— *BOARD POLICY* —

VFIRS HARDWARE GRANTS

(VFIRS \ VIRGINIA FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTE)

FIRE SERVICES GRANT PROGRAM

Provision for grant awards to jurisdictions
for personal computing hardware to facilitate
the greater intake of incident reports to VFIRS

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT *OF* FIRE PROGRAMS
Attn: VFIRS Hardware Grants Administration
1005 Technology Park Drive
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A.) PURPOSE

This document describes policy guidance whereby grants to jurisdictions for the title purpose shall be administered by the Department of Fire Programs (DFP / Agency) consistent with the *Code of Virginia* and as herein provided for by the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB / Board.)

B.) GENERAL OVERVIEW

Grant disbursements to eligible jurisdictions to acquire 'hardware' are to be administered by the *Department of Fire Programs* from the Commonwealth's *Fire Programs Fund* as provided for in the *Code of Virginia* [§38.2-401:D] and consistent with policy guidance provided by the *Virginia Fire Services Board* as wholly set forth within this document. All VFIRS Hardware grants shall first be authorized by the *Virginia Fire Services Board*.

The "Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System" (VFIRS) is provided for under the *Code.* This general 'mandate' is met as a component part of a greater national initiative in compliance with policy guidance provided by this Board, That national initiative – voluntary participation, is under the control & direction of DHS - U.S Fire Administration (USFA) which is a sub-division of FEMA.

The national reporting format – NFIRS \ National Fire Incident Reporting System, is designed for collecting, analyzing, and reporting injuries and losses of life $^{and}/_{or}$ property caused by fire and similar hazard. It is anticipated that VFIRS shall follow the NFIRS format without significant variation.

C.) *CODE OF VIRGINIA* CITATION

§38.2-401 of the *Code of Virginia* as amended – "Fire Programs Fund," is incorporated herein by reference.

D.) PRECEDENTS OF LAW & DISCLAIMER

In the event of a conflict the applicable law shall supercede the conflicting provision of this policy statement.

E.) DEFINITION OF TERMS

Commonwealth of Virginia, Department *of* Fire Programs – "GRANTOR." An agency of the state government of the Commonwealth of Virginia – Executive Branch; herein also referred to as *DFP* or *Agency.*

Grantor – The Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Fire Programs pursuant to/consistent with any applicable policy guidance from the Virginia Fire Services Board.

Grantee – Any of the several independent Cities, Counties or Towns incorporated within the counties as listed annually by the Secretary of the Commonwealth \and\ as thereafter so designated by VFSB.

Eligible Jurisdiction – Potential "GRANTEES." Localities within the Commonwealth of Virginia otherwise eligible [*§38.2-401 COV* et al] to receive *Aid to Localities* as an annual entitlement from the *Fire Programs Fund*; nominally the several COUNTIES, INDEPENDENT CITIES, AND INCORPORATED TOWNS within those counties; herein also referred to as *Jurisdiction* or *Locality.*

F.) DISBURSEMENT and USE OF FUNDS

Disbursements from the FIRE PROGRAMS FUND under the VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES GRANT (SUB-) PROGRAM for VFIRS HARDWARE GRANTS are made as a grant to a specified eligible jurisdiction consistent with all other provisions of this document. Such payments are made solely upon directive to the AGENCY by the BOARD.

1.) Disbursement of Awards – Grants shall be made upon availability of funds consistent with the then current Appropriations Act. The Board shall direct the Agency to grant the subject awards as determined by the Board and in the amounts so determined. The Agency shall make all such disbursements within 30 days, or as otherwise directed by the Board.

a) Payments of any grant will be provided through an electronic transfer of funds to an account owned by the payee at a banking institution doing business within the Commonwealth.

b) The filing of an application does not bind the Board to award nor the Agency to pay any grant.

2.) Use of Funds – Grant funds may not be used for anything other than specified VFIRS 'hardware'- (See also (H.1.))

G.) ELIGIBILITY

Any independent City, County, or incorporated Town is eligible to apply for an award to be granted for the titled purpose.

Upon determination by the Board of funding they may establish such awards program for a given fiscal period. Applications will be accepted until August 31 of each year, except as otherwise directed by the Board.

H.) TERM OF GRANT and GENERAL CONDITONS

Each grantee shall have 180 days after receipt of its award to procure the necessary hardware and train personnel. Actual operation of the program must commence by the end of this 180 day period. Upon a timely request by a grantee, these conditions may be modified for good cause. Minor modifications may be made directly by the Agency.

1.) **Use of Funds –** Grant funds may not be used for anything other than specified VFIRS 'hardware'- inclusive of a PC, Printer & connectivity, as such may be later defined by the Agency; and may not be retroactively applied to acquisitions that predate an award.

2.) **Mandatory Reporting –** As a condition of the grant, jurisdictions are to be required to maintain timely & uninterrupted input of incident reports to VFIRS for a period of not less than 36-continuous months after they initially commence reporting.

3.) **Liability to Forfeiture –** Localities whom are awarded and thereafter receive grant funds are accountable for all monies received. They are subject to forfeiture of such award –whole or in part, for materially failing to adhere to all of the terms & conditions

as enumerated throughout this document and any companion Practices established by the Agency pursuant hereto.

4.) **Appeal –** Localities whom are formally notified of forfeiture - see (3.) above, may appeal that demand through written advice to the Board; such to be received not later than 21-calander days following receipt of that initial notification.

5.) The Agency shall use its best judgment in the administration of such awards; and shall endeavor to notify the Board timely of any irregularities, negative trends or other circumstance which may compromise the general intention of providing a uniform incentive to jurisdictions not currently participating in VFIRS by significantly lessening their economic burden of start-up.

I.) AWARD AMOUNT

There shall be a cap on the maximum amount of funds to be awarded in any single grant to a jurisdiction based upon the number fire departments listed in their grant application for the titled purpose. An amount of **$1,000^{00}** per department shall generally be allowed in computing any Locality's award, potentially subject to a maximum amount for each jurisdiction as may be determined by the BOARD and thereafter uniformly applied to all award recipients for that fiscal period.

J. PROJECT COMPLETION

VFIRS Grant projects and/or program start-ups shall be completed within six (6) months following receipt of an award. K. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Awarded localities shall submit a written report to VDFP within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the VFIRS Grant six (6) month cycle. This report shall describe the fund's use and benefit to fire services agencies and/or the community served by such organizations. It will also allow the localities to comment on the Virginia Fire Services Board VFIRS program.

CERTIFICATION:

We the undersigned as Chairman of the VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD and Executive Director of the DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS jointly adopt the foregoing policy as such supercedes all such prior policy statements for the titled purpose; effective this 14th day of August 2010.

Richard E. Burch, Jr. Chairman Virginia Fire Services Board	W. G. Shelton, Jr. Excecutive Director Virginia Department of Fire Programs