

# VOLUNTEER FIRE CAPACITY GRANTS

(formerly known as VFA )

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**STATE OF ALASKA**

***DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION***

**October 2024**



# WHERE DOES THE FUNDING COME FROM?

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*USDA Forest Service awards Volunteer Fire Capacity (VFC) funding to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) each federal fiscal year to pass through to rural volunteer fire departments.*

**The Volunteer Fire Capacity grant** (formerly known as VFA) is an award of Federal financial assistance (CFDA # 10.664) and is subject to the OMB guidance in subparts A through F of 2 CFR Part 200 as adopted and supplemented by USDA in 2 CFR Part 400. Adoption by USDA of the OMB guidance in 2 CFR 400 gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance in 2 CFR 200 where full text may be found. Electronic copies of the CFRs can be obtained at the following internet site: [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov).

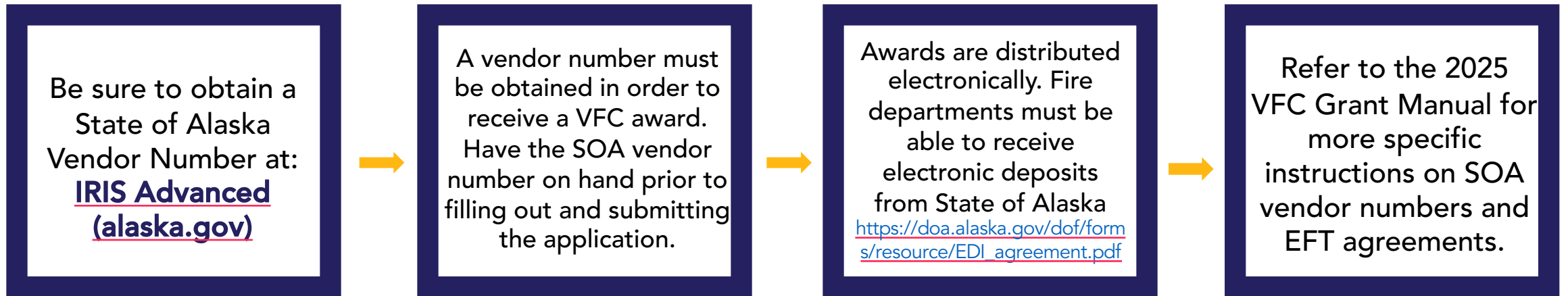
# APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

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- ✓ A maximum of \$10,000.00 per department is available for the 2025 awards. An increase of \$3000.
- ✓ Application period is from October 14, 2024 – December 13, 2024.
- ✓ Have the fire departments FDID number prior to registering and filling out the application.
- ✓ An electronic application must be submitted in the Division's Online Application System(OLAS):  
<https://dnr.alaska.gov/olas/>
- ✓ Register in OLAS if your FD is not already registered. If already registered, the same user-name and password can be used.
- ✓ The 2026 VFC Application process will continue the fall application dates of Oct-Dec 2026.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

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# VFC BASIC GRANT CRITERIA

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Serve a population of 10,000 or less.

Be registered with Alaska Division of Fire & Life Safety office at the time application is submitted.

Compliant with past VFC awards.

Submittal of documentation of 10% minimum non-federal matching funds with application.

Signed Certifications, Assurances & Drug Free Workplace forms and Fire Department Registration.

Be NIMS compliant.

Applications must be received in OLAS by December 13, 2024.

# INELIGIBLE FOR VFC FUNDING

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Repair, construction or purchase of buildings.

Land acquisition.

Pressurized waterlines and hydrants.

Emergency medical equipment.

Any non-fire related equipment.

Footwear/boots not associated with a vendor PPE package.

Logo items, rain suits, drones, computers, software.

Normal operating expenses.

Any single item costing \$9,999.99 or more including match & shipping.

# DOCUMENTATION OF MATCH

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- ✓ Matching funds must be at least 10% of total funding requested.
- ✓ Copies of invoices or cancelled checks can be used as matching documentation.
- ✓ Federal funds cannot be used as match.
- ✓ For matching purposes, up to \$600.00 of in-kind services may be used.

*In-kind services can consist of:*

- ✓ Unpaid attendance at fire protection training courses and/or workshops at the equivalent pay rate of EFF 3. Paid attendance at normal rate of pay if an employee of the VFD. Copy of roster of the course or workshop required with signatures, date, title and brief description of the class/workshop.
- ✓ Time, equipment, space, staff salaries, etc. These items come from another budget but are committed to the goals of the project for which you are applying for funds.

# VFC GRANT AWARD MEETING

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Total VFC requests from VFDs average well over \$250,000 a year. Average amount awarded each year has been approximately \$150,000 - \$250,000 and is depended on continued receipt of federal funding. A funding increase of nearly 40% is being instituted for the 2025 VFC budget.

DOF Area Fire Management Officers, Fire Staff Officer, and the Statewide Fire Operations Forester meet in the early spring of each year to review and discuss each application and award funding.



# VFC GRANT AWARD MEETING

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## Higher priority is given to

- ✓ Newly established (less than 12 months) approved fire departments.
- ✓ Fire departments that have not previously received VFC (formerly known as VFA) funding.
- ✓ Fire departments that have a cooperating agreement with the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, a Department of Interior Agency, or the USDA Forest Service to respond to wildland fires within their service area.
- ✓ Purchase of equipment especially used on wildland fires, such as portable pumps, fold-a-tanks, hose, communication equipment, etc.
- ✓ Training (documented; either structural or wildland).
- ✓ Documentation match exceeds 10%.

# POST GRANT AWARD MEETING

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The Division will notify all VFDs who applied for funding for VFC funding of award amounts, if any, through an email generated within VFC OLAS.

Awards will be distributed electronic checks in late spring/early summer. Expect to also receive a letter from the Division outlining grant compliance requirements and the post award documentation VFDs need to provide to their local DOF office. Compliance documentation must be submitted by October 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.

# VFC RECORD KEEPING

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- ✓ Establish a binder for your VFC application.
- ✓ Print your VFC OLAS application. Keep copies of application, documentation of match and assurances & certifications.
- ✓ Keep copies of notes and correspondence,
- ✓ Prior to the next grant cycle (October 1<sup>st</sup>) submit to your local DOF office copies of receipts for equipment purchased with previous year grant award funds, copies of training rosters if training was funded, training materials purchased, etc. All funds granted must be used for items specified in the application.
- ✓ Keep records for 5 years from grant awards unless an audit is taking place, then keep for 3 years after conclusion of the audit.
- ✓ Establish and maintain an equipment and supply tracking system to track items purchased with VFC funds. Refer to the 2025 VFC Manual.

# THANK YOU

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