

Emergency Medical Services Grant Program

A report prepared for the
Legislative Finance Committee

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2009 Montana Legislature passed HB 85 and enacted an emergency services grant program. The Montana Department of Transportation was tasked with developing and implementing this program.

The grant program was initially funded for the 2010-2011 biennium. The 2011 Legislature extended the program for the 2012-2013 biennium. The 2013 Legislature passed HB262 making the EMS program permanent. MDT appropriates \$1.2 million each year of the biennium from the highway non-restricted account. Grant recipients are required to provide a ten percent match for any grant funds received.

The Administrative Rules for the program have been adopted. Application material and award criteria are available online at www.mdt.mt.gov/business/grants_ems.shtml.

The first round of awards were made in June 2010. That round, forty-one eligible providers applied with requests totaling \$2.48 million. Of those, twenty-three providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.1 million.

Round II grant availability was announced immediately following Round I awards. Thirty-seven eligible providers requested a total amount just less than \$1.87 million. Twenty-two providers were awarded grants for a total of \$914,559.

The SFY 2012 grant applications were announced in July 2011 with the awards made in October 2011. Thirty-six eligible providers applied for a total amount of \$1.7 million. Twenty-one providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.08 million.

The SFY 2013 funding availability was announced in July 2012 with the awards made in December 2012. Twenty-eight eligible providers requested \$1.67 million. Eighteen providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.08 million.

The SFY 2014 funding availability was announced in September 2013 with the awards made in January 2014. Thirty-six eligible providers requested a total amount of \$2.59 million. Twenty providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.33 million.

The SFY 2015 funding availability was announced in July 2014 with the awards made in November 2014. Thirty-five eligible providers requested a total amount of \$3.3 million. Fifteen providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.18 million.

The SFY 2016 funding availability was announced in May 2015 with the awards made in September 2015. The program evaluated the time line for the grant process and determined that moving the grant opportunity to the beginning of the state fiscal year would facilitate expenditure of the funds in the state fiscal year of award. Thirty five eligible providers requested a total amount of \$2.7 million. Twelve providers were awarded grants for a total of \$982,000.

The SFY 2017 funding availability was announced May 2016 with the awards made in September 2016. Forty eligible providers requested a total amount of \$3.4 million in grant funds. Ten providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.06 million.

The SFY 2018 funding availability was announced May 2017 with the awards made in September 2017. Forty eligible providers requested a total amount of \$3.6 million in grant funds. Nine providers were awarded grants for a total of \$1.12 million.

The SFY 2019 funding availability was announced May 2018 with the awards made in September 2018. Forty-one eligible providers requested a total amount o \$4.3 million in grant funds. Ten providers were awarded grants for a total of \$994,800.

Note: MDT purchases requested equipment for direct shipment to grant recipients. The actual amount expended is generally less than awarded to providers as MDT purchases the equipment through a competitive bid process in accordance with state purchasing laws.

Table One shows the number of applications per round, number of recipients as well as amount requested and amount awarded.

Table One: Number of applications, Number of Awards, the total amount requested and total awards

	2010	2010 (2)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
#Applicants	41	37	36	28	36	35	35	40	48	41
#Awarded	23	22	21	18	20	14	12	10	9	10
Total Requested	\$2.48m	\$1.87m	\$1.7m	\$1.6m	\$2.3m	\$3.3m	\$2.7m	\$3.4m	\$3.6m	\$4.2m
Total Amount Awarded	\$1.1m	\$914,559	\$1.08m	\$1.07m	\$1.32m	\$1.18m	\$981,451	\$1.06m	\$1.12m	\$994,800

EMS GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Purpose

The purpose of the Emergency Medical Services Grant program is to provide grants to emergency medical service providers for acquiring or leasing ambulances or emergency response vehicles and for purchasing equipment for training, communication, or providing medical care to patients.

Background

The EMS Grant program was introduced as House Bill 85 in the 2009 Legislature and signed into law. The Legislature found that emergency medical service providers in many of Montana's rural areas face challenges in delivering service based on rural location and economic circumstances. This law directs the Montana Department of Transportation to provide funding for and administration of this competitive grant program.

Program Funding and Match

The EMS Grant program was originally funded for the 2010-2011 biennium, and extended by the 2011 Legislature into the next biennium. The 2013 Legislature made the program permanent. The program is restricted to providing grants and the administration of the grant program. MDT will appropriate \$1.2 million each year of the biennium from the highway non-restricted account. Grant recipients are required to provide a ten percent match for any grant funds received.

Up to five percent annually may be set-aside for emergency situations. Such a situation includes, but is not limited to, an emergency response vehicle or equipment becoming inoperable and in need of replacement. Normal or scheduled replacement is not considered an emergency situation. No emergency funds have been expended to date.

Eligible Emergency Providers

An emergency medical service provider must be a provider certified by the Department of Public Health and Human Services (MCA 50-6-306). Eligible providers are defined as being in operation for at least the 12 previous months (MCA 61-2-503(2)(a)). The provider must bill for services at a level at least equivalent to Medicare billing (2)(b) and the majority (51 percent or greater) of active EMTs must be volunteers (2)(c). Private business or a public agency that employs the majority of its EMTs on a regular basis with a regular hourly wage are not eligible.

Eligible Equipment

Eligible supplies consist of equipment that can be used for training, communication, or to provide medical care to patients. Routine or basic equipment such as disposable, single use, and personal protective equipment (PPE) are not eligible for funding. The following are examples of eligible items under this grant program:

Training Equipment

Training equipment includes materials used to provide training to receive and maintain relevant EMS certifications. Training equipment may include, but is not limited to, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) manikins, automated external defibrillator (AED) manikins and defibrillators, and DVD training kits.

