

C. Is this bonus for a specific individual who is likely to leave?

If "Yes", then you may apply for a bonus of up to 25% of that person's annual base pay.

D. Is this bonus for a group of staff who are likely to leave?

If "Yes", then you may apply for a bonus of up to 10% of each person's annual base pay.

Note: "Retention incentives must be entirely additive to an employee's regular compensation, narrowly tailored to need, and should not exceed incentives traditionally offered by the recipient or compensation that alternative employers may offer to compete for the employees. Treasury presumes that retention incentives that are less than 25 percent of the rate of base pay for an individual employee or 10 percent for a group or category of employees are reasonably proportional to the need to retain employees, as long as other requirements are met." (Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds: Overview of the Final Rule, p. 28)

Project Applications

Please answer the following questions to indicate which projects you are applying for funding to assist First Responders

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| 1. Are you applying for funding to assist in the hiring of First Responders? | No |
| 2. Are you applying for funding to assist in the retention of First Responders? | No |
| 3. Are you applying for funding to address the wellness of First Responders? | YES |

Project Narrative

Describe the project/projects to be implemented with grant funding. Narratives must respond to the following:

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1. Please describe the behavioral health, recruitment, or retention problem to be addressed by the proposed program.

First responders are faced with major stressors on a daily basis, due, in part, to the exposure to trauma they face. Unfortunately, the stigma of mental health results in a resistance of first responder to seek help. Police officers and firefighters have one of the highest rates of suicide of any profession. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the stress levels of first responders.

First responders exposed to COVID-19, even in the early stages of the pandemic, have reported higher amounts of alcohol use and severity, and were associated with more severe symptoms of anxiety and depression (Cognitive Behavior Theory, July 2021).

Cleveland's first responders have faced extreme stress and stresses and health issues related to COVID-19. There were 746 COVID cases among our first responders. That includes 562 police officers, 174 EMTs and paramedics, and 170 firefighters.

2. Please describe the project/projects to be implemented that will address the problem stated above.

The City of Cleveland is requesting funding for a combined wellness program for Police, Fire, EMS and Dispatch. Our plan is to create one public safety wellness program so the individual divisions stop operating in silos and combine efforts.

To accomplish this, we will:

- 1- Purchase licensing for a first responders and dispatchers wellness app. The app will include a variety of content and features including support for alcohol abuse, anger management, anxiety, depression, grief, peer support, and stress management. It will be confidential and available 24/7.
- 2- Hire two therapists to assist our current psychiatrist, creating the ability to work with more first responders.

3. Please describe the benefits of the proposed program for First Responders.

The benefits of these programs will include:

- 1- Giving all first responders access to a confidential, proactive wellness solution that includes anonymous self-assessments, peer support, vetted therapists and other tools. It will improve wellness and reduce stress and isolation.
- 2- Provide therapists for all first responders so more can receive these benefits. Therapy sessions have less stigma than seeing a psychologist so that will assist with getting employees to access the services.
- 3- Creating a Public Safety yoga and mindfulness program, and training Fire and EMS employees to be instructors, will prompt more fire, EMS and dispatchers to join the classes. The Division of Police have offered these classes successfully over the past few years. We look forward to adding other first responders to this valuable program that aids in stress reduction.

4. Please describe the history and background of the programs being recommended.

