

Region 3 Training and Exercise Reimbursement Policy

Approved by CREPC April 21, 2011

Background:

Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Grant Policy #1, approved by the Emergency Management and Homeland Security Coordinating Council on 6/9/05 established the original policy for reimbursement. The basis for this DEMHS policy was federal Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) Bulletins #141 and 157. Grant Policy #1 remains in effect today. Per discussions at the State NIMS/Training Committee in January 2011 the policy will not be updated any time soon. Further, at this Committee meeting during January 2011, it was emphasized that the DEMHS perspective is that each region decides (within the existing guidance of Grant Policy #1) how much funding to provide for training reimbursement and what categories of training are reimbursed. CREPC/Region 3 has typically established a pool of regional grant funds for reimbursement under this policy.

The original intent of the reimbursement policy was to assist departments in achieving NIMS compliance standards for training. These NIMS requirements were developed following the attacks on 9-11-01 as a way to better manage incident responses. Effective implementation of NIMS required a substantial burden on training time and budgets and the first responder community sought relief through reimbursement for time spent in NIMS compliance required training or providing backfill for those attending the training. Further the approved policy provided incentives for volunteer organizations to achieve the same level of NIMS proficiency and compliance via the volunteer stipend provisions of the reimbursement policy.

Part of the original NIMS implementation policy was to incorporate NIMS training into initial training programs. This transition has substantially been done in police, fire and emergency medical services. In practical terms, this means basic NIMS training should no longer be reimbursed because initial training is not reimbursed. Another way to view this topic is that the initial surge in NIMS training requirements has passed and it is time to rethink the reimbursement policy in light of current regional priorities.

As budgets get tighter, the Region needs to identify and prioritize training fund requirements and provide appropriate guidelines for reimbursement based on regional priorities. This policy outlines the Region 3 training and exercise reimbursement policy. The CREPC Request for Overtime /Additional Cost/Stipend Reimbursement form will continue to be the mechanism for requests for reimbursement.

Policy:

1. The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Public Safety staff is responsible for administering this policy.
2. The Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee, as the Regional Emergency Planning Team, will identify regional training and exercise priorities that are reimbursed under Grant Policy #1.
3. Regional priorities for reimbursement include the following:
 - a. Regional team training, drill and exercise participation for members of Regional response teams such as the Incident Management Team, HAZMAT Team, Bomb Squad, Dive Team, RID Team, etc.
 - b. Advanced ICS Training (ICS-300 and ICS-400) conducted locally
 - c. Pre-approved local and regional exercise participation
 - d. Pre-approved ODP training conducted at approved training venues, such as Anniston, Al.
 - e. Pre-approved training conducted at conferences that enhance regional capabilities

NOTES:

1. DEMHS is the State Administrative Agency (SAA) and CRCOG must request approval from DEMHS for training that has not been previously approved and all conference attendance.
2. Reimbursements requiring pre-approval must be pre-approved in writing. E-mail is acceptable.
3. All conference attendance must be pre-approved. Individuals committing to attend conferences without prior approval are liable for any costs incurred in the event conference attendance is not approved.
4. Reimbursement for overtime, backfill and volunteer stipend is limited to the limits established in Grant Policy #1 (\$25/hour up to \$200/day as of 4/21/11).
5. Reimbursement will only be provided if grant funds are available.
6. Departments must exhaust all efforts to obtain advanced ICS training locally rather than traveling to Anniston, AL or other locations that require travel and lodging, or extend the training duration beyond that of local training programs. If attending such training, reimbursement may not be provided beyond the reimbursement rate for the local equivalent training.
7. HAZMAT and other team training done by local jurisdictions will not normally be approved for reimbursement. This allows for continued funding for regional team development. Any local jurisdiction training conducted for non-regional team members, but similar to regional team training must be pre-approved for reimbursement.
8. On line training will no longer be reimbursed.