



OFFICE OF PLANNING AND BUDGET

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Kelly Farr
Director

Georgia Public Safety Officials and First Responders Supplement Grant Frequently Asked Questions November 23, 2021

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Who will apply for the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement Grant?

Counties and municipalities who employ law enforcement officers and first responders will apply to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) for the Public Safety Officials and First Responders Supplement Grant and will distribute awarded funds to their respective employing agencies. Sheriffs, fire chiefs, police chiefs, or others with eligible employees will not apply to OPB for these grants on their own.

How does an applicant request a payment through the grant?

OPB will manage the grant through the GeorgiaGrants system used for previous distributions of Coronavirus Relief Funds and Coronavirus Local Recovery Funds. OPB has already awarded the grant to all city and county governments who previously received either CRF or CLRF. OPB has also created awards for all private licensed ambulance service agencies as identified by the Department of Public Health.

Cities, counties, and licensed ambulance providers will receive terms and conditions via email to the primary contact associated with the account. Upon signature and submission, the grant will be accessible to all account users via the GeorgiaGrants portal with an option to request a payment. Each account will be issued a \$1 award; however, there is no cap to the amount grantees may request. In most cases, counties have two users registered for the portal – the certifying official (usually the county chairman or mayor) and one additional person.

Can credentials for authorized users be reset?

Authorized users who need to reset their credentials may do so [here](#). If locked out, they may contact grants@opb.georgia.gov.

Have the terms and conditions been distributed?

The terms and conditions have not been distributed at this time. GeorgiaGrants portal authorized users will receive the terms and conditions by email from echosign@echosign.com. The terms and conditions must be accepted by a certifying official before an authorized user may request disbursements from the grant. Grantees should add the above email to their safe senders list or check their junk mailbox if they are unable to locate the

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terms and conditions email after it is sent through the system as this document tends to be caught by email security settings and quarantined.

If the certifying official (chairman, mayor, city manager, finance director, etc.) has changed since the Grantee registered for CARES Act funding, how can this information be updated?

The POC must be an authorized official from the jurisdiction such as a chairman or mayor. OPB is working with ACCG and GMA to coordinate an appropriate POC list. If you are authorized to sign the terms and conditions for the Public Safety Officials and First Responders Supplement Grant, please email Beth Brown, bbrown@accg.org (county) or Becky Taylor, btaylor@gacities.com (city/municipality).

How do we verify and retrieve the eligible employee's certification title and license?

Law Enforcement: Each Law Enforcement Agency should have a Georgia Peace Officer Standards Training Council administrator that is able to login to their P.O.S.T. account <https://www.gapost.org/Rules/3offcrt.html> to view and download the list of the personnel they have within their agency/department.

Note: It is the responsibility of the agency and officer to keep their roster and individual information current. All agencies should make sure their rosters are accurate and up to date with P.O.S.T. All officers should verify their address and contact information in the P.O.S.T. Data Gateway to avoid any verification delays.

EMS: Each EMS Agency should log on to their OEMST License Management System (LMS) Public Portal (www.mygemsis.org/lms) and click on "Agencies" on the left side of the screen. Then click on "Personnel" on the left side of the screen to see the list of the personnel that they have on their roster along with each employee's license level and expiration date.

Fire: Fire departments can access their rosters by logging on to the GFSTC website management.gfstconline.org and using their department power user login, access the Firefighters tab. The roster can then be saved to pdf and submitted to OPB.

ELIGIBILITY

Who are the eligible organizations?

State government agencies and authorities, municipal and county governments, volunteer fire departments, and emergency medical services agencies licensed by the Department of Public Health.



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Who qualifies as an eligible employee?

A certified employee of one of the above organizations who actively served in one of the eligible positions listed on in the Public Safety and First Responders Supplement FAQ document during the month of August, 2021 **in a position which requires active certification** as a law enforcement officer, corrections officer, juvenile corrections officer, jail officer, probation officer, parole officer, communications officer, firefighter, or emergency medical services worker by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (POST), Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council (GFSTC), or Department of Public Health (DPH). Employees who have an active certification working in a position or capacity that does not require the certification as a term of employment in that position, are not eligible.

What is the eligibility time period?

The grant is based on payroll information between August 1 and August 31, 2021. If an eligible employee is included at any point on an August 2021 payroll, he or she is eligible for the grant.

Are former employees who were eligible and actively employed in August but are no longer with the employer still eligible?

Yes, they are still eligible if they worked at any time during the eligible period.

Are eligible employees hired after August 31, 2021?

Employees hired after August 31, 2021, are not eligible for the grant.

Certain classes of public safety employees are allowed to work for up to six months prior to becoming fully certified. Are these employees eligible?

Eligible employees must serve full-time in a position requiring active certification for eligible positions mentioned above. Anyone who falls under these categories without an active POST, GFSTC, or DPH certification or whose position does not require the certification is ineligible. However, if an employee that meets all other requirements became certified at any time during the August 1 to August 31, 2021 timeframe, they are considered eligible.

What if I was grandfathered in and do not have a certification number?

