

EMSW-2023 – Frequently Asked Questions 12.13.2022

Applicant Types and Requirements

Q. Can an individual apply for this funding?

A. No, an agency or program must apply to set up scholarship funds and reimbursement. These grants are not set up to be less than \$75,000.

Q. Is this only to establish new education programs? (2)

A. No, this is also for scholarship funds for employees and students, as well as reimbursement for wages for those attending paramedic school.

Q. Can a Tribal College be an applicant?

A. Yes, as long as they either are currently or are applying to become and approved Initial Paramedic Education Program.

Q. Can this funding be used for other levels of initial education, specifically EMT? (9)

A. No, this funding is limited to initial paramedic training ONLY.

Q. What if the EMT training is a prerequisite to paramedic training?

A. The funding is only for initial paramedic training.

Q. Even though the funding is not applicable for EMT students, can it be used to cover tuition and fees for prerequisite courses to be eligible for enrolling in paramedic (anatomy/physiology and others)?

A. If it is a true prerequisite and must be done before enrolling in paramedic training, then it would not be covered (these courses also fill prerequisites for many other training programs). If they are an integrated part of the paramedic curriculum, then it would be allowable.

Q. Can the grant cover tuition and fees of general education requirements for students that are degree seeking?

A. If the courses are a part of mandatory curriculum to be eligible to work as a paramedic. (Some colleges do not allow for certificate only courses)

Q. Are fire and EMS agencies that do Medical First Responder service eligible?

A. The funding is limited to initial paramedic training only.

Q. Do you have to already be an EMT to take a paramedic course?

A. Yes, you do.

Q. Our EMS company does not have a paramedic program, but our local college does. Do our employees get the grant money through the college program? Or does the EMS agency need to apply?

A. This depends on your local set up. It would be a good idea to reach out to your local college to ascertain if they are applying for this funding. Otherwise, your agency could apply for the funding and then get reimbursed for the tuition costs to any approved Initial Paramedic Education Program.

- Q. Are we allowed to use an employment agreement with the grant funding? Example: To attend a company's grant funded paramedic program, you must sign an employment agreement to work for that company for a given period.
- A. This is up to the applicant. How an agency or organization contracts with employees is not under the Department's purview.
- Q. Once the employee obtains a paramedic license from these funds through one grant, can that person go work for somewhere else?
- A. Yes, once licensed, the person could go where they wanted unless an employer had a contract with them, but that is not in the Department's purview.
- Q. Is there a plan somewhere in the total pool of money for retention of current staff?
- A. Ideally, yes, there will be. We first have to do a workforce assessment as is outlined in the boilerplate to then do an RFP for funding opportunities to address identified issues.
- Q. Can a hospital who is a Paramedic Program Consortium Partner with a licensed school apply?
- A. Yes, as long as they are currently an Initial Paramedic Education Program, applying to be an Initial Paramedic Education Program, an EMS agency, or a fiduciary for any of these.
- Q. Could this be used to obtain a satellite for an approved Initial Paramedic Education Program?
- A. Yes, as long as the application specified the need and expansion into an underserved area of Michigan.
- Q. Could funding be used to become CoAEMSP approved?
- A. Yes, this could be a part of the budget request to become an Initial Paramedic Education Program but would need to serve an underserved area of the state.
- Q. Can the funding be used for Paramedic CE courses taught on site?
- A. No, this funding is only for initial paramedic education.
- Q. Is community paramedic eligible for this grant?
- A. No, this funding is only for initial paramedic education.
- Q. Can the funding be used for continuing education for current paramedics – like critical care, neonatal resuscitation, etc?
- A. No, this funding is only for initial paramedic education.
- Q. Can a program, operated under a Satellite arrangement, apply for instructor costs if the satellite program is providing the instructor?
- A. This would depend. If this is an already established and functioning satellite program, no. If there was specific need outlined in the proposal for funding that showed why and how this cost would expand access to Initial Paramedic Education, then it could be.
- Q. If you are a satellite of an accredited paramedic program, can you apply for funding?
- A. The actual program would need to apply, but you might be able to apply as an EMS agency, if you are an EMS agency hosting the satellite.
- Q. Are we able to partner with a local school?

