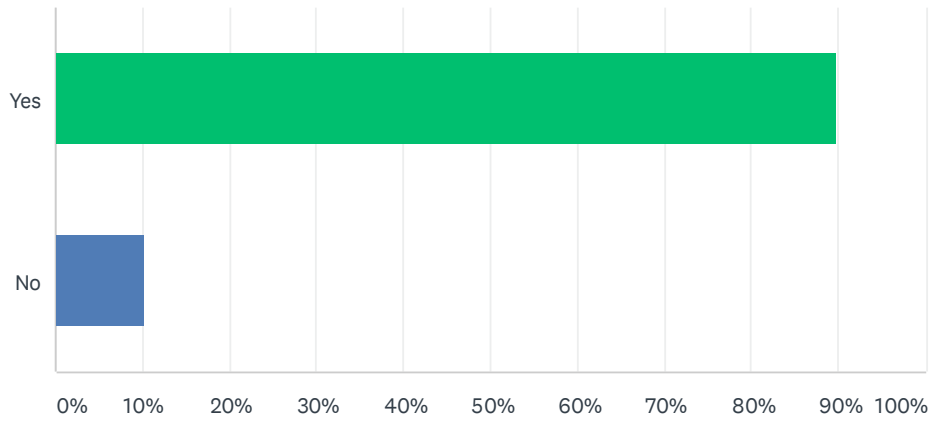


Q1 Do you feel the Relief Association law needed updated?

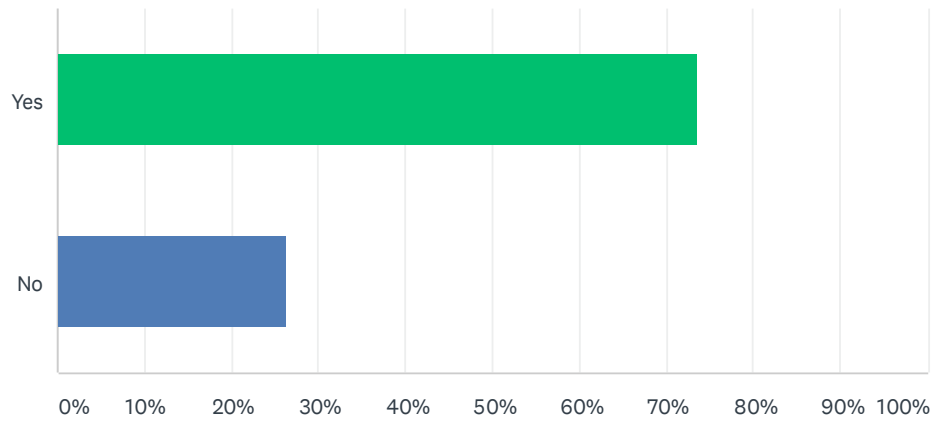
Answered: 358 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89.66%	321
No	10.34%	37
TOTAL		358

Q2 Do you feel the current regulations and requirements cause a burden to volunteer organizations?

Answered: 359 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.54%	264
No	26.46%	95
TOTAL		359

Q3 What recommendations do you have to improve the administration of Relief Funds at the local level?

