

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT – FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2020 SUPPLEMENTAL

SCOPE OF WORK FOR July 1, 2020 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2021; VERSION 2.0

The purpose of this document is to serve as guidance to assist Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) in drafting applications for EMPG 2020 Supplemental funding. Detailed descriptions of the work elements identified below, and associated staff hours required must be provided in order for applications to be considered complete.

Incomplete applications or applications requiring additional information will be returned for clarification.

Each RPC applying under EMPG 2020 Supplemental will be required to perform the work elements outlined below. To receive reimbursement of the tasks accomplished, RPCs must follow the **Reporting Requirements** outlined under each work element. Through this funding opportunity, FEMA and VEM will award funding to support planning and operational readiness for COVID-19 preparedness and response, development of tools and strategies for prevention, preparedness, and response, and ongoing communication and coordination among federal, state, local, and regional partners throughout the response.

Preparedness Work Elements:

I. Public Wi-Fi Broadband Project (Optional)

*This first work element provides an abbreviated description of the Wi-Fi Broadband project released previously. This remains within the scope of work; an RPC could apply for **additional site assessments** if they would like to add ones that they did not initially prioritize. The allowable costs per site remain unchanged: Each site assessment will have a total maximum of \$50 for [existing sites identified here](#), and up to \$100 to assess and evaluate potential new sites to be considered. This includes both the federal share and 50% non-federal match.*

In response to remote work, education, health care, and other needs prompted by the COVID-19 response and pandemic state of emergency, the Vermont Public Service Department (PSD) asked municipalities, schools, libraries and other public entities to voluntarily identify locations with free public Wi-Fi access to the internet that could be available inside cars parked outside of buildings. While the sites are numerous, the actual ability to receive a strong and reliable signal outside the building varies greatly. Through this project, the state's regional planning commissions would:

- Confirm the availability, strength, and ease of login associated with each of these self-identified sites.
- Identify which sites would collectively provide as much coverage and accessibility as possible to the whole community. This may be up to five sites per town.
- Contact the managers of those facilities to assist PSD with the distribution and installation of hardware, primarily WiFi extenders, that will propagate a strong signal to cars parked outside buildings that are host to the internet access.

The goal is to provide full digital access rapidly for all Vermonters. Due to the nature of the current public health emergency and the significant potential for continued need to maintain social/physical distancing, this is a time-sensitive endeavor. Making use of existing free public internet WiFi connections, the signal would be extended well beyond building walls into parking areas using *available* WiFi extenders that produce a *strong signal, are reliable, easy to install, and affordable*. While robust exterior-mounted extenders would be preferable, those installed inside buildings but in windows facing the parking lot or street should suffice for most of these sites.

Reporting Requirements:

1. Provide a summary in each quarterly report of the number of hours expended, number of hotspots assessed, and major tasks accomplished. (Please include the sites that were assessed for tracking purposes.)
2. Provide Wi-Fi hotspot information using the provided VEM Survey123 Form, and report pending issues to PSD through Rob Fish at Robert.Fish@vermont.gov.

II. Municipal/Regional Planning Support

The purpose of this work element is to provide support to municipalities in COVID-19/post-pandemic-related planning efforts, including coordination between towns and regions. Initiatives to strengthen local response capabilities and allowing municipalities to have less dependence on State-level support for mass care is encouraged. Examples of work include but are not limited to: assisting with municipal Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan development; local/regional distribution management plans; development of policies, procedures, and mutual aid agreements; public health and safety plans; evacuation planning; virtual local emergency operations center plans; town/school district coordination; and emergency communications plans. If you are including tasks that do not work directly with municipalities, please include the organizations you seek to support and how the task would benefit and/or link back to the municipalities in your region.

Reporting Requirements:

1. Provide a summary of municipalities and associated plans developed under this work element. Be sure to include an explanation of the plan and its correlation to COVID-19.
2. If capturing in-kind match from municipal officials, include the appropriate support documentation with the quarterly report. Keep in mind that all activities (including match) must be COVID-19-related under the EMPG-S award.

III. Municipal/Regional Collaboration and Training Support

EMPG-S funds may be used for a range of emergency management-related training activities to enhance the capabilities of state and local emergency management personnel assigned to support the COVID-19 public health emergency. Examples could include municipal training on plan development for any of the plans listed above, shelter training, evacuation, virtual EOC operations, and school safety/planning all taking into account a COVID-19 environment.

EMD roundtable-like calls to share and capture lessons learned across the region. Work on and encourage improvement plan development at the local and regional levels. While there will eventually be a full statewide After Action Report (AAR) for this event, municipalities can start focusing on minor changes they can make, or codify changes they made tentatively as the situation was unfolding since the beginning of the COVID-19 response. Coordinate with your VEM Regional Coordinator for facilitation support if you plan to hold a formal after-action discussion within your region.

Reporting Requirements:

1. Provide a summary of municipalities and associated training developed under this work element. Be sure to include an explanation of the plan and its correlation to COVID-19.
2. Document any lessons-learned that were captured from municipalities so that they may be used more broadly in improvement planning.

Response Work Elements:

IV. COVID-19 Response

The response work elements are aligned with the State's ongoing response to COVID-19. They include activities that may come up during this continued response throughout the period of performance. This section refers to the response mission area, however it is planning support and subject matter expertise that should be included here, not operationalizing response plans on behalf of municipalities.

Activities include:

- Participation in after action meetings.
- Participation in VEM-led calls/meetings/briefings for the COVID-19 Response
- Work with VEM on planning guidance development for municipalities
 - VEM may hold meetings or request assistance with planning guidance development as it relates to COVID-19 improvement planning.
- Time spent updating RPC COVID-19 web pages with guidance or links to new state programs/intitatives.
- Providing planning support to active distribution initiatives.

Activities DO NOT include:

- SEOC staffing. This is still captured by the MOA.
- Commodity procurement
- Equipment purchases
- Operational tasks

Reporting Requirements:

1. Provide summary of tasks completed in quarterly report. Include a description of how tasks relate to COVID-19 Response or post-pandemic environment.