

VOLUNTEER FIRE CAPACITY

(FORMERLY KNOWN AS VFA)

STATE OF ALASKA

DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION

2026



WHERE DOES THE FUNDING COME FROM?



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 (formerly known as VFA) grant 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.

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

- A maximum of \$10,000.00 per department is available for the 2026 awards.
- The 2026 Application period is from October 13th, 2025 – December 12th, 2025.
- 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 VFC Application process will be keeping application dates to Oct-Dec for 2027.



APPLICATION PROCESS

Be sure to obtain a State of Alaska Vendor Number at:

[IRIS Advanced \(alaska.gov\)](https://iris.alaska.gov)

A vendor number must be obtained in order to receive a VFC award. Have the SOA vendor number on hand prior to filling out and submitting the application.

*Awards are distributed electronically. Fire departments must be able to receive electronic deposits from the State of Alaska
https://doa.alaska.gov/dof/forms/resource/EDI_agreement.pdf*

Refer to the 2026 VFC Grant Manual for more specific instructions on SOA vendor numbers and EFT agreements



VFC GRANT BASIC CRITERIA

Serve a population of 10,000 or less.

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

Compliance with past VFC grant awards.

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

Uploading of signed Certifications, Assurances & Drug Free Workplace forms and Fire Department Registration with application into OLAS

Be NIMS compliant.

Applications must be received into OLAS by December 12th, 2025



INELIGIBLE FOR VFC FUNDING

*Repair,
construction or
purchase of
buildings.*

Land acquisition.

*Pressurized
waterlines and
hydrants.*

*Emergency
medical
equipment.*

*Any equipment
not fire related.*

*Footwear/boots
not associated
with a vendor
PPE package.*

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

*Normal operating
expenses.*

*Any single item
costing \$9999.99
or more including
match and
shipping.*



DOCUMENTATION OF MATCH

- *Matching funds must be at least 10% of total funding requested.*
- *Copies of invoices or cancelled checks can be used as match documentation.*
- *Federal funds can not be used as match.*

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

Total VFC requests from VFDs average well over \$250,000 a year. Average amount awarded each year is approximately \$150,000 - \$250,000 and is dependent on continued receipt of federal funding.

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

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 attack wildland fires within their service area. Usually, it is only DOF Area offices that have an agreement with a VFD.*
- ✓ *Purchase of equipment especially used on wildland fires, such as portable pumps, fold-a tanks, hose, communications equipment, etc.*
- ✓ *Training (documented; either structural or wildland).*
- ✓ *Documented match exceeds 10%.*



POST GRANT AWARD MEETING

- *The Division will notify all VFDs who applied for VFC funding of award amounts, if any, through via an email generated within VFC OLAS.*
- *VFC awards will be distributed electronically in March 2026. Expect to also receive a letter from the Division outlining grant compliance requirements and post award documentation that VFDs need to provide to their local DOF office. Compliance documentation must be submitted by October of the following year.*



VFC RECORD KEEPING

- *Establish a binder for your VFC application.*
- *Print VFC OLAS application. Keep copies of application, documentation of match and assurances & certifications.*
- *Keep copies of notes and all correspondence.*
- *Prior to the next grant cycle (mid October) 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. Receipts can also be uploaded directly into OLAS. Refer to 2026 VFC Manual for instructions. All funds granted must be used for items specified in the application.*
- *Keep records for 5 years from grant award 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 2026 VFC Manual.*



Thank You