Answered: 319 Skipped: 41

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I think there should be more money pushed to the rural areas that don't have the tax base to support them. There are companies sitting on thousands of dollars of relief money and some are just getting by.	3/18/2021 4:07 PM
2	Simplify what the auditing requirements are.	3/14/2021 1:53 PM
3	To be able to use Relief funds to aid college students with tuition as an incentive for them to join.	3/10/2021 1:58 PM
4	The administration of relief funds should be flexible to allow for a combination of staff members and/or volunteer members of the receiving organization to manage the administration of relief funds. An algorithm to determine the distribution of the relief funding for municipalities with multiple relief association to fund could be beneficial.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
5	Provide a state accounting/bookkeeping system we can use to keep the books of the relief department in, to make it easier for us to keep our records true and correct, as well as easier for the state to conduct their audits.	2/15/2021 12:27 PM
6	Develop specific software/portal for record keeping to ensure accuracy and accountability. Expand program to eliminate duplication of services, and require minimum training to be eligible.	2/15/2021 10:28 AM
7	For larger organizations, require Audit every year. It is very burdensome to be audited every 3 years.	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
8	there needs to be a limit on the amount a fire dept can have in "reserve". Some depts in our area have millions of \$ invested and continue to get more each year. Last year at a chiefs mtg in Bucks county, state rep and fire chief Frank Farry boasted to those in attendance that his dept had "piles of money in relief" meanwhile other depts struggled to host multiple fundraising events just to survive. His dept is just one example of an unequal distribution of funding. The current system rewards more money to depts in larger, more populated areas where there are multiple sources of income. While other depts get very little funding. Fires do not care if your a wealthy or poor dept, they burn the same.	2/11/2021 9:26 PM
9	Not sure	2/11/2021 3:07 PM
10	A minimum amount should be established to cover the costs of CORE responsibilities. Oversight should be given to the municipal government to ensure funds are being spent on CORE PPE and Injury- accident/sickness insurances as an addition to municipal supplied workers comp, not wasted non CORE equipment.	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
11	Accountability	2/10/2021 10:01 PM
12	Disclaimer: The opinions here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of my department. Instead of a transfer of funds transferring as cash to the local area which then needs to get audited biannually, I wish the would be something more along the lines of a state owned account that could be used to pay vendors directly and each transaction could be audited as it went through. I think that would help ease the record keeping burden, eliminate confusion about rules, increase the odds of infractions getting detected closer to the event, and make it harder to improperly transfer money to individuals.	2/10/2021 8:08 PM
13	Open the funds up to be able to be spent on more items	2/10/2021 7:56 PM
14	relief funds be allocated based on "studied" needs and not unnecessary purchases or duplication of equipment in areas. Application fairly to support career and combination department access being tied to department consolidations and regional movements. Utilize the funds to force efficiencies in department planning.	2/10/2021 7:14 PM

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15	Allow the individual fire departments manage their own state funds following the management guidelines for volunteer fire fighter relief association.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
16	More clear definition of what is or is not an allowable expense.	2/10/2021 3:45 PM
17	None	2/10/2021 1:18 PM
18	Expand the use of the money for fire dept. Service awards help recruitment and retention for fire dept. Drones are a useful tool for fire dept. Expand the parameters used for distributing fire relief monies.	2/10/2021 11:20 AM
19	develop computer program to administer the program	2/10/2021 10:08 AM
20	Add certain expenditures	2/10/2021 9:57 AM
21	Besides the fact we are getting less every year and equipment is getting more costly every year it should be treated like a grant	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
22	Come up with a way the local organization is getting the funds they deserve. People that have a RD or Pottsville mailing address because they get home delivery. The money for their property should not go to Pottsville because they may not even live near the city.	2/10/2021 5:29 AM
23	Because we are a single fire station town, this is not a problem.	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
24	Remove some limitations on what items can funds be used	2/9/2021 4:08 PM
25	Better distribution funds	2/9/2021 3:58 PM
26	The accounting standards that they require are terrible. If the treasurer uses Quickbooks, why can't the reports from Quickbooks be used rather than hand writing it all on their formats. Old school	2/9/2021 3:55 PM
27	There needs to be consistency among the auditors as to what is a permitted expense and what is not. It is inconsistent from year to year and service to service. EMS has been pushed aside because most services are combination but municipal services are able to spend these funds. Funds should be distributed fairly across all levels and types of emergency service organizations.	2/9/2021 3:17 PM
28	Use of monies should be better defined.	2/9/2021 3:05 PM
29	Come up with a better way to determine distribution amounts	2/9/2021 3:01 PM
30	a better system to get more funds. we have a major development being built in our town and our funding is not increasing the way it should.	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
31	Does FEMA have people at the local level administer and manage grant funds? No. You apply with a very specific, narrow request and it is administered by FEMA. Maybe it is time to remove layers and have the state administer the program.	2/9/2021 2:14 PM
32	I believe the current system works well. I think maybe the expenditures guide on line may be a little bit in depth. Example: When we bought command vehicles the guide said it was a legitimate purchase, but with my 35 years as treasurer, I knew they had to be housed in the firehouse which was not the purpose. The guide did not say this but I did verify this was the case with a representative of your office	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
33	Please see comments below outlining issue of career firefighters functioning as members of volunteer/combo departments being denied relief benefits	2/9/2021 11:14 AM
34	Relief auditing needs to accept modern forms of inventory tracking. Requiring paper copies is unnecessary.	2/9/2021 10:49 AM
35	Clearer guidelines for use with less restrictions	2/9/2021 10:40 AM
36	To look at amounts of money being given out our organization only get 4,000 dollars a year which others are get up to 50,000 a year	2/9/2021 9:55 AM
37	Increase funding	2/9/2021 9:43 AM
38	Relief from burdensome inventory tracking requirements for small/disposable equipment purchases.	2/9/2021 9:08 AM