A. Yes, if they are an Initial Paramedic Education Program OR if you are partnering with them in order to become one yourself.

Q. We currently have three campuses, do we apply separately, or for our entire Program Sponsor?

A. You will apply as your Program Sponsor. There is only one allowable award per Program Sponsor, but you could have different lines for the different campuses.

Q. Can this grant be used for staffing?

A. To offset staffing costs or pay for already trained staff to exist, no. To pay for staff to attend initial paramedic education programs, yes.

Q. How much time do we have before we have to be enrolled into a paramedic program?

A. The program costs would need to be incurred during the grant period to be eligible for reimbursement. (2/1/2023-9/30/2023)

Q. Are high school EMT programs eligible for the grant?

A. No, this is only for paramedic level training.

Q. Do we need to be a licensed agency?

A. No, you can also be an approved paramedic education program, an education program applying to be an approved education program, or a fiduciary of any of these, applying on their behalf.

Q. Can small agencies work together on a combined grant to meet the \$75,000 minimum?

A. Yes, absolutely.

Q. The RFP for the EMSW-2023 grant states that one of the objectives (II.4.B) is to provide "hourly reimbursement for time spent in EMS training programs, at a rate of \$15/hr, to a maximum of \$16,000 per paramedic student." From what was stated in the webinar it sounded like any approved program sponsor would be eligible for the hourly reimbursement and that the \$16,000 cap was the result of paying \$15/hr for the minimum number of hours that MDHHS requires for a paramedic program. However, II.7 states that "entities submitting for reimbursement of hourly rates for class time must be currently licensed EMS agencies in the state of MI."

Does that mean that approved program sponsors who are colleges or proprietary schools (approved program sponsors who are not EMS agencies) are ineligible for the hourly reimbursement, and only eligible for the "traditional grants" (II.4.A)?

A. Correct, the hourly rate is for those that are employed by an EMS agency. An education institution can't employ or pay students to attend there, it would create conflict.

Q. Does that advantage an approved program sponsor who is an EMS agency with a consortium agreement (Standard I.B) over a college (even one they may be in agreement with) over other program sponsor type (Standard I.A)?

A. Each application is reviewed separately. There is not an advantage specifically. An agency that is NOT a program sponsor could also apply for the hourly reimbursement, even if the student was attending someone else's course. Applicants are encouraged to work cooperatively.

Q. If a student who is employed by an EMS agency decides to attend a college program eligible for hourly wage through their employer and if so, would we have to list them as a partnering agency in the grant?

- A. That application would need to come from the employer, it would not be expected that an education program would keep track of the employers of all students unless they chose to apply that way.
- Q. Given that our attrition is not due to academic reasons and more to personal issues, would there be another way to subsidize cost of living for paramedic students if as a college we are not eligible for the hourly reimbursement?
- A. Not currently.
- Q. Increasing the number of Paramedic ICs to expand education opportunity/availability: The state of MI requires instructors to be licensed ICs. Is it appropriate to include in the RFP the tuition/fees of an Instructor/Coordinator class if the grant award is restricted to those licensed as paramedics at the provider level?
- A. This would be something that would need to be evaluated in the application itself. As the RFP outlines, this would have to be justified and tied to specific opportunity to increase the accessibility of paramedic programs. (examples might include: a program would need to show that they are turning students away due to lack of instructors, a program would show a need to reach a new area, but not have access to an instructor in that area)
- Q. Is a virtual reality headset an allowable expense under the categorization of textbooks and software required for students for them to be able to use high fidelity virtual reality full patient care simulation software during their course? For example, an oculus headset and controllers to be used with a patient simulation software for medics.
- A. This would be individually evaluated depending on context. If this was program equipment, it would only be allowable if there was demonstration that it would increase the number of licensed paramedics.
- Q. Would an immersion room be considered a building renovation request or an equipment request?
- A. All requests like this, renovation, equipment, or infrastructure would need to be directly tied to increasing the EMS workforce. Funding requests must increase accessibility and workforce.
- Q. Please concisely define “physical and durable medical equipment” with examples of what is and is not considered such. Are ACLS manikins allowed or are they DME?
- A. Items are not individually defined. Their purpose and tie to increasing workforce is the most important piece. An ACLS manikin that is a replacement would not qualify, but one that increased capacity of a program and allowed for furthering a program would be.
- Q. Can an EMS training group put in for a class to cover tuition for a certain number of students that are not their employee, but employees of surrounding EMS agencies in a rural area?
- A. Yes.
- Q. When applying for the grant, it can be only for ONE of the three things, correct? To establish a program, to provide scholarships for students, or pay our employees for attending a paramedic program, not a combination of all three?

