

**Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG)  
Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC)  
Regional Grant Process**

**Homeland Security Program Priorities**

Each grant year, the US Department of Homeland Security sets priorities for grants under the Homeland Security programs. Homeland security activities in the ATCOG Homeland Security Program are guided by these priorities as well as the goals and regional implementation strategies as identified in the current ATCOG Regional Strategic Implementation Plan and the ATCOG Regional Interoperability Communication Plan.

**Identifying Projects for Grants**

**Eligibility.** State of Texas guidelines state that potential sub-recipients for State Homeland Security Program grant funds are incorporated municipalities, counties, and the regional councils of governments (ATCOG). School districts, transit authorities, hospital districts, and river authorities *may* be eligible if ATCOG, a city or county grant recipient, or the State Director of Homeland Security determines such funding meets preparedness needs for the region. To ensure coordination, projects must be submitted through the appropriate jurisdiction (city and/or county). Eligibility does not guarantee that a jurisdiction will receive funds.

All jurisdictions must meet the State eligibility requirements by the state deadlines to be deemed eligible for funds unless a blanket extension is granted for any of the eligibility requirements. If when the final eligibility list is distributed to the COGs by the State a jurisdiction feels that an error has been made in determining its eligibility, it may request an extension from the State. This is the only circumstance when the Homeland Security Advisory Committee will honor an extension awarded by the State. Decisions regarding allocations will be delayed until the jurisdiction's extension deadline passes. If an extension is awarded and the jurisdiction is still not eligible by the deadline, the jurisdiction will not be considered for funding. If a jurisdiction applies for yet another extension and it is granted, the Homeland Security Advisory Committee will not honor this extension nor will it allocate funding to that jurisdiction. The Homeland Security Committee will not delay allocations while a jurisdiction applies for repeated extensions.

**Submittal of Project Applications.** Project applications will be distributed by ATCOG staff via three different avenues – mail, facsimile, and email - to ensure its delivery. The project application must be submitted by the deadline date set by ATCOG staff. Project applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for funding. ATCOG intends for local jurisdictions to have approximately two months to complete the information and submit their project applications. This should allow time for the jurisdiction to have the project application approved by its governing body if required by local policies and procedures. A certifying official of the potential sub-recipient must sign the project application for submittal. This must be the county judge and/or the city

mayor. Because of the regional focus of the homeland security program, local jurisdictions are encouraged to work through their respective emergency management coordinators when suggesting or seeking funding for a particular project.

**Review and Recommendation for Funding.** ATCOG staff will review the project applications for completeness and for project eligibility. This will include verification of a sub-recipient's eligibility to receive State Homeland Security Program funds as well as whether the expenditures proposed are allowable under federal regulations and guidelines.

**Committee Consideration.** Project applications will be submitted to the committee to be discussed and prioritized.

Projects will be prioritized based upon criteria as set out by the committee, which may include such considerations as:

- Compatibility with regional goals and approach
- Role or importance to regional response planning
- Immediacy of need
- Cost effectiveness
- Enhancement of existing systems or capabilities
- Ability to sustain the project after the grant funding expires
- Ability to meet state priorities
- Additional criteria as determined by the committee

Applicants for grant funds will be informed and invited to the committee meetings when the project proposals are to be discussed.

If matching funds are a requirement to receive State Homeland Security Program grant funds, the applicant will be required to present their plan for meeting the matching funds requirement at that time. If matching funds have not been identified, the project will be removed from consideration.

**Final Project Allocation.** Following the committee meeting, the Chair, on behalf of the committee, will then make a recommendation to the ATCOG Board of Directors for approval.

Project allocations approved for funding will be submitted by ATCOG staff to the State Administrative Agency (SAA) for approval. Once approved, the SAA will send sub-recipient agreements directly to the jurisdictions for signature.

## **Performance Period and Closeout**

**Responsibilities.** Sub-recipients of State Homeland Security Program grant funds are responsible for meeting grant deadlines, ordering required equipment, reporting online or to data calls as required by the state, complying with audits, maintaining records and all other sub-recipient requirements as specified in the agreement with the state. In addition to the regional planning and grant administration duties as required by the state, ATCOG staff members provide support to the sub-recipients to include informing them of state and federal guidance and deadlines, assisting with eligibility requirements, assisting with online reporting, providing liaison with the SAA, compiling information from or for data calls, supporting the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and coordinating among projects and/or among jurisdictions involved in a project.

**Reporting on Grant Progress.** The performance period for State Homeland Security Grant Program is officially two years. Sub-recipients will report on grant progress to the SAA and ATCOG each quarter of the performance period (January, April, July, and October).

**Unused Funds.** At any point during the performance period, the sub-recipient may request to use funds for another project. This may occur whether these funds remain from costs savings in an initial project or whether needs have changed and the initial project is unnecessary or of a lower priority. Using grant funds for another purpose other than the project initially awarded will require approval of the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and the ATCOG Board of Directors.

Sub-recipients will report on unused funds to ATCOG six months prior to close of the performance period (approximately July of the second year). The Homeland Security Advisory Committee may make new recommendations to the ATCOG Board of Directors to reallocate unused funds to other projects in the region at that time.