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39	Losen requirements on Audits, Equipment Asset schedules, Allowable purchases, and increase the available amount of money. Incentivize Fire Departments financially who wish to meet standards, provide quality driven public safety services and wish to consolidate.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
40	Online auditing and more easily access tracking of items	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
41	Loosen the restrictions. Would like to see funds approved for training facilities	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
42	The burden to the local volunteer companies is the tracking of inventory purchased and owned by the relief. The volunteer turn over rate is so high these days, purchases made and tracked by one set of individuals is not always cleanly handed over to another. When you talk about tracking beyond ~5 years it gets very difficult to keep the books current. Also retiring equipment needing to be formally tracked as well causes pain. On top of that the relief organization is just another overhead to running a fire company that the current volunteer shortages just cant handle. Your relief officers are almost always officers of the fire company that need to now to 2 jobs.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
43	It should be party to both the governing body and fire organization.	2/8/2021 7:49 PM
44	In combination depts, it should allow training & PPE costs to be used for both paid & volunteers	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
45	The amount of administrative items that need followed become very tedious	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
46	Expand allowable expenses	2/8/2021 6:29 PM
47	Constancy with audits; removing the municipalities from the allotments, give them directly to the fire company; have a better agency to answer questions regarding procedures and expenditures.	2/8/2021 5:54 PM
48	None	2/8/2021 5:53 PM
49	open what the funds can be spent for	2/8/2021 4:18 PM
50	Organizations should be provided with more discretion as to the use of funds	2/8/2021 4:10 PM
51	None	2/8/2021 4:09 PM
52	Better training for VFRA presidents and treasurers. Increase funding by having foreign and domestic insurers contribute.	2/8/2021 3:29 PM
53	Allow monies to be used on more equipment to cause less strain on Emergency Services General Fund	2/8/2021 3:04 PM
54	More liberal use of funds and less restrictive means of tracking the use of the funds. All electronic would be best.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM
55	Funds should be distributed directly to the Fire Company Relief Associations, rather than have local governmental agencies decide how much they feel should be accorded. This would equalize funding, rather than have local political agendas override the needs of a volunteer Association	2/8/2021 2:57 PM
56	I'm not sure, actually.	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
57	Provide more training sessions Besides sample forms/ledgers, offer electronic versions	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
58	More safety and everyday equipment needs to be added to the list for purchase.	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
59	Greater latitude to use the funds.	2/8/2021 1:00 PM
60	Balance out the level of funding. Too many Relief associations have way more money than they need and too many don't get enough money annually. There needs to be a better formula to calculate the funding. It should take into account the Fire Company resources needed to protect their response district. It makes no sense to give one Relief Association hundreds of dollars that have the same resources as a Relief Association that gets far less. How much money does a relief association need? Rich Relief Associations continue to get rich while the less fortunate relief associations continue to struggle.	2/8/2021 12:35 PM
61	In general do away with the relief organizations, give the money directly to the fire companies and have the audit performed through the fire companies. It is too much to have two executive	2/8/2021 12:06 PM

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boards in a fire company when the money and expenditures can be tracked through one organization.

