

Policy Name:	Firefighter Exposure to Environmental Elements Grant (FEEEG) Program
Policy #:	SP-06-01
Code/Rule Reference	ORC 4121.37 and OAC 4123-17-56 .
Effective Date:	June 6, 2025
Origin:	Division of Safety Services
Supersedes:	Policy issued June 28, 2023.
History:	Revised June 6, 2025; June 28, 2023; New Policy issued October 2, 2017.
Review Date:	June 16, 2030

I. Policy Purpose

BWC created the Firefighter Exposure to Environmental Elements Grant (FEEEG) Program as an extension and modification of BWC's general industry [Safety Intervention Grants Program](#). BWC uses the FEEEG Program to partner with Ohio employers to minimize firefighter exposure to dangerous environmental elements.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to BWC Office of Safety Services, employers, and their authorized representatives.

III. Definitions

- A. **Eligibility cycle:** The eligibility cycle applies to previous grant recipients who may be eligible to receive up to \$15,000 per eligibility cycle. The eligibility cycle is three years. The eligibility cycle start date is determined by the date of the earliest grant warrant.
- B. **Fast track grants:** Applications for specific equipment where there is high risk for injuries and illnesses, and the specific equipment is likely to have a significant impact on eliminating future injuries and illnesses.
- C. **Post-assessment and post-report:** A review of the worksite and newly purchased equipment that may be conducted at BWC's discretion after implementation, to observe and evaluate the area or task where the equipment is used.
- D. **Pre-assessment and pre-report:** A review of the worksite that may be conducted at BWC's discretion prior to implementation of the grant newly purchased equipment to observe and evaluate the area or task where the equipment will be used.
- E. **Retroactive purchases:** Equipment purchased prior to approval from BWC for the safety intervention, which includes ordered equipment, paid equipment, and received paid equipment.
- F. The following definition found in the [Safety Intervention Grants Program](#) policy does not apply to the FEEEG Program: unapproved purchases.

IV. Policy

- A. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, all application requirements, eligibility, participation criteria, reporting, and procedures stated in the [Safety Intervention Grants Program](#) policy apply to the applicants and participants of the FEEEG Program. BWC will use this policy to set forth the unique components of the FEEEG Program.
- B. Eligibility criteria.
 - 1. The employer must be a state-fund private or public taxing district employer who employs firefighters.
 - 2. The maximum total grant amount an employer can receive is \$15,000 per eligibility cycle. The eligibility cycle is three years. The eligibility cycle start date is determined by the date of the earliest grant award.
 - 3. BWC will use the last full policy year for which payroll information is available to determine if matching funds are required from the employer:
 - a. An employer with total payroll greater than or equal to \$500,000 is eligible for a five-to-one matching grant. This means BWC gives \$5 for every \$1 the employer contributes.
 - b. An employer with total payroll less than \$500,000 is eligible for a grant with no matching fund requirement.
 - 4. Employers currently participating in the Safety Intervention Grant Program are eligible to apply for the FEEEG Program even if they have received up to \$40,000 in their current Safety Intervention Grants eligibility cycle. Employers who are in the Safety Intervention Grants Program must be up to date on all required documentation and reports to be eligible to apply for the FEEEG Program.
 - 5. BWC reserves the right to conduct a visit to the employer's site based on the information provided in the application and complete either or both of the following:
 - a. A pre-assessment and pre-report before approval of the application, and
 - b. A post-assessment and post-report after the approval of the grant application.
 - 6. BWC reserves the right to randomly sample for environmental elements during the worksite visits.
 - 7. The employer is not required to:
 - a. Demonstrate the need for a safety intervention by describing the significance of the problem and the effectiveness of the proposed solution; or
 - b. Provide two years of baseline data.
- C. Pre-application steps.
 - 1. The employer must access the [Ohio BWC Grant & Program Management Portal](#) to complete and submit the Application for Firefighter Exposure to Environmental Elements Grant (SH-54).
 - 2. The employer must provide BWC with the following data:
 - a. Number of active firefighters, further defined by:
 - i. Number of career firefighters, and
 - ii. Number of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.
 - b. The total number of calls made in the last calendar year, further defined by:
 - i. Number of emergency medical services (EMS) calls,
 - ii. Number of fire calls, and
 - iii. Number of hazardous material (HAZMAT) calls.
 - 3. The employer must obtain three detailed price quotes from the equipment vendors. Each quote must be specific to the employer applying for the grant and must list all items to be purchased. The quotes must include the date of the quote and the equipment vendor's contact name and phone number. BWC highly recommends obtaining quotes of at least one hundred twenty (120) days or longer. If the vendor is a sole source provider, one quote is acceptable. For a sole source provider an explanation of the uniqueness of the item, and how the applicant determined that the item is only available from one source, must be provided in the application.
- D. Application requirements.
 - 1. The employer may only apply for, and only use grant funds to purchase, diesel exhaust systems, turnout gear or personal protective equipment extractor/washing machines, hoods with barrier protection, turnout gear dryers, and washable gloves. Employers may also apply for turnout gear for volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical services (EMS) personnel reported under the classification codes 7711, 7705, and 9439.
 - 2. The employer must submit the completed application with all questions answered to BWC.
 - 3. Section V (Budget) and Section VI (Agreement) of the application require the signature of an employee who has authority and responsibility for the employer.
 - 4. The employer agrees the signer of the agreement, or his or her successor, will have the authority and responsibility to ensure the employer's FEEEG obligations are fulfilled to:
 - a. Purchase and implement the approved equipment;
 - b. Provide receipt documentation to BWC within one hundred twenty (120) days of the date of the grant award; and
 - c. Submit a case study to BWC one year after the equipment implementation date.
 - 5. There are no quantity limitations on the items listed in section IV.D.1.
 - 6. The employer is not required to explain any prior rentals or testing of the requested equipment on the application.
 - 7. The state of Ohio considers a grant recipient a supplier. As such, the employer must obtain a supplier ID number through the [Ohio Shared Services website](#), then complete and submit the following forms to [Ohio Shared Services](#):
 - a. Request for Taxpayer Identification Number & Certification ([W-9](#) via the [Supplier Portal](#)).
 - b. Authorization Agreement for Direct Deposit of EFT Payments ([OBM-4310-Rev 11/1/2011](#) via the [Supplier Portal](#)).
- E. BWC evaluation of application.

