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## How to apply for the VFD radio grant?

Applicants must complete the web application form at [vfdradiogrant.nebraska.gov](http://vfdradiogrant.nebraska.gov), by 9/30/23. Please only one application per VFD. After the completed form is submitted, applicant will receive verification via the email address provided within the application. Should an applicant not receive a verification email after submitting the application, please notify [kelsey.c.hetrick@nebraska.gov](mailto:kelsey.c.hetrick@nebraska.gov).

## Who is eligible for the VFD radio grant?

All Nebraska Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) are invited to apply for the VFD Radio grant. This grant is intended to supply volunteer fire departments with radio equipment to facilitate communication with state agencies. **NOTE:** While we would like to supply all 472 Nebraska VFDs with radios, that will not be possible during the 2023/2024 budget year due to time and budget constraints. Instead, we will be using a selection process for all applications received by 9/30/23. We estimate 172 radios will be awarded for 2023/2024. Applicants will be notified by 10/31/23, if selected to receive a radio.

## What costs will the VFD incur for this equipment?

Legislature has tried to minimize the financial impact for the VFDs, by covering the initial cost of the equipment and the SRS fees for the life of the equipment. A case or one-time vehicle installation is also covered by the grant. VFDs will be financially responsible for covering any damage or repairs that are not covered under the 3-year warranty. VFDs are also financially responsible for the consumables (i.e., batteries, etc.) beyond what was included initially with the SRS Radio Kit. VFDs should consider adding the SRS Radio Kit to their insurance policy to cover if lost or stolen.

## How will VFDs be selected to receive the grant, since there are a limited number of SRS Radio Kits?

SRS is using the State Fire Marshal (SFM) list of VFDs and other data to validate the applicants' eligibility for the grant. If a VFD should find they aren't listed on the SFM VFD list, they will need to address this with SFM.

## How will VFDs be notified if they will be receiving an SRS Radio Kit?

Using the email address that the VFD provided within the application, grantees will be notified of being selected to receive the grant and asked to provide additional details. Applications that were not selected will also be notified via email that they won't be receiving equipment through this grant.

## What if the equipment is damaged or broken?

Notify the SRS team of the equipment damage, so that they can try to have it repaired under the manufacturer's warranty. The grant has purchased a 3-year warranty for both radios in the SRS Radio Kit. Motorola offers an additional extended warranty option, if a VFD would want to purchase extended coverage beyond the first 3 years. Damages not covered by the warranty will be the responsibility of the VFD.

## What is an SRS Radio Kit?

The SRS Radio Kit consists of 2 radios: Tri-band portable radio and a Mobile radio connected to Vehicle Range Extender (VRX). VFDs will have the option to have the kit installed in a vehicle or in a portable case.

## Vehicle Installation vs. Case Installation?

VFDs must choose between having the equipment in a portable case or have the equipment installed in a vehicle. This is a one-time option, as the grant will only provide for one or the other. Should circumstances change later, the cost to change will not be covered by the grant.

## How do I obtain the equipment after I have been notified of the award?

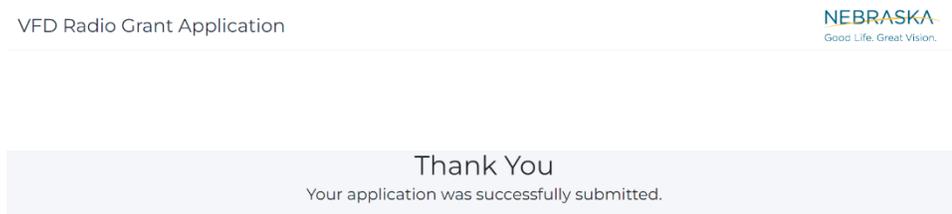
If you selected to have the equipment installed in a case, the equipment will be available for pick up during your scheduled training session. If you selected to have the equipment installed in a vehicle, the equipment will be sent to the vendor you designated to install the equipment and it will be between you and the vendor to set a date and time for the installation.