62	distribution of funds to equalize funding to every relief assn.	2/8/2021 11:51 AM
63	1)Allow our independent CPA to conduct an audit 2)Include more fire service related expenses as approved expenditures	2/8/2021 10:55 AM
64	Keep safety in mind, there are too many grey areas that no-one gives us a definite yes or no, then the audit comes and what we bought as safety was not correct we now have to pay it out of the fire company general account.	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
65	More money for rural departments	2/8/2021 10:48 AM
66	Allow fire companies to spend relief money on what they need. There are too many restrictions on how it can be spent. As long as it supports the mission of emergency response, it should be good.	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
67	Auditors should work as a partner, not as an enforcers.	2/8/2021 10:33 AM
68	Be able to use the funds for more things.	2/8/2021 10:21 AM
69	none at this time	2/8/2021 10:13 AM
70	The local level is fine.	2/8/2021 9:57 AM
71	Clear Definition of eligible organizations.	2/8/2021 9:54 AM
72	Create a state comptroller to pay relief bills from all associations, there will still be local control, as to what an organization will spend there money on. This will eliminate theft of relief funds by unscrupulous individuals.	2/8/2021 9:45 AM
73	Allow for a more expanded list of allowable expenses	2/8/2021 9:25 AM
74	Having all of the auditors on the same page when it comes to auditing. Every 2 years, when you get someone different, they tell you different things and its not referenced in the regulations. When you point this out, they become silent or try to fight back and change the rules. There should be more oversight from fire departments on what they can and cant do versus the state saying this is how its done.	2/8/2021 9:09 AM
75	Expanding the list of allowable expenses.	2/8/2021 9:05 AM
76	Reduce the gap in funding from the highest to lowest, to reach the median	2/8/2021 9:03 AM
77	Give relief to departments that need it. Large and finical stable department get the most funds.	2/8/2021 8:27 AM
78	None	2/8/2021 5:59 AM
79	Expand what the funds can be used for.	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
80	Make the process simpler. Don't use so many "lawyer words" Better define the acceptable items and stop making it difficult to understand	2/7/2021 8:50 PM
81	We use quick boots and emergency reporting for our inventory. There should be a way to download these items on keep in the file instead of hard copies of everything. I realize that some hard copies are needed.	2/7/2021 6:12 PM
82	All fire departments should get a set amount and then more from that point let's say everyone gets 15000 and then divide the rest up with a formula like is used now. That would make it fair for the companys that only get a couple thousand they also have needs and smaller mail campaigns and less business to go to for help	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
83	Pass the law that if you got under 20k dollars you would get 20k this was talked about an never got passed	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
84	None	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
85	Less paperwork with common sense oversight	2/7/2021 4:40 PM
86	Not be so restrictive in what can be bought with relief funds.	2/7/2021 4:39 PM
87	Simplification (modernization) of applicable purchases. Centralization of state administration	2/7/2021 4:12 PM

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	and oversight.	
88	We should be allowed to use more computerization and less paper forms.	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
89	Increase education to elected officials and the public on what it is and what it is used for.	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
90	Just need to change certain requirements with the times we are dealing with.	2/7/2021 1:50 PM
91	None	2/7/2021 1:48 PM
92	Increase amounts to smaller volunteer associations. A minimum of \$10,00.00 would be a great improvement.	2/7/2021 1:32 PM
93	More available purchasing and more equal monies.	2/7/2021 1:22 PM
94	The fire service is changing. We need funds open for more training, to be precise the medical end of it. Most volunteer stations can't afford medical classes if we could use some of the funds that would help.	2/7/2021 1:00 PM
95	we feel that we need a clear set of which items can be purchased with relief money. right now when we call with a question if item can be purchased we are told we will let you know when you get audited.	2/7/2021 12:58 PM
96	Allow REASONABLE (\$600 +per month min)LOSAP funding which will help with future recruitment and retention. Like NY, VA, FL etc currently do.	2/7/2021 12:54 PM
97	More comprehensive list of approved purchases Expand laws to provide more benefit to volunteers i.e. LOSAP programs and incentive programs	2/7/2021 12:53 PM
98	Revisit the restrictions on what the money can be used for.	2/7/2021 12:38 PM
99	The Relief Funds eligibility should include other legitimate Organizations like Water Rescue Companies, Special Search & Rescue Units, etc., that are not associated with a Fire dept.	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
100	Allow relief associations to pay for gear for paid firemen not just volunteer, take away rules of what you cannot purchase	2/7/2021 12:07 PM
101	An easier way to ask for interpretation of the law.	2/7/2021 11:56 AM
102	Get more restrictive with allowable equipment. Cap the amount of reserve an association can have. When they reach the cap, reduce their distribution and give more to those who are struggling.	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
103	More funding and wider range of items funding can be used for	2/7/2021 11:33 AM
104	Relax the regulations on what the funds can be used for. Needless to say, funds should not be used for social events, but the requirements for how the funds could be used are too restrictive.	2/7/2021 11:06 AM
105	The main issue I have run into is the determination if an item is relief purchaseable or not. The auditor can't give you the answer and DCED will only give you an opinion. Defining what is or is not a safety related item can be interpreted in various ways. It might be good to set up an email address or other portal dedicated to getting approval for an expenditure. And something you can print out as a receipt that it was approved or not. That then would be attached to the receipt so the auditor doesn't have to question it.	2/7/2021 10:59 AM
106	What you can purchase and what you can not purchase is to vague.	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
107	They could be more evenly distributed to all companies not some of the larger municipalities getting larger sums and putting it in a bank account	2/7/2021 10:36 AM
108	Allow for expanded use of the money toward the repair and maintenance of emergency vehicles that will improve or maintain the safety of those riding it (example - buying new tires). Mandate that that all monies received by the municipalities go directly to the department designated as the primary responding agency and not split by other agencies who may respond to the coverage area.	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
109	Broaden the usage of funds to the needs of the organization. An increase in relief funding for out struggling volunteers is desperately needed!	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
110	Simple guide lines that can be printed for each member of the local organization.	2/7/2021 10:12 AM