To receive this supplement, an employee must be eligible under the guidance set forth in this document, to include a certification number. All employees who are "grandfathered in" must reach out to their respective licensing body to ensure they have the proper certification. Leaving a certification number blank on the template provided for payment requests will result in a request to revise and resubmit, delaying payment.

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Is an employee who would otherwise be eligible but was on unpaid FMLA for either all or a portion of August 2021 eligible?

The employee must have been active on the payroll and paid during the month of August to be eligible. If they were not paid during August, they are not eligible.

Is an employee who would otherwise be eligible but was on workers' compensation for either all or a portion of August 2021 eligible?

The employee must have been active on the payroll and paid during the month of August to be eligible. If they were not paid during August, they are not eligible.

If an eligible individual was on the payroll in August but is no longer employed by the county, is the county responsible for issuing their grant?

If the employee is eligible, yes.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

What are the eligibility requirements for volunteer firefighters?

Volunteer firefighters who were active on a fire department roster in August 2021 are eligible. Counties must provide documentation to certify eligibility. Volunteer firefighters will be required to submit the OPB template and the roster with employees listed on the template, in the order they appear on the roster they submit to OPB.

How will independent volunteer fire departments (not affiliated with a county or city) be handled?

Volunteer fire departments will apply through their respective counties or cities.

EMS

Who should apply for the grant for certified EMS employees who are public employees, but are paid through County Hospital Authorities rather than by their respective counties?

Licensed emergency management services agencies may apply for the grant for certified EMS workers, including those employed by hospital authorities. The hospital authority may apply to OPB directly, or it may provide the county with a list of eligible employees who were on their payroll in August and the county may then apply on the authority's behalf.

SUPPLEMENT

How much is the supplement?

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Eligible full-time public safety officials and first responders will receive a \$1,000 grant. Volunteer firefighters are eligible for a \$300 grant (see Volunteer Firefighter section for more information).

Will eligible employees receive the entire Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement Grant, or will taxes and other payroll withholdings apply?

The Governor's Office intends for all eligible employees to receive the entire grant, however the supplement is subject to withholdings. In accordance with the American Rescue Plan Act, this program has been established as a payment for assistance to households and populations negatively impacted by COVID-19. The payments will be subject to FICA, and must be included on a W2 or 1099, as appropriate. The supplement from OPB will include employer's contribution to FICA. As such, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) will require eligible entities to submit payroll information to show if they contribute to the Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program or pay Medicare for their Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll taxes so that when the grant is issued through payroll, eligible employees will receive the full amount.

Grantees that are paying the supplement through payroll for their own employees will treat the supplement as any other taxable pay. Grantees that are applying on behalf of others, may apply for the employer FICA contribution and turnover the full amount to the agency, department, etc.

Will the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement be subject to retirement withholdings?

In accordance with the retirement withholding decision for the recent supplement payments to state employees and teachers, the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement will not be subject to retirement withholding. Supplements do not represent a salary change for the purposes of retirement calculation and thus are not subject to retirement withholdings. Therefore, the only expected fringe that would be associated with these supplemental payments is FICA.

Can eligible employees receive a Public Safety Officials and First Responder Supplement Grant from more than one entity?

No. Each eligible employee may only receive one grant payment. If an individual works for more than one entity, the primary employer should issue the supplement. Individuals who work for more than one employer and receive multiple payments should return any overpayment. Failure to do so may result in prosecution for fraud.

How long will it take for the county to receive the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement payment?

Requests for payment from the grant will be reviewed as they are submitted. If there are questions regarding the documentation, or the documents are not organized as outlined under required documentation, OPB will return the payment request and communicate directly with the authorized user for additional information if

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needed. Once the application is approved, the grant payment will be issued to the Grantee. The Grantee will then disburse the grant to the eligible employees.

Providing correct documentation as required will allow OPB to review and approve an applicant's grant expeditiously.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

What documentation will be required to submit with the Public Safety Officials and First Responders Supplement Grant application?

Applicants must provide payroll information, including each eligible employee name, position title, active pay status, full time status, certification title and number, and reflect that the individual was an employee during the period between August 1 and August 31 of 2021. Please ensure that only August 1-31, 2021 payroll is submitted. July or September payroll will be returned to grantee for revision.

Payroll information must also show whether the department or entity contributes to the Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) program or pays Medicare for its Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll taxes. OPB is developing further instructions for counties to use to apply for the supplement that will be accessible on the website.

Payroll documentation should come from the grantee's payroll system. It is preferred that grantees submit an exported excel document from payroll. In instances where this is not practicable, grantees should highlight each employee on the pdf or list that is provided. Payroll documentation that contains multiple employees without highlighting the corresponding employees will be returned to the grantee.

Grantees must provide the names of employees on the template provided in order of appearance on the payroll verification information.

Can an applicant submit multiple applications for the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement Grant?

Applicants may submit documentation of all employees eligible to receive the grant via one payment request or they may submit multiple payment requests. For example, a county may choose to submit separate payment requests for POST-certified employees, firefighters, and others. If there are no duplications in the employees listed, it is acceptable to break up the applications. However, by submitting separate requests for each category (POST-certified employees, firefighters, etc., any return for revision that you may receive will not delay payment on your other payment submissions.

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