



Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant

We are pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive an award of \$3,500 under the federal Title IV - Volunteer Fire Capacity (VFC) Grant Program for 2025. The award is intended to assist your fire department/district with the purchase of wildland firefighting supplies. This will be your only notice; you will not receive a paper award letter in the mail.

IMPORTANT CHANGES for 2025

- **No paper award letters will be sent in the mail.**
- **Claim for Payment forms are partially pre-filled and must be proofed by grant recipients.**
- **Only one total on the Claim for Payment Form (for the amount spent), called “Wildland Firefighting Supplies”, should be listed and should encompass the total amount spent. You will also need to fill in the “Net” box, with half of what you spent, not exceeding the \$3,500 threshold.**
- **Grant recipients will not be penalized for spending an amount that differs from the amount specified on the application, as long as items purchased are eligible under forest service guidelines.**

In previous years, grant award payments have occasionally been delayed due to discrepancies in the name and address provided to us with proof of purchase paperwork and the name and address registered with The NY State Statewide Financial System (SFS). **If the name or payment address on your invoice or claim for payment form differs from what is in SFS, the NYS Comptroller will not issue your payment.** For your convenience, we have pre-filled your claim for payment form with the current payee information listed in SFS (based on the vendor ID you provided in your VFC application). For applications that did not have a vendor ID listed, the vendor ID in SFS associated with other identifying information on your application was used (name and address). Please carefully look over the pre-filled claim for payment form attached to your award letter, and follow the appropriate steps from the list below:

- If everything is accurate, no corrections are necessary, and your grant award check will be sent to the address listed on the form.
- If the payee is correct, but the address is invalid, we cannot update that information in SFS for you. Please use the SFS vendor portal to update and maintain accurate address information.
https://esupplier.sfs.ny.gov/psc/fscm/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL. If you need additional assistance with registration or address updates, call the Statewide Financial System helpdesk at 518-457-7717 or 855-233-8363, or contact them via email helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

- If the payee is incorrect, send an email to the VFC mailbox vfagrant@dec.ny.gov with an updated substitute W-9 form (blank form attached), with the correct payee name, so we may set up a new account for you.
- If anything in your pre-filled form is incorrect, and you update your payee or address information in SFS, please fill out and attach a correct updated claim for payment form, in lieu of the pre-filled form (blank form attached), with your receipts. You may discard the erroneous form.

Please complete the following steps prior to February 28, 2027, or we will consider your grant a forfeiture. Exceptions may be made for circumstances beyond your control which delay receipt of your purchases.

1. Purchase wildland firefighting supplies. Expend \$7,000 to receive the full \$3,500 grant award. Anything less than \$7,000 expended would result in an award of 50% of your expenditures. ***No items exceeding \$9,999 are eligible for VFC funding.** For a list of eligible items, please see our webpage <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/public-safety/volunteer-fire-capacity-grants>. If an item may be used for both wildland firefighting and structure fires, it may be eligible for VFC funding, but items only intended for structure fires are prohibited for VFC reimbursement. You will receive reimbursement for all eligible wildland firefighting supplies (no single item exceeding \$9,999), up to your full grant award of \$3,500, regardless of what was specified on your application. You will not be penalized for spending more or less on each category of items specified on your application. If you have any further questions regarding the eligibility of items, please contact us via email vfagrant@dec.ny.gov and will get back to you promptly with an answer.
2. Upon receipt of your purchases, contact your local Forest Ranger at the nearest regional Department of Environmental Conservation office to schedule an inspection of purchased items. To determine the ranger for your area, please see DECinfo Locator <https://dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator>, expand “Reference Layers”, in the left pane, and check the box for “Forest Ranger Contact”. Click on the boundary lines for your area to see a pop-up with your local forest ranger contact information. You will also find a list of forest rangers, by county, on the DEC’s website at <https://dec.ny.gov/about/contact-us/forest-ranger-rosters>.
3. Once your local forest ranger has inspected and approved your purchases, complete and sign your claim for payment form. Provide only the total amount of all purchases combined. Do not list each individual purchase separately (see pre-filled form with “wildland firefighting supplies” listed). During the inspection, provide the forest ranger with copies of receipted invoices as proof of purchase, which we will attach to your claim for payment form for final submission to SFS payment processing.

Thank you for participating in the Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Program, and if you have any questions, please email vfagrant@dec.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

NY State DEC
Division of Forest Protection
Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Program
(518) 402-8835