A. There is no limit to the combination of things. An applicant can apply for any combination of initiatives to address the workforce shortage, so long as it is between the funding limits and meets the funding criteria otherwise.

Q. We are an EMT/AEMT EMS academy trying to apply to become a paramedic program. We are also an ambulance company under the same LLC. Do we need to apply separately for the grant under the operations side and the academy side or would it fall under the same application? That being said if it is separate, can the operations side use funds given to them to send our EMTs to paramedic school through our own academy? Do we need to be considered a proprietary school in order for that to happen?

A. There can be only one application per recipient, so they would be a combined ask. You can use the funds to send your employees to your own Approved Paramedic Initial Education Program. There are numerous ways to become an Approved Paramedic Initial Education Program, one of which does involve becoming a proprietary school. The funds set aside for your EMTs to become paramedics may only be used to send them to Initial Paramedic Education at an Approved Paramedic Initial Education Program.

Q. I just want to confirm that requesting to purchase new, high-end type equipment that will be used to teach paramedic students in the classroom, would be viewed as "durable program equipment" and therefore not allowable.

A. This is correct, as it does not increase the capacity to reach more students.

Q. I understand rent for buildings is not allowable, I want to confirm that a trailer to move equipment from one satellite location to another -- in order to expand service offering -- is also a not allowable expense.

A. This would be considered for funding if it were EXPANDING a program to reach an area that does not currently have access to paramedic program.

Q. There are several references to target population, some areas it appears to be focused on the geographical population of the communities being served and some appear to be focused on the target population as the students we are hoping to train. Can you please define target population or is different depending on which section we are responding to?

A. This does depend on what the grantee is writing for. It may refer to the population being served by an agency (constituency), but it also may apply to the type of students/candidates being recruited.

Q. For paying the student, is it only paying them while in class, or can it be for work while they are at the station?

A. It is only for compensating them while they are in Initial Paramedic Education Training. It is not to offset workforce costs.

Reporting Requirements

Q. How will evaluation of the grants be done?

A. Grantees will be expected to report on attrition of students/employees, pass rate/success (if applicable for the grant time period), and employment status of scholarship recipients. These will be dependent on the type of application/grant.

Q. Will there be some sort of performance reporting throughout the grant period?

A. No, the grant period is short. There will only be the final report out.

Deadlines

Q. Are the deadline dates just for this round of funding?

A. Yes, there will be further RFP for other funding.

Q. What is the performance period?

A. February 1, 2023-September 30, 2023

Funding/Finance

Q. Is this the only funding opportunity that there will be?

A. No, there will be more with different requirements forthcoming.

Q. Can funds be used for courses that have already begun or for someone who has already started their initial paramedic training? (3)

A. Yes, as long as the attributed costs occur in the funding period (2/1/2023-9/30/2023)

Q. Do students need to have the paramedic completed by 9/30/2023 or just enrolled and paid for?

A. No, they do not need to be done, but the funding will only apply for costs incurred in the budget period. (2/1/2023-9/30/2023)

Q. Will a local match be necessary?

A. No, there is no match required.

Q. If a fiduciary is used to administer the program, can an administrative amount be requested in the grant?

A. Yes, indirect/administrative is allowable.

Q. Is there a limit to the indirect rate that is allowable?

A. It is only limited to an organization's declared federal indirect rate.

Q. What are indirect costs?

A. It is the cost that an organization incurs to administer a program. It helps support the administrative burden of overseeing a project.

