



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Hinchey Announces Launch of \$25 Million Volunteer Fire Services Capital Fund

MICHELLE HINCHEY December 19, 2023



NOW OPEN: Volunteer Fire Infrastructure and Response Equipment Grant Program

Volunteer Fire Infrastructure & Response Equipment Grant Program (V-FIRE) Championed By Hinchey Will Provide Significant Support To Volunteer Firehouses In NYS

KINGSTON, NY – Senator Michelle Hinchey today announced that the application portal is now open for the \$25 million Volunteer Fire Infrastructure & Response Equipment Grant Program (V-FIRE), which she developed as part of the FY2024 State Budget. Volunteer fire departments across New York State can now apply for grant funding through the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) to support equipment

and building upgrades. The program's Request for Applications is available [here](#).

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, “New York’s first-ever Volunteer Fire Services Capital Fund is finally open — a huge win for our first responders and local taxpayers that I’m proud to have led the charge in creating. This new capital fund is not only an investment in the safety of our communities but also in the first responders who are always there to answer the call. It’s a privilege to champion support for New York’s volunteer firehouses, and I encourage all to take advantage of the funds available.”

“On behalf of our state’s 80,000 volunteer firefighters, I want to thank Senator Hinchey for her leadership on this important issue and also thank both houses of the Legislature and the Governor for including \$25 million in funding for this grant program in this year’s budget,” **said Edward Tase, Jr., President of the Firefighters Association of the State of New York**. “Raising capital funds for vital long-lasting public safety items like fire apparatus, building improvements, and new fire stations is especially important to our rural fire departments. FASNY encourages all fire departments with a qualifying need to apply for one of these grants.”

Don Corkery, President of the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York, said, “The Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York would like to recognize Senator Hinchey for her work in establishing the Volunteer Fire Services Capital Fund and setting aside \$25 million in the state’s 2024 budget for local fire departments to receive grants to purchase equipment needed by volunteer firefighters to safely perform their duties. These grants will help local fire departments and fire districts relieve some of the financial burdens they face and provide savings to taxpayers.”

The New York State Association of Fire Chiefs said, “The NYS Association of Fire Chiefs, through its President Scott Ewing, thanks Senator Michelle Hinchey for her strong support of the Volunteer Fire Service Capital Fund in this year’s budget. The money will go a long way in supporting the important work that the volunteer fire service does in the communities they serve. This is potentially a game changer for volunteer recruitment and retention efforts!”

THE VOLUNTEER FIRE INFRASTRUCTURE & RESPONSE EQUIPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Administered by the State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the grant program supports volunteer fire departments by upgrading and improving facilities and response capabilities. Two funding options are available through the grant program:

- **\$20 million is available for construction, renovation, and/or facility purchase projects,** including fire stations, substations, joint/shared stations, fire training towers, instructional classrooms and meeting spaces, exhaust systems, and shower facilities for decontamination. **Eligible applicants can apply for up to \$1,000,000.**
- **\$5 million is available for fire service equipment projects,** including personal protective equipment (PPE), PPE washer/extractor, PPE dryers, radios/communications equipment, rehab equipment, and mask service unit/air compressors. **Eligible applicants can apply for up to \$500,000.**

The program’s Request for Applications is available [here](#). The application deadline is April 30, 2024, by 5:00 pm.

In addition to handling traditional fire services, volunteer departments throughout New

York State are taking on a growing range of responsibilities, such as mutual aid calls, EMS, vehicle accidents, and weather-related rescues. By boosting capital funding for volunteer fire services, New York can not only address the increasing demands on these departments but also contribute to a system that delivers substantial cost savings to taxpayers.

During the FY2024 State Budget process, Hinchey garnered broad support for the Volunteer Fire Infrastructure & Response Equipment Program, building a coalition that included the Fire Association of the State of New York (FASNY), the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York, the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs, the NYS Conference of Mayors, the New York Association of Towns, the NYS Association of Counties, and a bipartisan group over 40 state lawmakers.

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