

Fire Family Foundation Grantmaking Guidelines – Community Grants

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Fire Family Foundation (FFF) is a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt California nonprofit corporation. Consistent with its charitable mission, FFF makes contributions to other Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations to support the local charitable needs of fire departments and firefighters and their families and other charitable causes within their local communities. The following are FFF's guidelines for making such grants, consistent with applicable law:

1. Who is eligible?

- Eligibility is limited to organizations that support (i) the charitable needs of fire departments in any jurisdiction within the U.S., active or retired firefighters or fire department staff or volunteers, or the families of any such individuals, or (iii) other charitable causes within their local communities.
- It is strongly preferred, but not required, that grantees be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as having Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. For grants to organizations that do not have Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, additional requirements apply, as set forth below.
- FFF does not make grants to organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, disability, handicap, age, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or any other basis prohibited by applicable law.

2. What are grants awarded for?

- Grants are awarded:
 - a. to provide general operating support for eligible Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations; or
 - b. for a specific, restricted charitable project, program or purpose that supports the charitable needs of:
 - i. fire departments in any jurisdiction within the U.S.,
 - ii. active or retired firefighters or fire department staff or volunteers, or the families of any such individuals, or
 - iii. other charitable causes within their local communities.
- FFF may restrict grant funds for use for specific purposes (e.g., relief for victims of disaster or personal hardship). However, FFF may not require – although it may recommend – that the grant funds be used to benefit particular individuals or persons.

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- Grants may be made for sponsorship or other support of a grantee’s fundraising event or other charity event.
3. How are recipients selected?
 - a. Potential grantees will be identified by FFF or may apply by submitting a request in writing describing how the grant funds would be used.
 - b. Grantees are selected in FFF’s discretion based on relevant factors, such as the amount of the grant requested, the potential grantee’s needs and resources, the total amount of funds that FFF has available for grants at the time, and the amount and needs of other potential grantees.
 4. How much are the grants?
 - a. There is no minimum or maximum grant amount. FFF will determine the amount of the grant in its sole discretion based on the demonstrated need or purpose for which the grant funds will be used, FFF’s available funding and any other relevant factors. Potential grantees may request a specific grant amount.
 - b. Organizations may receive more than one grant. Each potential grant will be evaluated separately.
 5. What is the grant approval process?
 - a. FFF has the sole discretion as to whether or not to make any particular grant. Qualified organizations, including organizations that received grants in the past, are not guaranteed to receive a grant.
 - b. All grants will be reviewed and approved or rejected by FFF’s Board of Directors.
 - c. FFF may require documentation or verification of information in order to make a grant, as FFF determines to be appropriate under the circumstances.
 - d. All documentation requirements determined to be necessary or appropriate under the circumstances must be met before a grant will be paid.
 - e. A written grant agreement must be entered into for all grants that are either: (1) over \$10,000, or (2) to a grantee that is not a §501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. In all such cases, the grant agreement must be signed by both parties before FFF disburses any grant funds.
 6. FFF’s Policies & Procedures

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- a. Due Diligence: Due diligence must be conducted on all potential grantees, to the extent appropriate depending on the size and nature of the grant, and such efforts shall be documented in FFF's records.
- b. Section 501(c)(3) Grantees: For all potential grantees that have Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, the following steps must be taken:
 - Each potential grantee's IRS determination letter, recognizing it as having Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, shall be requested.
 - Each potential grantee's Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status shall be verified on the IRS' website (currently, at <http://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>).
 - The potential grantee's website (if any) must be reviewed and an internet search of the potential grantee should be conducted (e.g., to identify any instances of fraud or any other financial, reputational or other or risks to FFF).
 - For all grants over \$10,000, a potential grantee's most recent tax return (IRS Form 990) and financial statements (audited financial statements, if available) must be reviewed, and any additional steps recommended by the Board shall be taken. Such steps may be taken for grants under \$10,000 as needed or appropriate.
 - For grants having a term exceeding one year, the foregoing diligence efforts shall be updated at least annually.
 - Any indicators that a grant by the Foundation may not be used for the intended purpose, and reasons why a grant would or would not be likely to be particularly effective in furthering the Foundation's tax-exempt purposes and mission, shall be brought to the attention of the Board prior to its vote on whether to approve a grant.
- c. Non-Section 501(c)(3) Grantees:
 - Grants to grantees that do not have Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status present higher risks of non-compliance with requirements arising from FFF's Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, including that the grant funds will be used other than for FFF's Section 501(c)(3) purposes. Accordingly, FFF will take appropriate steps under the applicable circumstances to ensure that any such grant funds will be used for the intended charitable purposes and consistent with Section 501(c)(3) requirements.
 - For all potential grantees that do not have Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, the potential grantee must describe in writing (which may be done