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111	Allow the use of electronic Bill paying and single check signatures to pay bills	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
112	Simplify list of of relief-eligible items	2/7/2021 9:55 AM
113	Certified 3rd party to handle trausere duties and be paid by the commonwealth to prevent theft of funds	2/7/2021 9:43 AM
114	A new Federal 501 category for State Audited Relief Association to eliminate the cost and time of filing a Federal 990 Tax Form	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
115	None at this time.	2/7/2021 9:28 AM
116	Open the law to a broader scope of funding for purchasing	2/7/2021 9:07 AM
117	Perhaps there needs to be a committee that meets to discuss changes and help assist with these changes. Be able to utilize money to fund a length of service award for members	2/7/2021 9:04 AM
118	Us funds for life insurance, once satisfied, money can be used for any reasonable purchaces	2/7/2021 8:37 AM
119	More oversight needs to be administered. Some associations play really loose with the money and then barely get a slap on the wrist when it is uncovered	2/7/2021 6:49 AM
120	Expand purchasing regulations, revise the appropriation formula	2/7/2021 6:21 AM
121	Funding seems fine Usage of funds needs some attention	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
122	Clearly identify items approved and not approve. All training is safety related and should be included in approval	2/7/2021 2:19 AM
123	More incentives for volunteers	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
124	I feel Relief Associations should have certified accountants and or professional "Money people" required to sit on the committees in order to properly guide, manage and handle monies.	2/7/2021 12:59 AM
125	More options and what to spend the money on.	2/6/2021 11:27 PM
126	To administer and reconcile relief funds in a real world setting for fire companies vs a financial administration always finding fault in fire company administration	2/6/2021 11:06 PM
127	The recording keeping on the local level needs to be more streamlined. The amount of recording keeping just for audit purposes is overblown. Especially when the resources on a local level are already stretched	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
128	More flexibility to use the funds in any way as long as the company can clearly demonstrate "related to Emergency response"	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
129	Lift all restrictions on spending, just give the allotment as an annual stipend. Also, require municipalities to evenly distribute funds amongst all organizations within their boundaries.	2/6/2021 10:05 PM
130	we file tax forms with the federal government done by an accountant then the state also audits the books which takes a lot of extra time for the administration officers.	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
131	Broader use of funds. Many small agencies or municipalities with several stations bank the funds because of the restrictions. Additionally,any fail to understand what they can truly be used for	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
132	Loosen the spending guidelines to allow more flexibility in spending. Perhaps allow up to a certain percentage to be used for Fire Company debt relief and infrastructure improvements.	2/6/2021 9:19 PM
133	Level the playing field, some departments in our county are getting over 75,000.00 and some get 3000.00 but the equipment all costs the same , definitely not fair	2/6/2021 9:02 PM
134	Some organizations are incurring hundreds of thousands of dollars while others are barely getting by. Restrictions on what funds can be spent on seem confusing.	2/6/2021 8:27 PM
135	There needs to be a better way of evaluating the department's need to get more funds.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM
136	None	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
137	Stop adding items that have nothing to do with safety of firefighters. But are just ways to help very rich departments spend money they have been hording for years. Example retirement	2/6/2021 7:01 PM

