

State Homeland Security Program Grant – Other Federal Funding Opportunities

Senior Advisory Committee and Interagency Review Committee

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) serves as the State Administrative Agency for the State Homeland Security Program Grant (SHSP) administered by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) established by Alaska Statute as the Governor's Advisory Committee for planning and preparedness for all hazards in 1990 serves as Alaska's formal DHS required Senior Advisory Committee (SAC). The SERC is established under AS 26.23.071 with formal established membership across local, State and federal entities. The SERC facilitates the preparation and implementation of all emergency plans at all levels within the State; establishes local emergency planning committees; makes recommendations to appropriate parties to improve prevention and preparedness; and performs coordinating, advisory and planning tasks related to emergency planning and preparedness for all hazards. The SERC has established bylaws, policies and procedures, and a biannual work plan. The SERC meets twice annually and through DHS&EM, reviews the Threat and Hazard Identification & Risk Analysis (THIRA) and State Preparedness Report. The SERC coordinates multi-agency funding opportunities to ensure the GAPS identified in the THIRA are addressed to the extent funding allows. Alaska's preparedness and planning priorities are identified and implemented through DHS&EM as the SAA. The SERC Coordinator serves as the SAC Point of Contact. The Alaska Statutes and ancillary governing documents supersede the need for a charter document and have served the State well across multiple Administrations, regardless of political affiliation.

Through DHS&EM, funding from the SHSP is provided to local jurisdictions through a sub-grant program. The Division develops a local jurisdiction application to solicit projects meeting the priorities of the State's Homeland Security Strategy and the Investment Justifications developed by the GAPS identified in the THIRA reviewed by the SERC and submitted annually to DHS. These projects encompass planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise requests. Local jurisdiction applications are reviewed by the Division for adherence to program requirements and prior applicant performance is notated. Applications are compiled for the review of an Interagency Review Committee. The review committee is tasked with developing recommendations for sub-grant project funding, subject to the approval of the Director of DHS&EM.

The committee is comprised of representatives covering multiple disciplines and communities. Review Committee members include past participants to ensure historical knowledge is maintained along with individual representatives of various disciplines with personal interest to serve and representatives that have been suggested by local jurisdiction. Division concurrence is required of all members.

The intent of the Review Committee is to have representation of multiple disciplines with roles in emergency management, terrorism prevention, and all hazard response and recovery. This varied representation allows for comprehensive discussion and evaluation of projects. Committee representatives are sought from:

- Emergency Management
- Fire
- Law Enforcement
- HazMat
- Medical
- Government/Administration

Other disciplines that may be represented include:

- Communications
- Technology/Cyber Security
- Public Works

Representatives are chosen to ensure there is sufficient and balanced representation from these disciplines. Adequate geographical representation is also critical with members from urban and rural areas of the State being represented. Discipline representation is divided between the State's population areas with at least two rural area representatives.

The Review Committee reviews all eligible projects from each jurisdiction's grant application. These projects are discussed and are either recommended or not recommended for funding. Committee members are not allowed to lobby for or vote in the review of projects submitted by their jurisdiction and discuss or disclose details of the committee's deliberations to others. If during Committee review, clarification is required, DHS&EM staff may be consulted if a question is desired to be asked of the jurisdiction and contact with the jurisdiction will be made if necessary. Once the committee has reached complete allocation of grant funding, these recommendations are presented to the Director of DHS&EM and to the SERC at the next meeting.