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via e-mail) the specific intended charitable use of the grant funds. FFF will ensure that such use would further charitable or educational purposes as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and will consult with legal counsel as needed to make that determination. For example, disaster relief provided to needy individuals made on an objective basis may qualify.

- All grants to grantees that do not have Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status must be made after both parties sign a written grant agreement that restricts the use of the grant funds for the intended charitable purpose and that requires the grantee to return the grant funds if not used for such purposes.
 - FFF may require in the written grant agreement that receipts or other documentation be provided to FFF to ensure that the grant funds were in fact used for the required charitable purpose, as appropriate based on the amount and purpose for the grant.
- d. Documentation: FFF is required to maintain adequate records to show that the grants it makes are consistent with federal tax law requirements given FFF's status as a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization. FFF must maintain the following documentation for each grant:
- Amount
 - Name and address of the recipient
 - Purpose of the grant
 - The due diligence done on the grantee
 - The manner in which the grantee was selected, including the written grant request (if any) and any additional documentation provided to qualify for the grant
 - Any reports, receipts or other documentation provided by the grantee to confirm that grant funds were used for the intended purposes
 - Signed grant agreement or, if none, a copy of the letter awarding the grant
 - Any relationship between the grant recipient and officers, directors, key employees or substantial contributors to FFF or entities controlled by a substantial contributor to FFF (and how a conflict of interest, if any, was managed)
- e. Post-Grant Oversight: If a written grant agreement is entered into, FFF must ensure that any requirements in the grant agreement are met (such as receiving reports or receipts from the grantee verifying that the grant funds were in fact used for the intended purposes).
- f. FFF's policies and procedures: FFF will administer these Grantmaking Guidelines consistently with FFF's other policies and procedures (including without limitation, FFF's Conflict of Interest Policy).

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- g. Conflicts of interest:
- The Foundation’s Board and any individuals assisting the Board with review of potential grantees, shall be bound by FFF’s Conflict of Interest Policy at all times, including in the administration of FFF’s grantmaking program. All such individuals are required to immediately notify the Chair of the Board of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest that they have with respect to a potential grantee or recipient of a grant.
 - Conflicts of interest may include, for example, business or family relationships between a potential grantee and FFF’s directors, officers and major donors, or such individuals’ family members or entities that they control.
 - Conflicts of interest with respect to any actual or potential grantees, and how such conflicts are being managed, must be reported to the Board prior to its deliberation and vote on such grants. The material facts relating to any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and how it was managed and addressed shall be documented (e.g., in the minutes of the meetings of the Board as appropriate and in the file relating to the actual or potential grantee).
- h. Source of funds: Funds for grants may be provided by FFF’s Board of Directors from FFF’s existing assets. FFF may also fundraise for this purpose. FFF’s Board of Directors will determine, in its sole discretion, the amount of funds that will be available for such grants.
- i. Earmarking prohibited: FFF will, and is legally required to, retain full control and discretion over all charitable donations and grants that it receives. Donors may not earmark or require contributions to go to a particular grantee organization. Any fundraising conducted by FFF will not state or imply otherwise. Nonetheless, donors may restrict their contributions for use for specific types of purposes (for example, to aid families of firefighters who died or were disabled in the line of duty).
- j. Other grantmaking: For clarity, these guidelines do not restrict FFF from making charitable grants outside the scope of these guidelines (but consistent with FFF’s Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and applicable law).
- k. Periodic review: These guidelines will be reviewed periodically by FFF’s Board of Directors to ensure compliance with changes to the law and best practices for charities.