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	funds where the insurance companies get rich!	
138	Cap the amount of money that can be kept on hand and redistribution to smaller departments that get small amounts. There should be a minimum amount distributed.	2/6/2021 5:40 PM
139	Improve the equipment list benefits.	2/6/2021 5:26 PM
140	Update of allowed expenses Improve auditing process	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
141	More even across the board. A cap on how much a dept can save.	2/6/2021 4:37 PM
142	Documentation is difficult to maintain to assure a clean audit. My only deficiency was lack of paper check copies. Didn't matter that I could access all checks on line.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
143	Eliminate some of the bureaucratic constraints regarding expenditure of funds.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
144	Re evaluation of approved expenditures. Make it easier for approval of online purchases . Make it so companies can match grant approvals for equipment with relief funds.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
145	Funds should be able to be used for anything	2/6/2021 3:00 PM
146	Exemption of audits for funds below a dollar amount. Just show proof of expenditures like we do for state grant if your VFD only recovers under 15k annually	2/6/2021 2:49 PM
147	Allocation determination	2/6/2021 2:33 PM
148	Reevaluate the current funding that is being offered, and increase it due to the operational cost to maintain equipment, building and apparatus in a ready to respond manner. Include a pay-for-call to volunteers to incentivize new recruits.	2/6/2021 2:25 PM
149	Approved equipment becomes a burden between DCED and the AG's audit. One makes recommendations, the other cites things in their audit, neither of which are always and consistently on the same page. Additionally, some of the items could use updating on the pre-approved list as well.	2/6/2021 1:54 PM
150	3rd party oversight of relief funds via a regional office.	2/6/2021 1:43 PM
151	Should be sent directly to fire departments	2/6/2021 1:28 PM
152	Give directly to FD NOT govt. Change the formula to allow smaller depts to get a minimum amount based on coverage area as well.	2/6/2021 1:07 PM
153	Streamline audit requirements. Make online banking easier. Look at cities with old Associations sitting on mlions of dollars and figure out how they can help their now all or mostly career department.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
154	Streamline the request process	2/6/2021 12:42 PM
155	None	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
156	Better communication btw VFRA and the State in interpreting the approved equipment list.	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
157	At the local level, our allocated monies we receive fast and efficiently.	2/6/2021 12:00 PM
158	Allow for a wider range of allowable purchase related to vehicles.	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
159	Require minimum relief insurance for all dept's/associations. Equalize funds to departments and per member to eliminate the current inequity of the very rich that can't spend all their funds and those that get very little.	2/6/2021 11:52 AM
160	Allow for use for incentives and salary	2/6/2021 11:46 AM
161	Allow municipalities to assist the volunteers with the audit Have the auditors available after hours and weekends so volunteers do not have to take time off from work Specify fire and rescue departments only	2/6/2021 11:38 AM
162	Education to local government	2/6/2021 11:26 AM
163	Require immediate turnover of funds from municipalities when they receive it	2/6/2021 11:21 AM
164	I agree with the audits but not the process of how they do them	2/6/2021 11:19 AM
165	Remove the restrictions and let FDs use relief money for any fire suppression or emergency	2/6/2021 11:15 AM

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response purpose.

166	Guidance is occasionally contradictory between DC ED and the auditor General's office	2/6/2021 10:52 AM
167	Detailed equipment inventory at the level required is a major burden. Reduce this requirement. Audits are good and not an issue with me.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
168	Cut the restrictions and let the fire companies spend this money as they see fit. The local leaders are best at determining their needs, not state officials that have no idea what's happening in my town.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
169	Allow for the transfer to a general fund instead of a separate relief fund	2/6/2021 10:46 AM
170	More allowable expenditures. It should be up to each relief association to decide what the money should be used for (within reason and audited)	2/6/2021 10:44 AM
171	Less regulation	2/6/2021 10:42 AM
172	Better distribution of the funds	2/6/2021 10:37 AM
173	Require funds to be distributed to departments based on the formula used to distribute them to the AHJ/municipality.	2/6/2021 10:28 AM
174	None. The state has been very specific on how the funds are to be used. Comply with the rules and stop looking to spend the funds for things not related to safety.	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
175	Mandatory training for Relief Officers. Relief Officers cannot be line or admin officers in the fire company. Mandatory training for all on internal controls.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
176	Update technology items	2/6/2021 10:19 AM
177	Provide local relief leaders the flexibility to manage their funds for expenses someone in Harrisburg may not allow.	2/6/2021 10:09 AM
178	The relief funds should be distributed more evenly and fairly across the state. Organizations that are tax funded and have career people such as cities and large townships receive large amounts of relief money and some have millions in investments or savings. I think there should be a cap and once it is reached, they should not receive any further funding until money is spent.	2/6/2021 10:00 AM
179	I always felt that the money received was meant for the health of f/f's and equipment to do our jobs.	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
180	If a Volunteer Fire Company has "Paid Drivers" or "House Engineers" that are career staff, relief funds should be eligible to purchase PPE for those personnel as well.	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
181	Keeping inventory up to date	2/6/2021 9:15 AM
182	I would love to see a mandatory requirement for death/insurance requirements.	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
183	There should not be an audit. We get state grants and they do not audit those. Also a fire company should be able to use that money for anything it needs. Fire companies that have large tax revenues should get less than a small fire company that does not get any tax revenues.	2/6/2021 12:51 AM
184	Increase tax base > 2%	2/5/2021 10:18 PM
185	Add other uses for funds.limit to fire co. Only non paid department's	2/5/2021 9:19 PM
186	Allow for types of expenditures. Caps on how much funds any department can save from year to year. Change tracking of equipment requirements to items over \$5,000.	2/5/2021 8:50 PM
187	Bring standards up to today times	2/5/2021 8:27 PM
188	Allow funds to be deposited directly to departments general fund. Allow department managers to utilize funds in their best determination.	2/5/2021 8:24 PM
189	Assess ALL insurance companies in Pennsylvania, foreign as well as domiciled in PA.	2/5/2021 7:54 PM
190	The excess paperwork takes time away from other important things.	2/5/2021 7:51 PM
191	An online database of acceptable expenditures. A contact to verify acceptable purchases not	2/5/2021 7:47 PM

