

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Posting Date: February 23, 2024

Q. Apologies if this was in the presentation - how does the community's population affect the funding?

A. Federal guidelines require that rural areas receive at least 25% of the overall award's total funding. A rural area is defined in the federal requirements as an area encompassing a population of less than 50,000 people. Applications from rural local jurisdictions and rural areas will receive priority consideration to meet this requirement. If additional funds become available, the OGR reserves the right to award additional applications considered worthy of funding.

Q. If the district has an existing subscription (Duo) for 20 users, could funds be used to expand access to the subscription to the entire district?

A. If the subscription is expanded from the existing subscription, yes this is allowable.

Q. To clarify a previous question: is it true that one application cannot include more than one of the 5 project areas? For example, can a Town apply for funds to implement both MFA and an incident management plan?

A. An applicant can include more than one (1) project objective in their plan.

Q. If we seek a quote from a state contract that doesn't require 3 quotes, does this grant override that and require 3 quotes?

A. You may work with a MA Statewide Contract Vendor if you choose. If you do, it eliminates the need for RFI's, RFR's, RFQ's, quotes for equal considerations, etc.

Q. If I am understanding this correctly, a single application of maximum of \$100,000 is for both city/town AND school in that town for the eligible services. Please confirm. Thanks!

A. A city or town and a local school district may only submit one (1) application for both entities. They cannot apply separately for this grant.

Q. If a regional school district submits an application, and one of the sending town school districts submits an application, will that cause an issue?

A. A city or town and a local school district may only submit one (1) application for both entities. They cannot apply separately for this grant.

Q. If this has a maximum award of 100,000 for a single municipality and it is an 80% grant but the project total cost is more than 100,000 are we only submitting details to substantiate the 100,000 amount?

A. The project must be up to, and for no more than, \$100,000.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. Will the grant pay for a multi-year MFA subscription? If so, how many years would be acceptable?

A. If you choose to upgrade your MFA service, this grant may potentially cover the cost difference if there is an increase in cost from your initial service to the upgraded service. We still have some research to do to confirm this and will continue to work on finding a definitive answer.

Q. What about manufacturer-provided support contracts purchased with hardware. Examples include next-day, onsite service for critical infrastructure such as servers, network devices, etc., entitlements to firmware and software updates, and phone support?

A. The projects allowable with this application are dot.gov domain, cybersecurity training, Multi-Factor Authentication, Tabletop Exercises (TTX) and Incident Response Planning (IRP)-unless the support contract would need to fall within the allowable projects.

Q. My charter consists of 3 schools with separate SAM accounts. Do we apply together or separately?

A. Charter Schools, if an independent, local, public entity, would apply together as one application if affiliated.

Q. The solicitation asks for incident response planning as one of the objectives, within that exercise you generally would need to add a detection and analysis capability. is this allowed. or just the planning?

A. Most Incident Response Planning (IRP) doesn't require EDR/MDR, etc., but it could be recommended by the IRP vendor separate from the exercise. Detection, analysis, and response are not allowable under the current projects of dot.gov domain, cybersecurity training, Multi-Factor Authentication, Tabletop Exercises (TTX) and Incident Response Planning (IRP).

Q. How do we determine what to ask for \$\$ if one of the goals is to request 3 quotes?

A. Reach out to statewide contract vendors and ask for a quote or perform market research to better triangulate costs.

Q. If we have a municipal utility, which operates independently of the city, would they be eligible, and would it have to be included under the municipality?

A. If a public local entity, independent of the municipality they may apply.

Q. Can there be more clarification on the "plan"? Do we need to request it via e-mail or is there somewhere we go to get that? Is it a requirement as part of the application process?

A. The SCGP Plan should be obtained to better understand what is allowable. Please contact Sarah Cook for assistance.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. Is this presentation recorded?

A. Yes, copy will be sent to attendees/also available on website.

Q. There was a note that a contract and or consultant to install and train could be eligible, but I didn't see an option to check on the application. Which would we check off for consultation or training?

A. Depends on specifics of project. Please contact Sarah Cook for clarification.

Q. Can consulting or training for existing systems be eligible for security hardening? We are migrating to Azure and have dabbled in Intune, but would possibly be looking at having someone train and/or consult on security posture and options.

A. No, does not apply to a specific project. Please contact Sarah Cook for clarification.

Q. is this a matching grant with municipality responsible for some of the funds?

A. This is a reimbursement grant, no matching funds are required.

Q. If we are already engaged with a vendor (on ITT72) to implement MFA, can we request these grant funds to cover this project?

