

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Awards \$20 Million in American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grants to 353 Fire Departments in New Jersey

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Grants Will Ensure Firefighters Have Proper Fire Protection, Cleaning, and Sanitization Equipment

TRENTON, NJ – Governor Phil Murphy today announced the award of \$20 million in American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grants to local and regional fire departments across New Jersey to ensure firefighters have proper protective, cleaning, and sanitization equipment. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) awarded the grants to 353 fire departments after a competitive application process.

Today's announcement marks the second time the Murphy Administration has awarded American Rescue Plan (ARP) Firefighter Grants. In November 2022, DCA awarded \$10 million to 293 fire departments.

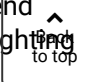
"I am pleased that my Administration was able to double the allocation of ARP funds in this year's budget from \$10 million to \$20 million to fire departments, which provide critical, life-saving services in our communities," **said Governor Murphy**. "The continuation of the American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grant Program for a second cycle means local governments don't have to break the bank to get firefighters the gear and equipment they need. We're putting our federal tax dollars to use here in New Jersey communities for essential services."

"This funding would not be possible without the support of our state and federal legislators, who have time and time again prioritized our first responders," **continued Governor Murphy**.

"It can be difficult for fire departments to replace equipment when needed due to the high costs involved and financial constraints. The American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grants give fire departments the ability to purchase the equipment they need to protect our communities and keep themselves safe," **said DCA Acting Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez**. "DCA is proud to administer this important grant program and direct federal funds to the public servants who answer the call to serve their community despite enormous risk to their lives."

From the establishment of the firefighter grant program nearly 25 years ago, to consistently requesting budget resolutions towards funding to support fire departments throughout the state, to the creation of task forces in support of fire safety, New Jersey legislators at the federal and state level have advocated for our fire departments for years.

"As co-chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, I am thrilled to see Governor Murphy allocate \$20 million in American Rescue Plan funds to fire departments statewide," **said Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ-09)**. "I fought to include funding for our first responders in President Biden's American Rescue Plan and I am glad to see the funds put to use for our firefighters. This investment will empower 353 local and regional fire departments across New Jersey, providing them with the resources they need to protect our communities and save lives. I commend Governor Murphy and his administration for their dedication to public safety. In the Congress, I will continue fighting



to ensure our first responders have the funding and support they need to keep us and themselves safe.”

Fire departments will use the grant funding to help cover costs associated with the purchases of:

1. Protective clothing (turnout clothing ensembles, pants, helmets, hoods, gloves, footwear, etc.);
2. Cleaning and advanced cleaning equipment;
3. Breathing apparatuses;
4. Personal protective equipment (PPE); and
5. Other fire and/or virus protection equipment as determined to be appropriate by DCA’s Division of Local Government Services (DLGS).

A full list of the grant recipients, including grant award amount, is posted at <https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/arpffg.shtml> (<https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/arpffg.shtml>) on DCA’s website.

To qualify for grant funding, each eligible applicant had to describe the intended use of the funding, list the key personnel and/or outside consultant that will be managing the grant funds and purchase of equipment, and submit a governing body resolution acknowledging and approving any grant application and the proposed plan to use funds for the purchase of approved items.

Grant applications were reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Scope of fire department need as demonstrated by equipment need, number of service calls, number of active firefighters, distressed city rating, and population of service area.
- Level of commitment to protecting firefighters as demonstrated by the local match to the grant funding and other grants for protective equipment or other firefighting projects.

All local and regional fire departments in New Jersey were eligible to apply.

The American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grants are reimbursement-based. There is no advance payment or drawdown of grant funds. Eligible costs are reimbursed to the fire department when it submits evidence of payment of qualifying expenses to DCA.

“Safe clothing and gear are extremely important to firefighters’ physical and mental health,” **said State Fire Marshal and Division of Fire Safety Director Richard Mikutsky.** “The continuation of these grant funds means so much to these dedicated first responders, many of whom are volunteers.”

“Another strong commitment from the Murphy administration to protect New Jersey’s bravest. The number one killer to firefighters is cancer. This appropriation will help ensure we continue to take the steps to protect ourselves while we are out there protecting the residents and visitors of New Jersey,” **said Ed Donnelly, President NJ FMBA.**

“The health and safety of Firefighters should be a top priority for everyone in our state. This grant program goes a long way in supporting the well-being of our NJ Firefighters who serve in career and volunteer departments. We applaud Governor Murphy for his leadership and thank everyone involved for this important program. Having proper protective equipment and the ability to maintain that equipment in an uncontaminated condition will help shield the health and safety of Firefighters throughout NJ,” **said Robert F. Ordway, President, New Jersey State Firemen’s Association.**

“Since the inception of the American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grants program, the Professional Firefighters Association of New Jersey (PFANJ) is honored to stand with the governor on this initiative. We are proud to see the awarding of an additional \$20 million in funding. PFANJ firefighters courageously confront dangers daily, and this funding empowers departments to procure essential equipment for our vital duties. Governor Murphy consistently prioritizes the safety of our members, and for that, we express our gratitude,” **said Matthew Caliente, President, Professional Firefighters Assoc. of NJ, IAFF, NJ AFL-CIO.**

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