Communication Equipment

Grants for communication equipment must be compliant with the interoperability definition that regulates public safety radio communication in Montana. Eligible communication equipment includes portable radios and base units and vehicle radios, as defined in ARM 37.104.201.

Monitoring Equipment

Monitoring equipment includes, but is not limited to, an AED, cardiac monitor, endotracheal tube kit, chest tube pump and intraosseous kit, as found in an Advanced Life Support Kit (ARM 37.86.2601(6)(e)). Supporting documentation of the AED written plan (ARM 37.104.604) and proof of certification of the AED medical supervisor (ARM 37.104.601 (3)) is required before purchase can be authorized.

Medical Patient Care Equipment

Eligible supplies consist of reusable or one-time use, including but not limited to those items found in a Safety and Extrication Kit (ARM 37.104.205) or a Transportation Equipment Kit, as defined in ARM 37.104.206.

Eligible Vehicles

Eligible ambulances, including aircraft or emergency response vehicles, for purchase or lease must be maintained and used for the sole purpose of responding to emergency medical calls and to transport patients (MCA 61-2-502 (2)(a)(7)(a)). Purchase or lease of a new ambulance must follow the specifications as defined by the DPHHS, ARM 37.104.305. Aircraft includes any fixed-wing airplane or helicopter used or designed for navigation of or flight in the air (MCA 67-1-101).

Criteria

Applicants must include a statement and a proposed budget showing how the grant funds will be spent, identify the ten percent match funding sources, verify match funds are secure in a financial institute, include bid amounts, and provide supporting documentation (e.g. AED written plan, ARM 37.104.604). Applications are evaluated through a competitive process based on the following weighted criteria:

1. Demonstrated need for requested equipment, vehicles, or aircraft (50%)
2. Percentage of vehicular related medical calls in previous calendar year (25%)
3. Total number of calls in previous calendar year (5%)
4. Size of geographic area in square miles and boundary lines (5%)
5. Distance, in miles, from other emergency medical service providers in the geographic region, or the nearest public EMS provider (5%)
6. Distance traveled by the provider to the closest hospital (5%)
7. Percentage of volunteer EMTs on the active duty roster (5%)

Application Review

MDT reviews applications to determine eligibility. Complete and eligible applications are assessed based on the weighted criteria. Applications are reviewed and prioritized from highest to lowest score and reviewed and approved by the MDT director. Funding is apportioned in this priority order for all eligible items until funding is fully obligated.

If MDT denies an application, a letter of notice is sent to the applicant providing the reason for ineligibility. Allowable reasons for not awarding a contract or not funding the full amount requested may include: ineligible applicant, incomplete application, position in application ranking, lack of funding availability, or granting authority has ended.

Appeal Process

Applicants wishing to appeal a denial of a grant request must submit a letter to the MDT director within 30 days of notice. The appeal request must describe the criteria ranking that the applicant wishes to be reconsidered and justification for a reversal of decision.

After consideration and reevaluation of an appeal, the MDT director will reverse or confirm the award decision for the grant application. The director will respond to the appeal in writing. The resulting decision is final.

Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients must create and retain records supporting their agreement for a period of three years after the completion date of the agreement or the conclusion of any claim, litigation, or exception relating to this agreement taken by the State of Montana or a third party. On request, grant recipients must provide the state, legislative auditor, or their authorized agent access to any records necessary to determine compliance with the agreement.

GRANT AWARDS

The Emergency Medical Services Grant program is designed to fill gaps in EMS service in Montana. The program was approved by the 2009 legislature and became permanent in 2013. The program has allocated approximately \$1 million per year. To date 159 awards have been made totaling approximately \$10.7 million.

Table Two below shows awards by category of equipment and the amount awarded per category in the ten rounds of grant awards.

Table Two: Summary of equipment awarded, (continued on next page)

Equipment	2010 (1)	2010 (2)	2012	2013	2014
Vehicles	\$864,280	\$749,277	\$716,886	\$821,049	\$871,557
Cots, Load Systems	\$125,247	\$15,882	\$86,029	\$103,690	\$135,127
Radio Equip	\$20,668	\$49,231	\$29,172	\$21,830	\$30,215
Training	\$23,693	\$38,821	\$19,179	\$5,000	\$13,166
Monitors					
General Equip	\$66,276	\$61,348	\$229,007	\$125,643	\$227,162
Total	\$1,100,164	\$914,559	\$1,080,273	\$1,077,212	\$1,377,227

Equipment	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Vehicles	\$689,000	815,000	\$900,000	\$750,000	\$576,000
Cots, Load Systems	\$144,690	\$115,864	\$105,000	\$214,000	\$334,000
Radio Equip	\$8,650	\$30,653	\$16,000	\$0	\$0
Training	\$47,721	\$0	\$8,500	\$4,000	\$0
Monitors General Equip	\$288,438	\$19,934	\$32,000	\$157,000	\$84,800
Total	\$1,178,499	\$981,451	\$1,061,500	\$1,125,000	\$994,800

An EMS provider may qualify for additional grant award in subsequent years based on where the application ranks compared to other applicants in that year’s grant opportunity. The EMS grant program assists volunteer, rural EMS providers to acquire ambulances, emergency response vehicles, radios, training aids, and medical equipment that they would otherwise not have the funds to purchase. The following map in Figure One illustrates the dispersion of grant awards across Montana. The map in Figure Two illustrates the number of awards providers have received throughout the program.

Figure One: Grant recipient locations