A. No, supplanting.

Q. We're an RPA interested in assisting our communities with the applications. Can we be listed as the primary contact or does it need to be a municipal point of contact?

A. It must be the Municipal POC.

Q. Can you quickly review the required participation in NCSR/Cyber Hygiene, etc.

A. NCSR is intended to be a no cost self-assessment re:; cybersecurity best practices Cyber Hygiene is a similar initiative from CISA

Q. Can you resend the Excel spreadsheet? Even though I unblocked the file, I'm only seeing the first 2 tabs.

A. Please email Sarh for technical assistance.

Q. If a regional school district submits an application, and one of the sending town school districts submits an application, will that cause an issue?

A. No issue, both can apply.

Q. Can consultants be used to help setup tabletop exercises rather than just help with equipment?

A. Yes, it is an objective to test plan.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. What was the comment made about CISA's maturity level?

A. Levels of maturity that an organization has reached in terms of Cybersecurity risk practice and s prevention measures. Need for improvement.

Q. Can the public school apply for this by themselves is they are part of a municipality?

A. Public schools can apply separate from the municipality, if the municipality is not applying.

Q. If the public school is part of a City/Municipality can the district apply on its own? A similar question had a response related to town administration so looking for clarity.

A. If a school district is operated under the municipality, then they must apply under the municipality. If separate, apply separate.

Q. Can a Public School District apply, with the Superintendent as the CEO contact, or do we have to apply with the Town Administrator as the CEO contact?

*A. If the school is applying, the Superintendent. If town, the Town **Manager** CEO of the entity applying.*

Q. As a municipality, is it possible to submit a joint application for the city and two partners the fire department and the police department and qualify for up to \$300k?

A. No, these agencies all fall under the same Municipality. Does not qualify for joint application.

Q. Are Risk Assessment (RA), Business Impact Analysis(BIA), and Disaster Recovery Plan DRP covered under the preparation to develop a fully functional written incident response and Tabletop exercises (TTX)?

A Yes if components of the incident response plan.

Q. If a public school district applies (and no one else from the municipality is applying) do we list the Superintendent of School as the chief executive officer or do we need to list the Town Manager/Town Administrator?

A. Can list the Superintendent.

Q. If I am understanding this correctly, a single application of maximum of \$100,000 is for both city/town AND school in that town for the eligible services. Please confirm. Thanks!

A. Yes that is correct. A city/town and school district must file a single application.

Q. Can you share more about the migration to .gov objective?

A. Increase security parameters.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. Without doing the legwork of soliciting quotes, how do we estimate amount to ask for?

A. Reach out to statewide contract vendors and ask for a quote or perform market research to better understand costs for technology you are seeking to implement.

Q. How broad are the 5 required categories? For example, for the .GOV migration, could we use the money to pay for services to move our Microsoft-hosted email from the commercial cloud to the government cloud?

A. Please contact Sarah Cook for clarification.

Q. The application asked for the upload of a budget Excel spreadsheet. is the Municipal Local Cybersecurity Grant Program Budget Worksheet the spreadsheet we need to use and upload.

A. Yes

Q. Our Town also has very discreet IT departments and security initiatives. Is it OK to apply as 3 separate entities even though we are part of the same Board of Selectmen. For example, Town Hall executive, Fire Dept and Police Dept.

A. Municipality may only submit one application.

Q. Can we get a copy of the presentation?

A. Copies will be made available.

Q. Can we apply for a multi-year software such as phishing training over 5 years?

A. Contact Sarah Cook for clarification.

Q. If we already deployed MFA will this grant pay for one year's subscription to the MFA service ?

A. Email Sarah to validate, but since the subscription is already a subscribed service, it might be supplanting and might not be eligible.

Q. Is this available to higher ed as well?

A. Not aware of local higher education entities, must be a municipal department/agency.

Q. Is there a scenario under which pen testing services could be covered under one of the listed grant objectives?

A. Not for this round, possibly for testing of plan, please contact Susan Noyes for clarification.

Q. Are educational collaboratives eligible for this grant?

A. Educational Collaboratives are not eligible.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. If we are already locked into a multi-year contract for service such as DarkTrace could we use money from this grant to cover the yearly cost with them?

A. No, that is supplanting.

Q. Can you do a joint application paying for two different services for example? Let's say City of Lowell was using one cyber security product and Lowell Public School using a different one can we file jointly?