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listed in the database. Currently no one is willing to do this in writing.

192	More interaction with other county or municipal fire companies.. to better control inventories.. sometimes, after a job, you come back with another company's tools or they come back with yours	2/5/2021 7:33 PM
193	Maybe offer some classes on GAAP and record keeping for those departments that don't have the resources internally to do the reporting.	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
194	Assist agencies who do not even receive \$5,000 in Relief funds. There are many agencies in highly populated areas that are sitting on MILLIONS of DOLLARS in the bank or investment account. Money needs spent on insurance, safety, PPE, other vital equipment and training. Set maximum levels of money that can be HOARDED by agencies; when those levels are met, money is redistributed to NEEDY agencies and not given to the agencies that obviously do not need it.	2/5/2021 5:51 PM
195	Reduce the amount of categories that funds can be spent on. Provide a template for record keeping. Reactivate the regional training that was provided by the Auditor General's office.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
196	Opportunity to spend the much needed funds on items for Fire, EMS and Rescue	2/5/2021 5:36 PM
197	Allow more conferences to be paid for Allow drone purchases	2/5/2021 5:11 PM
198	Create an online accounting application that all relief associations can use. Also create an on line inventory application so relief associations can keep more accurate inventories, or.....a statewide subscription to an app like PStrack	2/5/2021 4:49 PM
199	The Auditors need Relief Treasurers do not have time to write and mail (slow) checks out to vendors anymore.	2/5/2021 4:36 PM
200	Let's be real! Everyone knows that there are a lot of very wealthy VFD's. Some departments have the enviable problem of how to spend their funds. There are Departments that have well over a million dollars in their accounts on the other hand some have nothing after receiving their allotment. I understand how the formula works and I do think it needs improved but why doesn't the state limit how much you can have in your account? It's grossly inequitable.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
201	Accountability is important but the audit places a lot of stress on the officers of the Relief Assn. Best example is requirement to produce EVERY training certificate that is funded. Most companies I know have gone away from Relief paying for training because of this.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
202	Anything to reduce the amount of paperwork required on the volunteer side	2/5/2021 4:15 PM
203	Wish the money was more divided over the state. When you have small departments doing 15 fundraisers a year to help replace equipment to better protect their members. When lots of money is in the eastern part of the state and the northern part get very little money and it keeps dropping every year	2/5/2021 4:05 PM
204	Allow to be used for LOSAP program, brick & mortar training structures. No interest loans for housing.	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
205	Relieve the stringent requirements for inventory of equipment. This can become burdensome to keep track of items for 20-25 year.	2/5/2021 3:56 PM
206	Each relief association should be guaranteed a minimum amount, so they can purchase insurance and protective gear.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
207	"Administration" and distribution of relief funds need to be updated to allow combination departments to use funds for staff members.	2/5/2021 3:35 PM
208	None	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
209	Make all relief associations get the same amount bigger fire companies get a lot more money then us smaller companies	2/5/2021 3:26 PM
210	Expand what relief can buy.	2/5/2021 3:18 PM
211	Funding across the board spread out evenly. Need to involve forestry department who do not get funding for insurance.	2/5/2021 3:17 PM
212	The only thing I can think of is the issue with sale tax exemption and tax filings.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM

