



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 16, 2026

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

**Re: Authorization to Accept SFY2025-2026 Recruitment and Retention
Grant Program Funds**

Dear Honorable Members:

Please find an accompanying memorandum and proposed resolution from the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services requesting authorization to accept \$25,000 in funding from the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact Dan Neaverth Jr. at the Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services. Thank you for your consideration on this request.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Mark C. Poloncarz", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/crn
Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services
Re: Authorization to Accept SFY2025-2026 Recruitment & Retention Grant Program Funds
Date: January 16, 2026

SUMMARY

Legislative authorization is requested to accept \$25,000 in funding from the NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, for the Fiscal Years 2025 & 2026 SFY2025-26 Recruitment & Retention Grant Program Funds (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026). This funding will be used to support the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency services personnel.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The funding for this action is derived entirely from 100% State Aid dollars. No County tax dollars are necessary to support this request.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services has been awarded \$25,000 of NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services funds. This funding is to support the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency services personnel. Of the over 100 fire and EMS agencies, the majority are staffed by volunteer personnel. The geographic diversity and large number of agencies create a challenge for standardizing training and operations as well as disparities in access and funding. There is a commonality in their difficulty recruiting new firefighters and the retention of current members. In each of the last 3 years, Erie County volunteer ranks have had a net loss of 60 or more firefighters. This funding will be used to provide shared marketing and recruitment resources for all county volunteer departments.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services would not be able to provide such resources and the net loss of Erie County volunteer firefighters will likely continue.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services will work with the Division of Budget and Management to amend the 2026 Adopted Budget amounts.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY & EMERGENCY
SERVICES

RE: Authorization to Accept SFY 2025-2026 Recruitment & Retention Grant Program
Funds

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services has been awarded \$25,000 in state aid funding to support the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency services personnel with shared resources in the SFY 2025-2026 Recruitment & Retention Grant Program Funds; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services requires legislative approval to accept the State funds and to amend the 2026 Adopted Budget; and

WHEREAS, no County funds will be necessary for Erie County to accept this State aid to support the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and emergency services personnel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the County Executive or Deputy County Executive to accept \$25,000 from NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and amend the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' 2026 Adopted Budget (Fund 110, Funds Center 16700) as follows:

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services
Fund 110, Funds Center 16700

<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
409000 State Aid Revenues	<u>\$25,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$25,000</u>

<u>APPROPRIATIONS</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
530000 Other Expenses	<u>\$25,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$25,000</u>

and be it further

RESOLVED, these funds will be utilized to ensure that DHSES are able to continue to support, strengthen and enhance the work of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency personnel through recruitment and retention; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to the Division of Budget and Management to make any technical adjustments necessary to effectuate this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the County Executive's Office, Comptroller's Office, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Department of Law, and Division of Budget and Management.