1. BWC considers the employer's application complete upon receipt of the following items:
 - a. The completed application,
 - b. The signed Statement of Agreement, with electronic signatures, and
 - c. The Budget page with electronic signatures and at least three vendor quotes, or one vendor quote and a sole source letter.
2. The firefighter grants are considered fast track grants and are reviewed by one member of the Review Committee who recommends either approval or denial of the application to the OSS Superintendent.
3. BWC requests grant funds for approved applications through the Department of Administrative Services. Employers can expect to receive funds approximately six to eight weeks after approval of the application.

F. Operation of program.

1. The employer must agree to submit one case study to BWC one year after the implementation of the equipment.
 - a. The case study must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the one-year reporting period.
 - b. Assistance from a BWC representative on the one-year case study is available upon request.
 - c. The employer must complete and submit the one-year case study online through the link provided on [Ohio BWC Grant & Program Management Portal](#).
 - d. BWC requires an employer who fails to adhere to the case study reporting requirement to reimburse the full amount of the grant.
2. The employer is not required to contact a BWC Field Safety Service Consultant to observe the equipment and complete a post-assessment and post-report.
3. There are no life expectancy requirements for the equipment purchased.
4. BWC will not approve, and the employer may not use, grant funds for retroactive purchases.

G. Scenarios.

1. An employer has received a Safety Intervention Grant in the amount of \$40,000 to purchase a power cot system for the EMS unit. The employer is behind on the required quarterly reports. The employer is now applying for a \$15,000 FEEEG to purchase a turnout gear extractor/washing machine.

Response: An employer participating in the Safety Intervention Grants Program must be current on all receipt documentation and reporting to be eligible for the FEEEG program. BWC will hold the FEEEG application for a period of forty-five (45) days. If the employer does not submit the delinquent documentation within this timeframe, BWC will return the FEEEG application to the employer.

2. An employer applies for a FEEEG in the amount of \$10,000 to purchase a diesel exhaust system. After receiving the funds, the employer submits another FEEEG application two months later for \$5,000 to purchase hoods with barrier protection and washable gloves.

Response: This is acceptable. A single policy number can have multiple FEEEGs as long as the total of all grants does not exceed \$15,000 per eligibility cycle.

3. An employer applies for a \$12,000 FEEEG to purchase a turnout gear extractor/washing machine. The employer's payroll for the last full policy year for which payroll information is available is \$835,000.

Response: Since the payroll is over \$500,000, the employer is eligible for the matching five-to-one grant. BWC will provide \$10,000 and the employer must match this with \$2,000.