## When and where is the training?

Training sessions will be offered for each NSP troop area. Dates and times are still TBD. Once the training schedule has been published, VFDs can sign up. A training video will also be made available ([Link HERE](#)) for additional staff training and as a refresher course.

## How do I know my application was received?

If an application has been successfully completed, the applicant will see this message on the screen:



The email address entered into the application form will then receive an email from [OCIO.DoNotReply@nebraska.gov](mailto:OCIO.DoNotReply@nebraska.gov). This email includes a copy of your submitted answers for your records.

- Please only one application per VFD.
- The submit button won't process if any of the required fields aren't completed and may require scrolling up to find the question in error (text will be red).

## Are the SRS Radio Kits VFD property?

Radio kits are the property of the State of Nebraska. Radios will have State asset tags and serial numbers recorded as part of the State's inventory. It is the VFDs responsibility to secure and maintain the radio kits. VFDs should report if radios are damaged, missing, or no longer used. Should a VFD's situation

change, and the radio kit is no longer being used, the equipment should be returned to SRS for redistribution.

## What is required for the equipment testing, after it is installed?

Monthly testing consists of powering on the SRS Radio Kit and talking to the local PSAP.

- Example of Test Outline will be provided later

## Are state EMT entities eligible for the grant?

Per Nebraska State statute 35-901 the following are eligible for the SRS Radio grant:

(1) For purposes of this section, volunteer department shall mean volunteer fire department or volunteer first-aid, rescue, or emergency squad or volunteer fire company serving any city, village, county, township, or rural or suburban fire protection district

## What if applicant doesn't have a FDID number?

If a VFD doesn't have an FDID, they should contact the State Fire Marshal to obtain one. If State Fire Marshal has approved the VFD, but hasn't issued a FDID yet, please use 0000 for the FDID in the application to signify that the FDID is in the process of being issued.

Applicants, such as EMT, that don't have an FDID will still need to be validated for eligibility by the State Fire Marshal.

## What talk groups will be programmed on the radios?

The radios will be using the existing interoperability talk groups. We also will be adding the local talk groups as requested for these.

## Will the radios be VHF, UHF, or 7-800?

The portable radio will come with VHF and 7/800 MHz. The radios are capable of UHF, but UHF is not included with the SRS Radio Kit and would require an additional cost to the grantee for adding the UHF flash update from Motorola. The APX model will be multi-band and the mobile will be single-band VHF

Radios will be configured by default with VHF, if UHF is needed the VFD will incur cost for the UHF programming

## Are the SRS Radio Kits compatible with the ORION system too?

The SRS Radio Kits are compatible with TDMA (required by ORION and Lincoln systems). The grant also allows for the programming of adding other systems, so that systems like ORION can be added. Obtaining permission for systems other than SRS requires VFDs to enter into agreements with the other systems.

## What brand of radios will the SRS Radio Kits include?

Most of the SRS Radio Kits will be the Motorola brand. Kenwood is another option if that better fits the VFD's needs. Grant applicants must select between Motorola or Kenwood when completing the application form.

## Why am I getting a VPN error when trying to access the website?

The links provided are accessible to the public, but the direct link must be used. If a person tries to navigate to the location from the CIO homepage, they are likely to get an error message.

- Grant information: <https://cio.nebraska.gov/network-serv/publicsafety/index.html> and locate the "State of Nebraska Volunteer Fire Departments – Radio Grant Information" button on the page.
- Application form: <https://vfdradiogrant.nebraska.gov/>

## Can the grant be used to order radios from local vendor?

The grant is providing equipment and training and not cash.

## How will warranties be processed?

Please contact SRS who will then contact the manufacturer. Since the kits are purchased by SRS, the manufacturer will have SRS listed as the registered equipment owner.

## Do we need to bring our apparatus (fire truck) to the training session?

Those VFDs that are getting the equipment in a case will receive it at the first training session that they attend. For departments that will have the equipment installed, the vendor you chose during the application process will reach out to schedule a mutually agreeable installation date. There is no need to bring any apparatus to training. The training will be in a classroom setting with power supplies available for practice with the equipment.