




Freeport Fire Rescue

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To: Sofia Wilson, Town Manager
From: Paul Conley, Fire Rescue Chief 
Re: Application for EMS Stabilization Grant
Date: January 11, 2024

The Fire Rescue department is seeking approval to apply for a EMS Stabilization Grant from the State of Maine. Attached to this memo is the Executive summary from the guidance document and the program overview. The grant application is due by 01/27/2024.

Locally we are looking at utilizing the fund amount allocated for Freeport Fire Rescue for EMS education and leadership training.

Currently assessing educational programs to enhance our staff and the opportunity of advancing some EMS licenses to the Advanced EMT level.

- Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) course
- Four-day educational program covering the standard ACLS, AMLS, PHTLS, PEPP and CPR courses these courses will meet relicensing requirements.
- Leadership engagement and professional development.

These courses to be offered in Freeport

Purchasing a training manikin for procedural skills

Executive Summary

The 131st Maine Legislature, in concert with Governor Mills' Administration, enacted legislation in 2023 that created a \$31 million grant program to support the EMS system throughout the State of Maine. The Maine Emergency Medical Services Stabilization and Sustainability Fund, as it is called, is broken into two distinct components, as identified in the title. The Stabilization Program was intended to be rapidly deployed and source emergency medical services (EMS) agencies experiencing significant financial woes with temporary fiscal support to ensure that all Mainers and visitors to the State continue to receive high-quality EMS care.

This document is *not* intended to be an application. This overview document has been created to maintain transparency in the process and serve as a reference for system stakeholders, elected officials, and constituents to understand how the program was developed and how the allocations were determined. The calculations and other items within this document will be incorporated into a Request for Applications (RFA) that the Department of Administrative and Financial Services will support. Eligible EMS entities will be provided with all of the calculations that can be performed at the state level to ease the process; however, the Bureau wanted applicants to understand how those calculations were derived, hence the document's creation. The overview document is intended to cover, at a high level, eligibility, allocation, funding limitations, reporting, and the use of funds. This document is not intended to replace the language in the RFA but to be a reference should someone have questions about how things were determined within the RFA document.

In addition to these grant dollars, the Legislature appropriated four temporary staff persons to the Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services. These positions will be dedicated to this grant and supporting EMS agencies applying for these funds. They will manage invoices and payments to EMS agencies receiving the funds. Additionally, they will provide technical assistance to EMS agencies working to become more resilient and sustainable. They will also work on developing the second component of the program, the Sustainability Program. This funding phase requires rulemaking by the Maine Legislature; therefore, a specific implementation date cannot be sure. However, it is the goal of the Bureau to develop proposed rule language for the Board of Emergency Medical Services' consideration in early 2024.

The Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and the Board of Emergency Medical Services remain committed to supporting the EMS system throughout Maine at all levels. If, after reading this document, you have additional questions about the Stabilization Grant Program, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at Grants.EMS@maine.gov.

Overview

The 131st Legislature, as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State,¹ put forth funding to support the stabilization and sustainability of the emergency medical services (EMS) system in the State of Maine. Stakeholders worked collaboratively with the Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS), the Office of Governor Janet T. Mills, and stakeholders throughout the EMS community to put forth funding to support the stabilization and sustainability of the emergency medical services (EMS) system in the State of Maine.

Over the past few decades, the EMS system in the State of Maine has faced significant challenges with staffing and long-term funding, making it difficult to ensure that all Mainers have access to high-quality EMS no matter where they are in Maine. The COVID-19 Pandemic, socioeconomic factors, and evolution in the workforce's perceptions have led to a situation where some EMS entities (i.e., ambulance services and non-transporting services) struggle to meet today's demands for EMS. This reality poses short- and long-term risks to the residents and visitors of the State of Maine; therefore, the Maine Government (both the Executive and Legislative Branches) felt that it was necessary to invest in Maine's EMS system to support existing infrastructure and promulgate a more lasting and sustainable solution.

This component of the overall funding program is intended to stabilize and support the existing system until such a time when a more sustainable solution can be implemented throughout communities in the State of Maine. The Maine Board of Emergency Medical Services (the Board) and Maine EMS are committed to promoting and providing for a comprehensive and effective emergency medical services system to ensure optimum patient care as charged by enabling statute.²

The Maine Legislature has appropriated \$31 million for the Maine Emergency Medical Services Stabilization and Sustainability Program. This proposal only addresses the stabilization component of the program and accounts for approximately 40% of the overall funding.³ The stabilization component of this funding is intended to support EMS entities throughout the State that are facing immediate risk of failing and leaving their communities without access to adequate EMS. This proposal is designed to detail how those funds will be administered in the State of Maine and to serve as an instrument to consult with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and the Board, as required in the authorizing statutory language.⁴ This document is intended to detail how Maine EMS developed the programming around this funding model and will not be something that individual services have to navigate directly. Most of the criteria, calculations, and ideas covered in this document will be pre-determined as part of the Request for Application (RFA) packet. Maine EMS believes that sharing this document and increasing transparency is imperative for applicants, EMS stakeholders, and the public to understand how allocations were determined and the program's underlying structure that will ultimately underpin the RFA.

¹ Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State Report to Legislature (December 2022) – <https://www.maine.gov/ems/sites/maine.gov/ems/files/inline-files/Maine-State-Blue-Ribbon-Commission-Report-On-EMS-final.pdf>

² 32 MRS §81-A

³ Public Law 2023, Chapter 412, Part GGGGG

⁴ 32 MRS §98