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# 15 U.S. Code § 2229a

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## Staffing for adequate fire and emergency response

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### **(a) Expanded authority to make grants**

#### **(1) Hiring grants**

(A) The Administrator of FEMA shall make grants directly to career fire departments, combination fire departments, and volunteer fire departments, in consultation with the chief executive of the State in which the applicant is located, for the purpose of increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards, and to fulfill traditional missions of fire departments that antedate the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

(B) Grants made under this paragraph shall be for 3 years and be used for programs to hire new, additional firefighters or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call (as defined in section 2229(a) of this title) firefighters to full-time firefighters.

(C) In awarding grants under this subsection, the Administrator of FEMA may give preferential consideration to applications that involve a non-Federal contribution exceeding the minimums under subparagraph (E).

(D) The Administrator of FEMA may provide technical assistance to States, units of local government, Indian tribal governments, and to other public entities, in furtherance of the purposes of this section.

(E) The portion of the costs of hiring firefighters provided by a grant under this paragraph may not exceed —

(i) 75 percent in the first year of the grant;

(ii) 75 percent in the second year of the grant; and

(iii) 35 percent in the third year of the grant.

(F) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any firefighter hired with funds provided under this subsection shall not be discriminated against for, or be prohibited from, engaging in volunteer activities in another jurisdiction during off-duty hours.

(G) All grants made pursuant to this subsection shall be awarded on a competitive basis through a neutral peer review process.

(H) At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Administrator of FEMA shall set aside 10 percent of the funds appropriated for carrying out this paragraph for departments with majority volunteer or all volunteer personnel. After awards have been made, if less than 10 percent of the funds appropriated for carrying out this paragraph are not awarded to departments with majority volunteer or all volunteer personnel, the Administrator of FEMA shall transfer from funds appropriated for carrying out this paragraph to funds available for carrying out paragraph (2) an amount equal to the difference between the amount that is provided to such fire departments and 10 percent.

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