



December 3, 2024

Dear Forest Warden or Fire Chief,

I am pleased to announce the 2024 Volunteer Fire Capacity (VFC) grant solicitation with funds provided by United States Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. **This year the total project cost is \$7,000 (To be reimbursed up to half (\$3,500)).** The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is soliciting applications for small grants from qualifying fire departments. **Applications are due on or before January 10th, 2025.**

Funding for this program is provided by the USDA Forest Service, Cooperative Fire Protection (CFP) and administered by the DCR Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry. Non-profit rural call or volunteer fire departments that provide service primarily to a population of 10,000 or less are encouraged to apply. Fire departments must be made up of at least 80% call or volunteer firefighters, be recognized as a department under state law and be National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant. CFP eligible proposed projects will be those within the categories of FIRE FIGHTER SAFETY, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, and RURAL FIRE DEFENSE. Your application must describe your project and how it relates to the above categories.

Successful applicants must first bear the full cost of the project. Funding is available on a 50% reimbursement basis only. Total reimbursement amount shall not exceed a **\$3,500** value. Reimbursement is available for cash expenditures only; however, the applicant's share of the project may include either cash expenditures or in-kind services (donations, volunteer hours related to the project etc).

To be considered for reimbursement, projects MUST NOT BEGIN until the town receives the award notification a signed standard contract for the grant that contains the VFC Grant start & end date as well as the Grant amount approved.

Follow link to start application:

[APPLY](#)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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2024 VFC GUIDELINES

Dear Fire Chiefs, Town Fire Wardens, and Administrators,

In a collaborative effort between the U.S. Forest Service and Massachusetts DCR Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry, we once again offer an opportunity for rural fire departments to apply competitive funding through the Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant (VFC). DCR strives to distribute these limited funds fairly and equitably throughout the eligible Call/Volunteer fire service in Massachusetts. Please follow these guidelines to ensure your application is processed correctly, completely and in a timely manner.

FEDERAL GUIDELINES:

Requirements for Fire Department VFC eligibility:

- a population of less than 10,000
- be 80% or more call or volunteer
- be recognized as a fire department by the state
- be NIMS (National Incident Management System compliant [Incident Command, Multi-Agency Coordination and Public Information Systems])

*Note: If any single item with a value of \$5,000 is purchased under the VFC grant program you we request that add the piece of equipment to you inventory according to (2 CFR § 200.313 – Equipment). Furthermore, we ask that you notify DCR when/if the equipment is disposed of and provide the value of the item on the date of disposition.

Selection and Funding Process:

In selecting projects, the State Forester's office will:

- Provide funding for projects involving training, prevention, and equipment purchases. Projects may be for firefighter safety, technology transfer, and rural fire defense. Medical and rescue purchases are not eligible.
- The description and/or assessment of risks and/or situations in your town which places your community at elevated wildland fire risk, and the narrative of the benefits of the project in the proposal. See link below for tools to explore the risk to your community
- Approve a cost-sharing rate of 50% not to exceed \$3,500.00 per grant. This is a reimbursable payment. The fire department funds 100% of the grant project and they will be reimbursed 50% of the approved award amount or up to \$3,000. For example:
 - a 7,000 project will be reimbursed \$3,500
 - a \$8,000 project will be reimbursed \$3,500
 - a \$2,000 project will be reimbursed \$1,000
- Determine that matching funds are available from the applicant.
- On a sliding scale, priority will be given to Departments who have not received recent VFC funding.

Wildfire Risk Tools:

[Northeast Midwest Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal](#)

[Wildfire Risk to Communities](#)

Expenditures by successful applicants cannot be made until **Grant Notifications and executed contracts are send to applicants. VFC Grant Projects Start Date will be July 1st, 2025. Grant Notifications and executed contracts will be sent to successful applicants prior to this date. All projects/purchase need to be completed by May 31st, 2026.** Payment requests for reimbursement including invoices & proof of payment must be submitted by 6/30/2026.