

Emergency Services Provider Fund



Application Guidelines 2026-2027

Introduction

The Emergency Services Provider Fund (ESPF) is a program intended to assist volunteer first responder organizations in Nova Scotia with the purchase of equipment used directly in response to a fire or emergency situation. Fire Departments, Ground Search and Rescue and HAZMAT organizations play an integral role in assisting emergencies, assisting in recovery and ensuring the safety of Nova Scotians.

Programs

Emergency Service Individual Organization Funding

- Supported to a maximum of \$30,000 will accept applications beginning June 1, 2026 and close July 31, 2026.

Emergency Service Regional Funding

- Supported to a maximum of \$200,000 will accept applications beginning September 1, 2026 and close October 31, 2026.

Projects will be supported to a maximum of 90%.

ESPF Spring 2026-27

Emergency Service Individual Organization Funding

Emergency Service Individual Organization Funding: will support projects to a maximum of \$30,000 will be accepted beginning June 1, 2026 and close July 31, 2026.

Emergency Service Individual Organization Funding will be awarded to a specific emergency service organizations. This funding supports independent initiatives tailored to the individual organization's operational needs, equipment, or programs aimed at enhancing their emergency response capabilities within the program scope.

ESPF Fall 2026-27

Emergency Service Regional Funding

Emergency Service Regional Funding: will support projects to a maximum of \$200,000. Applications will be accepted beginning September 1, 2026 and close October 31, 2026.

Emergency Service Regional Project Funding will be awarded to a first responder organization in partnership with a municipality to support emergency services across a broader geographic area. This funding will address the collective needs of multiple emergency response organizations responsible for the region, ensuring coordinated, region-wide preparedness, response and recovery efforts that benefit an entire region.

Eligible Recipients – Both Streams

- Fire departments;
- Ground search and rescue organizations;
- HAZMAT organizations, and
- Other first responder organizations in Nova Scotia who did not receive funding in 2025-26.

Organizations must be in compliance with all reporting requirements prior to application, including fire incident reports.

Eligible Costs – Emergency Service Individual Organization Funding

Funding will be used for equipment used directly in the response to a fire or emergency situation. Eligible equipment must fall into the following categories. Equipment outside of these categories will not be funded.

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA);
- Communications equipment;
- Miscellaneous fire fighting equipment;
- Rescue equipment;
- Water supply and suppression equipment;
- HAZMAT equipment; and
- Emergency power for building

A detailed listing of eligible equipment can be found in the application.

Eligible project costs must be between the project's approval date to March 31, 2028. Any funds outside that time-frame will not be eligible.

The recipient must secure the necessary insurance and permits prior to the commencement of the Project (e.g. emergency power).

Eligible Costs – Emergency Service Regional Funding

- Major equipment and specialized vehicles/trailers to support operations across a region;
- Regional training facility
- Shared equipment pool (SCBA Cascade Trailer/Location, Drones, Rope or Swift Water Kits, Remote Rescue Kits, Rehab Units)
- Regional mobile command unit
- Multi-purpose UTVs/ATVs for wildland and SAR missions
- Regional hazard and vulnerability analysis to assist in building protection strategies
- Regional risk reduction strategies and public education projects
- Regional exercise and training program with AAR to inform regional capabilities improvements
- Regional fire smart program enhancements
- Mental health resiliency programs

Ineligible Costs

- Operating and administrative costs;
- Firefighting apparatus and typical passenger vehicles;
- Vehicle upgrades; and
- Equipment not used directly in the response to a fire or emergency situation.

How to apply

1. Complete the application form online. located at:
<https://www.forms.novascotia.ca/emergency-services-provider-fund>
2. Check the application for details on all required supporting documents.
3. Submit your completed application and supporting documents.
4. Department of Emergency Management reviews your application after the submission deadline (this can take 6 to 8 weeks).

Review and Approval Process

Applications submitted to DEM will be reviewed to ensure the requirements outlined in these guidelines have been met. Incomplete applications and/or late submissions may result in your project not being considered for funding.

As part of the review and approval process, DEM may request information from your municipalities related to the financial support they provide your organization.

The review and evaluation of applications is a competitive process. Although a project may be eligible, it is not guaranteed funding from this program. If the project is approved; it is possible that the approval will not match the full level of funding requested in the application.

Payment

Successful applicants will receive an approval letter and Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) outlining the requirements of the approval. DEM will release 100% of the payment upon receiving the signed T&Cs.

If your organization has received previous funding through the ESPF and the final report is overdue, no funds can be released for any subsequent grants approved through the ESPF until the overdue report has been received.

Project Completion

The project must be complete and all invoices must be dated no later than January 31, 2028.

DEM has the right to require the return of any unspent funds or any funds that have been spent on items that were not part of the Agreement.

Final Reporting

The Recipient must submit a Statement of Expenditures to DEM within 60 days of project end date. DEM will provide the required reporting templates to successful recipients.

The Statement of Expenditures will consist of a listing of all invoices as well as proof of payment in the form of copies of cancelled cheques, printouts of online cancelled cheques, or copies of electronic payment documentation.

Communications

Funding approvals must be kept confidential until DEM has coordinated a public program announcement.

The contribution by DEM must be recognized in any project promotion or communication.

A list of successful project applicants may be made public after the process is completed.

For More Information

Emergency Services Provider Fund (ESPF)
Department of Emergency Management

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