

The RIAFC Foundation received a 2012 Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) grant for \$974,200 over 4 years to assist Rhode Island's fire departments with the retention and recruitment of Volunteer Emergency Responders.

Part 1- Scholarship – At least 50 per year eligible Volunteer Emergency Responders recruited after April 3rd, 2013 may receive reimbursement for their NFPA 1582 compliant physical and for travel expenses to attend Firefighter 1 training for up to \$1,100, including expenses for mileage, lost wages, federal per diem rate for meals, and GSA rate lodging. Each Volunteer must commit to membership at a Rhode Island volunteer or combination fire department for a minimum of 12 months.

Within the first 12 months of appointment to the department, newly recruited Volunteers must meet the minimum fire and EMS training requirements of that department, and within 12 months complete Firefighter 1. For Volunteers accepted under this program, every sponsoring Department/Agency will be reimbursed for each newly recruited volunteer's NFPA 1582 compliant physical upon receipt of a passing certificate. Whenever possible, departments will cover these training expenses or facilitate training in-house. The volunteer will incur out of pocket expenses toward this scholarship and request reimbursement of these expenses after the fact.

Please read the RIAFC SAFER Grant Administrative Guide for additional information.

Part 2- PPE Reimbursement- Once each Volunteer in this program passes their physical and Firefighter 1, and their Fire Chief produces certificates for both to the RIAFC's project coordinator, the department is then eligible for a reimbursement of \$2,000 towards the cost to purchase SAFER eligible NFPA compliant turnouts (PPE).

Part 3 - The SAFER grant program also includes two (2) Retention & Recruitment Workshops each year. Anyone involved with volunteer retention & recruitment in their department is encouraged to attend. Travel expenses to attend will be reimbursed (mileage, lodging and per diem). These 2-day Workshops are instructed by experienced IAFC VCOS instructors and topics include:

- Leadership: overcoming time demand challenges and skills & strategies for improvement
- Communicating the Value of Your Department: customer service, mission statements, and demonstrating financial benefit to the community
- Retention of Current Volunteers: welcoming new members, successful retention programs, motivating your volunteers, and SAFER grant funding opportunities
- Designing & Implementing a Local Recruitment Campaign: needs assessment, recruitment responsibility, developing the message, and identifying marketing channels

Locations, dates, and workshop registration will be available at www.rifirechiefs.com.

This SAFER grant starts on April 3, 2013 and ends on April 2, 2017. The RIAFC Grant Manager will be Greg Redden who can be reached at 855-VOLFIRE or Greg@Volunteerfirefighter.org.

SAFER grant funding is available to help YOUR department with a local recruitment program. Contact us for assistance with your next marketing campaign.