A. No, they all fall under the City of Lowell.

Q. Are multiple depts in one city considered multiple applicants?

A. Must apply under one application.

Q. Are postmarks by 3/8 acceptable or does it need to be received in your office by 03/08?

A. Yes, postmarked by 3/8/24.

Q. Can charter schools and vocational tech/aggie school districts apply?

A. Yes, if they are a local entity.

Q. Can standalone vocational tech school districts apply?

A. Yes, if they are a local entity.

Q. Can standalone vocational aggie school districts apply?

A. Yes, if they are a local entity.

Q. Can standalone charter school districts apply?

A. Yes, if they are a local entity.

Q. If we went to .gov, could funding be applied to new business cards with the updated email?

A. No.

Q. If we went to .gov, could funding be applied to new business cards with the updated email?

A. No.

Q. You have said that schools may apply separately from their municipality and that other departments like police and fire must submit as part of a municipality. When are separate individual applications allowed and when must they be rolled up under the municipality as one?

A. A joint application is when a city and adjacent town file an application together. Municipalities/their departments would be allowed one application.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. If a town does apply and doesn't plan on including the public schools, are the schools out of luck?

A. If municipality doesn't apply, school can apply, but departments cannot compete, communication between departments is key.

Q. What is the name of the report we have to ask for?

A. Mass State & Local Cybersecurity Plan (SLCGP)

Q. Would a Water District be able to apply on their own, we are separate from the municipality, no tax money and rely on water revenue only, separate board of commissioners.

A. Yes.

Q. For a regional school system would we include the census for all towns served?

A. Yes, the census for each individual town served by the school.

Q. If the Applicant covers both Town and school how should the Applicant type be answered?

A. Municipality.

Q. Will 3rd party services such as SOC as a service i.e. Arctic Wolf be an applicable use of the grand funds.

A. Email Susan or Sarah for further details.

Q. Will CrowdStrike software for a regional dispatch center be an allowable expense?

A. Does not qualify for SLCGP application, does not fit project profile.

Q. What if the equipment will be used equally by a and b... should the one-line item say a + b?

A. Email Sarah for technical assistance.

Q. My understanding is that a regional school can apply. Is this accurate?

A. Yes, if the school district is exclusive to the Town Administration.

Q. Required Census information - if a regional public school district, do you want the population of the towns in the region?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by "exclusive to the town administration"? My school is a regional technical school that services five towns. Is it still eligible to apply?

A. Yes.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. Is there a limit of one application/project per municipality?

A. Yes.

Q. Could an application include projects that support both the Town and School sides of a town?

A. Yes, separate application for school and town.

Q. I can't tell by what was stated thus far if this grant would apply to something we need. Our Public Safety communications system does not work well and there are dead zones where Fire can't communicate with each other or dispatch around Town. Would replacement of this system be something that qualifies to be considered or does it have to be more directly related to cyber security?

A. Not Eligible.

Q. So we can only choose from those five options for this grant?

A. That is correct.

Q. Is this spreadsheet required with the grant or is this just a tool to help us?

A. Required submission.

Q. Many software licensing models are subscription-based. Can grant funds be applied to an initial term of a subscription?

A. Please reach out to Susan Noyes to determine if eligible/allowable.

Q. Will questions and answers be provided along with the recorded presentation and slides?

A. Yes.

Q. May a public school district apply for this grant directly if the city itself does not intend to apply, or must the application be submitted by the city itself even if on behalf of the public schools?

A. A Public School District may apply if the school district is exclusive to the town administration.

Q. Are Collaboratives eligible to apply along with their member districts?

A. Collaboratives if a 5013c are not eligible to apply.

Q. Will this be recorded?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this apply to Quasi-Agencies of the Commonwealth?

A. No, Municipal only for this grant.

Municipal Local Cybersecurity Security Grant Program

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public
Safety and Security

Office of Grants and Research



Q. Can this grant be used for Cybersecurity Monitoring services?

A. Not currently.

Q. Will we have access to these slides after the training?

A. Yes, the slides will be available.

Q. Could a municipal police department apply on behalf of themselves, the fire department? If that happens, does that constitute as 2 municipalities / \$200,000.

A. Not allowable.

Q. Can you clarify what "exclusive to the town administration" means in your previous responses?

A. If a school district is exclusive to the Municipality, they can apply.

Q. Do we have to use a vendor that is on ITS78?

A. Not a requirement, more a recommendation.

Q. Will the slides be made available after the webinar?

A. Yes.

Q. Will software licenses be allowed?

A. It depends on what licenses you are referring to. If they fall under the projects, then yes.