

FY23 NONPROFIT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (NSGP)

HELPFUL TIPS & FAQs

The purpose of this document is to assist grant applicants prepare their NSGP Investment Justification (IJ) packet, while addressing issues that have prevented IJs from moving forward for funding. This document addresses the basic requirements for IJ submission and in no way guarantees the IJ will be selected by the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA) for funding. These Tips and FAQs are based on the review of past IJ applications and Technical Assistance calls with DHS/FEMA Grant Program personnel who reviewed FY22 IJs. Please remember, this is a nationwide competitive grant.

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. You are the *sub-recipient* – not the Applicant. The State is the Applicant; you only need to complete the forms necessary/required by the State and DHS/FEMA for the *sub-recipient*.
2. Download/obtain all the correct forms for the **current** grant Fiscal Year (FY) – links below.
3. Read the instructions for the **current** FY thoroughly - do not rely on last year's documents or processes.
4. Obtain the necessary tax and nonprofit registration items in advance of applying – **do not wait**. Not having the required registration information is an automatic disqualifier and cannot be submitted after the fact. **Make sure your nonprofit status is current**.
5. All fields must be completed. Do not use “see attached”, “see below”, or reference another document – your IJ will be considered incomplete by doing so.
6. **Do not** change form formatting. DHS/FEMA will not accept forms that are not in the original or instructed format – changing the format is an automatic disqualifier (see #3).
7. Ensure your responses align with your Vulnerability Assessment (VA); do not give vague or interpretive answers; be succinct and clear. If your responses do not clearly express risk or a nexus to a potential terroristic attack, your chances of funding are reduced.
8. Should you use a grant writer not intimately associated with your organization – *review their work*. Generic or “boilerplate” responses will diminish the authenticity of your IJ and reduce the chances of funding. Ensure *your* IJ highlights *your* organization.
9. Should you elect to use an outside organization to complete your Vulnerability Assessment – please ensure their assessment is in alignment with the DHS/FEMA Vulnerability Assessment Tool and Outcomes/Outputs – you must submit the **entire** assessment with your IJ.
10. Ensure your projects are allowable – review the Authorized Equipment List (AEL), Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and Preparedness Grant Manual for more information – or contact one of the POC listed in the Resources Section.
11. Ensure your IJ packet is complete before submitting it.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:

1. The following documentation is required for your IJ to be reviewed and submitted to DHS/FEMA for final evaluation. If one or more of the items is missing, your IJ **will not** be reviewed or forwarded to DHS/FEMA.
 - a. **Mission Statement:** Your mission statement must be on organizational letterhead. This is used to validate information in your IJ and to categorize the facility (ideology-based, education, medical, etc.) It should clearly provide the “who, what, and why” of your organization/facility/site.
 - b. **Vulnerability Assessment (VA):** *The vulnerability assessment is the foundation from which your IJ is built.* The VA identifies the threats, vulnerabilities, and potential consequences specific to the facility/site and will be used to validate your IJ responses. It is recommended that you, or the person completing your assessment, uses the DHS/FEMA Assessment Tool (link below – free). **This is not required;** however, if the DHS/FEMA Tool is not used – ensure the assessment clearly addresses and identifies the threats, vulnerabilities, and potential consequences to the location; furthermore, ensure it includes Action Items for improving facility/site security – not just the items of deficiency. Equipment requested in the IJ should directly link to the threats, vulnerabilities, and potential consequences, as identified in the VA. Lastly, ensure you submit the **entire VA** – not just the cover sheet or summary.
 - c. **Completed Investment Justification (IJ):** Required fields must be answered – a blank field or “see attached” constitutes an incomplete IJ – please review your work and provide the required information for each field. **Do not** change the formatting – changed formatting is an immediate rejection. *Please maximize the character count in the narrative fields; be clear, concise, and relevant. Not clearly expressing risk or a nexus to a potential terroristic attack against your facility/site will diminish chances of funding.* Be mindful of historical threats/events vs. current threats/events. Historical threats/events may be used to add context, but do not completely articulate the “here and now” risk, threat, and consequences to your organization/facility/site. Narratives that focus on events/threats against a broader community, in other states or countries, or in years past are not adequately addressing the “here and now” associated with *your* location and community – address how the risk, threat, and consequences of a potential terroristic attack would impact **your** location and community “here and now”.
 - d. **Supplemental Documentation:** You may submit supplemental documentation (pictures, police reports, etc.) if you believe it enhances the VA or provides clarification to a particular element of the VA. *Supplemental documentation is not required and is not submitted to DHS/FEMA.* Supplemental documentation will only be used during the initial review for substantiation of the VA.

FAQs:

- 1. I am not sure if my organization qualifies, how do I make sure?** 1) Be a nonprofit as described under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (IRC) and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such code; 2) Able to demonstrate, through the application, that the organization is at high risk of a terrorist attack.
- 2. Where do I download/obtain the correct forms for the current FY grant?** Grant forms and documents may be downloaded from one the following websites: Grants.gov; the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA); and the Tennessee Department of Safety & Homeland Security (links below).
- 3. What forms/documents do I need to submit to the State?** 1) Investment Justification (IJ); 2) Organization's Mission Statement (on letterhead); 3) Vulnerability Assessment. If any one of these is missing, your IJ packet is incomplete and will not be considered for funding.
- 4. Who do I contact (POC) if I have questions?** James Cotter – james.cotter@tn.gov and/or Gary Baker – gary.baker@tn.gov
- 5. Do I submit my IJ through Grants.gov?** *No. Your IJ is submitted to one of the POC listed at #4. Nonprofit organizations may not apply to DHS/FEMA directly – you must apply through the State. You are the sub-recipient; the State is the Applicant.*
- 6. When does my IJ have to be turned in?** The date provided in the Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is the date in which the state must have all the IJs submitted to DHS/FEMA. Your submission date will be posted on one the state websites – or contact one of the POC.
- 7. Is a DUNS and SAM Number required?** Yes
- 8. Do I have to register with Grants.gov?** No
- 9. Can I do the Vulnerability Assessment (VA) myself?** Yes (link below).
- 10. My organization has more than one location, can I apply for each?** Depends – Please refer to the NOFO, Section: NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION SPECIFIC APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.
- 11. What is Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) Compliance?** Recipients and subrecipients proposing projects that have the potential to impact the environment, including, but not limited to, the construction of communication towers, modification or renovation of existing buildings, structures and facilities, or new construction including replacement of facilities, **must** participate in the FEMA EHP review process. If your organization has been selected for grant funding, you will receive further information concerning EHP.
- 12. Should I review the Preparedness Grants Manual?** Yes – section NSGP. This manual provides information about how to manage your grant, resources for a successful IJ application, and answers to questions that may arise over the course of the performance period (link below).

RESOURCES/LINKS:

Grants.gov - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

Tennessee Emergency Management Agency -
<https://www.tn.gov/tema/emergency-community/grant-programs/hom.html>

Tennessee Department of Safety & Homeland Security -
<https://www.tn.gov/safety/homeland-security/grants.html>

DHS/FEMA Vulnerability Assessment Tool - <https://www.cisa.gov/houses-of-worship>
****NOTE*** This may be used even if your location is not a house of worship*

Preparedness Grants Manual - <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/manual>

State Points Of Contact (POC) - James Cotter – james.cotter@tn.gov and/or Gary Baker –
gary.baker@tn.gov