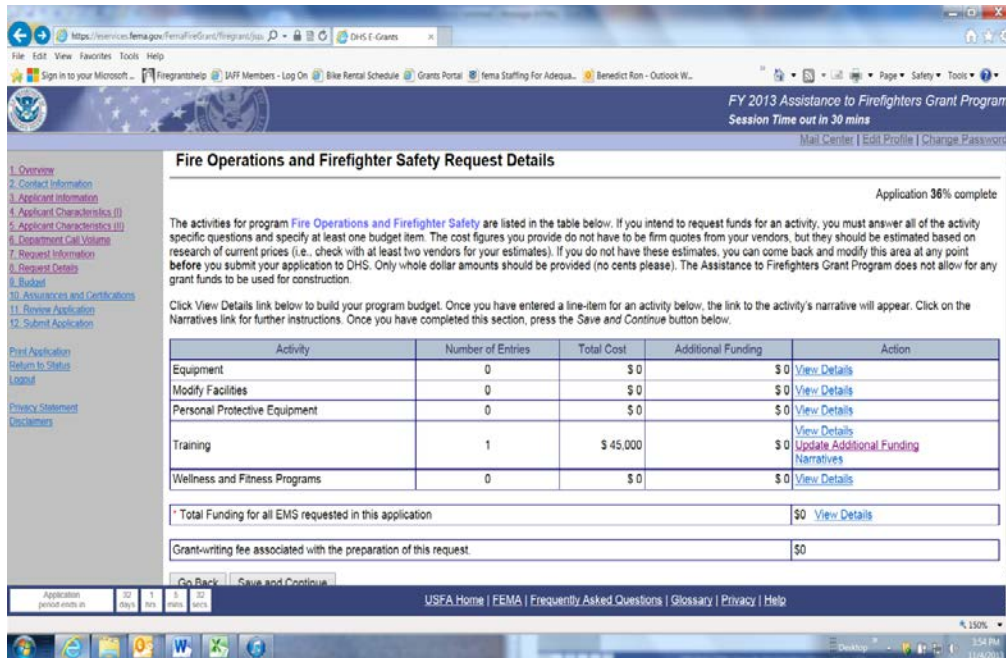
Press save and continue. You will now be directed to this screen:



Add “Continued Clinical Training/Consultation” as additional training program.

- For “Continued clinical training/consultation,” enter the estimated number of hours of consultation (e.g., 52 hours for weekly training/consultation) and the consultant’s hourly rate (e.g., \$50/hour) as the cost per unit for item number 3.

Once you are done adding additional training programs, select “Return to Summary” and see this screen:



Here you will enter additional information related to the cost of delivering this training under the “Update Additional Funding” hyperlink. Eligible uses of training funds include, but are not limited to:

- Tuition, exam/course fees, and certifications/certification expenses
- Purchase of training curricula and training services (instructors)
- Overtime expenses paid to career fire fighters to attend training or to cover colleagues who are in training
- Cost for qualified behavioral health experts to provide continued clinical training/consultation

Under the Training category you can add the cost of personnel attending the training and/or other costs to conduct this training. You will have 4,000 characters to explain your request. The more detail you provide on the requested funds, the better understanding the reviewers will have of your request.

- If you are requesting the cost for personnel to attend training or to cover colleagues who are in training, be sure to include the number of personnel x the number of hours x the hourly rate. Explain the need for the personnel costs which may include the need to maintain minimum response capabilities during the scheduled training.
- For continued clinical training/consultation, include specifics about the anticipated training/consultation schedule (e.g., weekly consultation, monthly trainings). Estimate the expected number of hours of continued training to be delivered x the hourly rate of the qualified behavioral health professional. Explain the need for continued peer

training and the necessity of using a qualified and licensed behavioral health professional.

Once this is completed, select save and continue.

You will now return to this screen:

Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety Request Details

Application 36% complete

The activities for program **Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety** are listed in the table below. If you intend to request funds for an activity, you must answer all of the activity specific questions and specify at least one budget item. The cost figures you provide do not have to be firm quotes from your vendors, but they should be estimated based on research of current prices (i.e., check with at least two vendors for your estimates). If you do not have these estimates, you can come back and modify this area at any point before you submit your application to DHS. Only whole dollar amounts should be provided (no cents please). The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program does not allow for any grant funds to be used for construction.

Click [View Details](#) link below to build your program budget. Once you have entered a line-item for an activity below, the link to the activity's narrative will appear. Click on the [Narratives](#) link for further instructions. Once you have completed this section, press the [Save and Continue](#) button below.

Activity	Number of Entries	Total Cost	Additional Funding	Action
Equipment	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	View Details
Modify Facilities	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	View Details
Personal Protective Equipment	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	View Details
Training	1	\$ 45,000	\$ 37,700	View Details Update Additional Funding Narratives
Wellness and Fitness Programs	0	\$ 0	\$ 0	View Details
* Total Funding for all EMS requested in this application			\$ 0	View Details
Grant-writing fee associated with the preparation of this request.			\$ 0	

[Go Back](#) [Save and Continue](#)

From here, select “Narratives” hyperlink.