Q. Is the goal of the grantor to award many smaller amounts, fewer larger amounts, or is the grant amount not really a huge factor?

A. This isn't calculated into the scoring, as long as other requirements (minimum and maximum) are met.

Q. As a for profit institution, am I expected to expense to the penny how student scholarship funds used to cover tuition are spent?

A. Regardless of type of institution, the reimbursement amounts much match actual costs.

Q. If I disperse \$10,000 for student scholarships, do I need to report how much goes to payroll, facilities, bills, etc?

A. The invoices for reimbursement must match your budget and be divided accordingly.

Q. If we are a municipal fire department (or agency of any type) is the city (county/township) our parent agency?

A. That depends on the given financial structure of the organization. Please reach out to the EGrAMS help desk for specific information. MDHHS-EGrAMS-Help@michigan.gov

Q. If you write for a certain number of students and they have not started a class or change their mind about going, what will happen with the money?

A. This is a reimbursement grant, the money will not be disbursed if the tuition is not paid.

Q. What if there is a problem where the grant amount goes under the amount awarded?

A. Unused grant funds will be rolled over to different grant opportunities.

Q. We believe the earliest we could support a new Paramedic class start would be May, 2023. This would leave just 5 months of funding support (May - September 30, 2023) for the 14-month program. Can we draw down the full amount for each student at the beginning of the class start in May 2023 to support the entire 14 months or are we able to only seek 5 months (May-September 2023) of support? (2)

A. The funding is reimbursement based, so it would only be available for those costs incurred during the funding period.

Q. If we do not begin a paramedic education program until Fall 2023 and it runs for 15 months ending December 2024, how does the drawdown of funds work during the 8 months in 2022? Can the entire funds be drawn down prior to September 30, 2023 in order to make scholarship awards? Typically any financial aid at the college is applied on a semester basis.

A. These are reimbursement grants, so payment is made according to invoice

Q. What are the tax implications for students if we pay tuition and provide the \$15/hour for class attendance?

A. The Department can't know each individual's or agency's tax status. This should be discussed with an accountant.

Q. Pertaining to the three potential uses of the funds, if we choose A. Traditional grants, limited to \$20,000 per paramedic student, how will this work with other financial aid? Can the amount up to

\$20,000 per student be used as a scholarship, and if so, is it considered first or last dollar? Do we take in to account students who might receive TIP, Pell, MI Reconnect, etc?

A. The Department won't have access to a student's individual status, but the funding will ideally be used as supplement to other available funding or for those who are unable to receive assistance. It would not be expected that student loans would need to be obtained first.

Q. If an EMS agency wants to send "some number" of their employees to a paramedic class that another agency is going to hold in their service area, how exactly does that work? Would the host agency request grant funding to cover the 30 seats open for the class and then figure out how to allocate the funding amongst some interested fire departments?

A. The program sponsor could apply for funding for available seats and then decide how those seats are filled. How they contract with their neighboring agencies is not under the scope of the grant.

Q. Are applicants with an outstanding tax bill that is being negotiated automatically disqualified?

A. No, they are welcome to apply. There is a possibility that treasury will garnish the award, but that is not known by the Department.

Q. In EGrAMS, at the end of the budget section (the tab is numbered 15), there is a tab titled source of funds. It has several areas to fill out. Is this supposed to be there?

A. That section should match your application budget. If the only money in your project is from the grant, you would put that in state funds. If you are supplementing the project with funds from other sources, then those sections of the workbook would be filled up, otherwise you would only have that one section with answers. If it does not match your budget, the system will error and you will not be able to submit.

Q. If an agency does not have a negotiated indirect cost rate letter with the federal government, can it use the de minimis rate of 10% that some federal grants allow for those agencies without a negotiated rate?

A. Yes, if an agency does not have a negotiated rate, they could use UP TO the de minimis rate of 10%.