



**WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

#7 Players Club Drive
Charleston, West Virginia 25311
Phone: (304)-558-2788

JEREMY C. JONES
Director/State Forester

December 4, 2023

Dear Chief:

We have recently received notification from the U.S. Forest Service that the Volunteer Fire Assistance program was funded for fiscal years 2023-2024. As in the past, the Volunteer Fire Assistance program makes funds available to volunteer fire departments (VFDs) in **communities with populations of 10,000 or less** for organizing and equipping local forces. The program is managed by the West Virginia Division of Forestry (WVDOF) which provides guidelines and priorities in compliance with Federal regulations. This program will allow the WVDOF to match equipment project costs to qualifying Volunteer Fire Departments (VFD) on an 80/20 basis.

As federal grant monies are limited, the WVDOF must establish priorities based on individual department need, type of equipment requested, and the service value of the project to the community. Additionally, the fund limitations require WVDOF to cap the amount of match money granted at \$2,000 per VFD (see guidelines below).

General guidelines for the 2023 Volunteer Fire Assistance program are:

1. No more than \$2,000 will be allocated to any one department.
 - a. Example: Project cost total = \$2500
 1. VFD 20% = \$500
 2. WVDOF 80% = \$2000
 - b. Department must make the initial purchase upfront and submit an invoice for reimbursement.
2. The WVDOF **cannot** reimburse purchases made prior to application approval.
3. Requests for building rehabilitation, new construction or the purchase of vehicles will **not** be considered. Vehicles include any type of ATV.
4. However, applications for equipment needed to outfit a vehicle **will** be accepted.
5. Project requests pertaining to equipment must be for items that will improve the operation of the fire department. Normal maintenance items are **not** eligible.

6. Although this program provides funds for both structural and wildland fire activities, applications for equipment relating primarily to wildland fire suppression will be ranked higher than those relating solely to structural fires.
7. The following state guidelines apply to any individual equipment items with an **acquisition** cost of **\$1000 or more**:
 - a. A Volunteer Fire Assistance tag must be affixed to the item
 - b. Equipment cannot be sold or otherwise disposed without permission of the WVDOP
 - c. Item information must be added to the Memorandum of Understanding for state property
 - d. Equipment will be inspected periodically by WVDOP personnel
8. Your approved project must be completed, and invoices submitted to this office by **September 30, 2024**.

If your organization is eligible and wishes to apply for funding under the Volunteer Fire Assistance program, please fill out the attached Application and provide a **written description and cost estimate** of your project. We will then evaluate the application and notify each applicant of their status. **Applications must be postmarked no later than January 31, 2024. Applications postmarked after January 31, 2024 will not be accepted – no exceptions.** We will notify you of approval or disapproval of the request as soon as all the project evaluations are completed.

Any questions regarding the Volunteer Fire Assistance program should be directed to Jeremy Jones at (304) 352-4877.

Sincerely,



Jeremy C. Jones

Director/State Forester

2023

**APPLICATION
VOLUNTEER FIRE EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
DIVISION OF FORESTRY**

Fire Department Name		Post Office Box or Street	
County	City	State	Zip
Contact Person Name		Phone	Email

- [1] Population of largest community in your primary protection area _____.
(Note: this is referring to the community in which you are located, NOT the population of your entire coverage area)
- [2] Does your department have the financial capability to match VFA Grant funds within the limits mentioned in the guidelines? Yes _____ No _____
- [3] Check the option that best describes your project (only check one):
Primarily Structural Firefighting _____ Primarily Wildland Firefighting _____
Equal use between Structural and Wildland Firefighting _____
- [4] **DESCRIPTION & ESTIMATED COST OF YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT (please attach additional sheets as necessary):**

Signature _____ Date _____
Fire Chief or Dept. Official

Upon completion of this form, mail to: West Virginia Division of Forestry, Attn: Jeremy Jones, #7 Players Club Drive Charleston, WV 25311. Direct questions to Jeremy Jones at 304-352-4877.

Due January 31, 2024