Section # 1 Project Description: In the space provided below include clear and concise details regarding your organization’s project’s description and budget. This includes providing local statistics to justify the needs of your department and a detailed plan for how your department will implement the proposed project. Further, please describe what you are requesting funding for including budget descriptions of the major budget items, i.e., personnel, training materials, contracts, etc.? You are limited to 3,000 characters. Discuss:

- The number of personnel you intend to train
- The need for this training and how it will improve fire fighter health and safety
 - What are the behavioral health-related occupational hazards of firefighting?
 - What are the behavioral health challenges faced by your department in the last five years?
 - Describe any gaps/inadequate behavioral health services to help fire personnel? (e.g., lack of peer support and behavioral health education; distrust of EAP; stigma around behavioral health)

- Provide general stories (that maintain privacy/confidentiality) of members who could not obtain adequate help due to gaps/lack of resources.
 - Find resources that can help justify the need on [IAFF Behavioral Health Program](#)
- What specific behavioral health risks will this training address?
 - PTSD
 - Substance abuse
 - Suicide
 - Depression and anxiety
- Do you have any existing peer teams (e.g., CISM)?
 - If so, what is the need for IAFF Peer Support Training?
 - How will IAFF Peer Support Training and newly-trained peers be integrated into current programs?
- What the training includes:
 - Essential skills to help fire personnel in distress
 - Guidance on how to recruit peer providers and build/sustain an effective peer program
 - Suggestions on how to collaborate with and access local behavioral health and social service providers and resources
 - Teaches how to help fire fighters in distress and navigate complex behavioral health and social service systems.
 - Proactive approach that helps to prevent behavioral health crises.
- How will the program be delivered?
 - IAFF Peer Support Training, in-person, interactive training led by peers over two days
 - Online IAFF Behavioral Health Awareness Course designed for fire service
 - Continued clinical training/consultation
- Details about the clinical consultant (name, qualifications, previous experience/familiarity with fire service)
- How/when clinical consultation will be delivered (Weekly meetings? On-call basis? Emergency assessments?)
- How/when trainings will occur (frequency? Topics?)
- How many hours of training are included?
 - 16 hours for two-day training
 - 2 hours for online course
 - # of hours of continued clinical training/consultation for duration of grant period

- Why is continued clinical training/consultation by behavioral health consultant needed?
 - How will the consultant help with program development, selection of peers, assessment, access to community resources, emergency response?
 - How is continued training helpful?

- What topics will be covered in the training?
 - Active listening skills
 - Confidentiality
 - Assessment (including suicide assessment)
 - Crisis response
 - Action planning
 - Accessing behavioral health resources
 - Outreach and education
 - Relevant best practices and SOPs from experienced peer teams

- Why are these topics important to your department and mutual aid?
 - How will these topics help you provide peer support?
 - How will these topics help you access resources?
 - How will these topics help you with peer program development?

- How will training be delivered?
 - Will you host the class and allow other attendees or will all 30 spots be filled with personnel from your department?
 - How will training continue with this train-the-trainer model?
 - Trained Peer Supporters conduct regular education about behavioral health concerns (including PTSD, suicide prevention/awareness, stigma) so rank and file know signs and how to respond. Include proposed training schedule (quarterly? Every six months?)
 - Clinical consultant provides continued training/consultation to Trained Peer Supporters, who incorporate additional knowledge/skills into their education and practice.

- How will the Peer Support Program continue to grow after the grant?
 - Develop partnerships with local universities (additional training, research)
 - Better utilization of/working relationship with EAP
 - Build relationships with local clinicians, including educating them about fire service culture and needs of first responders
 - Collaboration with and leveraging resources of nearby peer programs.

- Describe how you will minimize the impact on the department's ability to provide service during training.
- Need to explain how you will meet the mandatory match of the grant money being requested.

Section # 2 Cost/Benefit: In the space provided below please explain, as clearly as possible, what will be the benefits your department or your community will realize if the project described is funded (i.e. anticipated savings and/or efficiencies)? Is there a high benefit for the cost incurred? Are the costs reasonable? Provide justification for the budget items relating to the cost of the requested items. You will be limited to 3,000 characters. Discuss the benefits by addressing:

- What have been the department's costs associated with behavioral health? (e.g., worker's comp, disability claims, lost productivity)
- How will this training better prepare your members to assist fellow fire fighters during potentially traumatic events or large scale disasters?
- How does this program address behavioral health stigma?
- How will peer support impact behavioral health-related worker's comp claims and lost workdays?
- How will peer support help with utilization of department-funded resources?
- How can continued clinical training/consultation expenses save money in the long-run?
- Why are peer support programs an effective way to improve behavioral health among fire fighters compared with more traditional EAPs?
- Why is it important that peer support training be standardized among fire departments?
- Why is it important to open peer support provider training to all members and all ranks within your department?
- Why is it important to learn and practice these skills before becoming an IAFF Trained Peer Supporter?
- Will you collect data and evaluations that demonstrate the effectiveness of your training and how will you collect that information?
- How will this training continue to have an impact/train after the two-day course?

The total cost of this grant request is \$7,500 (IAFF Peer Support Training) + \$\$ amount for personnel costs + total \$\$ amount of short-term clinical training/consulting fees.

The \$7,500 fee for the IAFF Peer Support Training includes:

- All instructor fees (including their travel and hotel expenses)
- All instruction materials (manuals, workbooks)

Personnel costs include:

- Overtime expenses paid to career fire fighters to attend training or to cover colleagues who are in training to maintain minimum response capabilities.
- Be sure to include the number of personnel x the number of hours x hourly rate.

Clinical training/consulting fees include:

- Number of training/consulting hours to be delivered
- Hourly rate of consultant

Include a statement addressing impact and cost per person.

- Specify total number impacted (e.g., # in department)
- Divide total training cost by number impacted for cost per person.

Section # 3 Statement of Effect:

Remember, the most important thing is for you to tell your story and why this funding and training are critical to your members and the community you protect. How would this award affect the daily operations of your department (i.e., what the benefits will provide the personnel in your department)? How would this award affect your department's ability to protect lives and property in your community? You will be limited to 3,000 characters.

For additional information on applying for grants, contact the IAFF Grants Department at grants@iaff.org or (202) 824-1575.

For more specific programmatic information on the [IAFF Peer Support Training program](#), contact us by email at behavioralhealth@iaff.org, or by phone at (202) 824-8626.