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213	While it's realized the importance for the need to separate duties of officers of the Relief Association, as membership declines, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find members both willing and qualified to accept an officer's position in the Relief Association. There should be a way to maintain oversight within the Association without mandating the duties of Treasurer and Secretary be separated.	2/5/2021 3:12 PM
214	Increase funds to support all relief associations, some communities get "peanuts" while others get large sums.	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
215	Maintain the original intent of the program. Local municipal leaders Ned to step up their support of the volunteer service.	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
216	Better allocation of funds. The richest communities receive very large amounts of money from relief; it is my personal experience that these affluent communities then spend these funds on things they do not truly need. However they spend the money because they know that it will look bad if they do not. An audit should be done also to check to see how much Relief funds some of these fire companies have in the bank. If they have 500,000 plus in the bank do they really need to be receiving more ?	2/5/2021 3:03 PM
217	I feel that the documentation could be improved to make it easier for smaller relief associations that do not have large funding amounts	2/5/2021 2:54 PM
218	Less restrictive where possible	2/5/2021 2:53 PM
219	The problem is that some things not considered essential for firefighting are truly essential to help keep the hall above ground example having the social hall where some use to make their income to be able to support the firefighting side	2/5/2021 2:46 PM
220	Provide the ability to obtain approvals for purchases prior to executing them instead of having the determination made at the Audit. Provide programs for the financial reporting functions which include annual report templates.	2/5/2021 2:36 PM
221	The state should provide the full fire package to all fire departments and this will allow better tracking of equipment in the maintenance module which can make audits easier to track equipment in this program.	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
222	Digitize all of it, reduce the township involvement and cut check directly to departments that support the township	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
223	change or ease in tracking purchased assets	2/5/2021 2:23 PM
224	Open it up to general use.	2/5/2021 2:22 PM
225	The process of receiving funds within the State agency needs an auditing process. The funding sources were recently raided by other State agencies and Departments without an accounting or due regard for the volunteer fire services. It was found by mistake. Reappropriated funds without the end users knowing should not happen, maybe more oversight would help.	2/5/2021 2:16 PM
226	The burden of all the regulations needs to be simplified. The auditors always are able to find some minor issue and make issue of it. Simplify it!	2/5/2021 2:11 PM
227	trying to make it fair and even distribution of funds throughout the state. Rural departments do not get the funds they desperately need while other departments sit with millions in their relief funds.	2/5/2021 2:10 PM
228	allowable equipment needs to be updated to reflect current requirements and ems agencies need to be included as well and the fire companies can not be allowed to keep them out.	2/5/2021 2:09 PM
229	More flexibility on how funds can be used. Should be allowed to be deposited into the general fund instead of having a seperate organization.	2/5/2021 2:02 PM
230	The regulations seem fairly straight forward at this time	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
231	Limit the number of years to record disposed items	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
232	Online reporting which leads to real-time auditing instead of biannual visits.	2/5/2021 1:49 PM
233	The audit function by the Auditor General needs to be loosened to. Generally audits use statistical sampling or another method that does not require a copy of every invoice for each check issued. Example: relief grant annually of \$13,000 with a dozen checks issued, The	2/5/2021 1:44 PM

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auditor has to see every invoice and often wants copies. The provision of an annual list of allowable purchases would be helpful.

234	More digital and online, regulations, rules, etc.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
235	Change Funding Formula. 50% of the relief assoc. get less than \$10,000 a year and are probably the ones who need it most	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
236	Adherence to funding rule so volunteer organizations receive the proper amounts. Expanding purchase availability to include full apparatus and building purchase.	2/5/2021 1:30 PM
237	Place the administration of the funds into the hands of the municipality through the Fire Chief or appropriate administrator, thus dissolving the relief associations. In many departments/companies the administration of the relief association funds goes through a separate organizational body which and over rides the direction of the Chief and the operations of the Fire Department /Company.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM
238	Need a minimum distribution to less than fortunate communities and then distribute the rest to the more financially lucky communities.	2/5/2021 1:21 PM
239	I feel a newer distribution model should be applied. There are many larger organizations that are sitting on millions of dollars of relief funds, because they either don't need it, or can not use it (career departments), and then there are departments that are struggling that could use more financial support.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
240	Have a cap on amount of funds a relief association can have in saving/investment. When cap amounts are reached no further state funds given. Allocations can then be distributed to remaining associations with greater need.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
241	As a treasurer of a Relief Association, the ability to contact someone and get a definitive answer on how to properly do something that is not something you do regularly would be more beneficial than do it and wait until the Audit to find out it was wrong.	2/5/2021 1:08 PM
242	Too much paper. Accept electronic copies of invoices bank statements training certificates	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
243	Accounting and auditing practices are archaic. There has to be a better way. While I understand the need for financial accountability, the constant shuffle of paperwork and signature requirements is ridiculous.	2/5/2021 1:02 PM
244	Less reliance on relief funds as a supplement to lack of local/county/state DIRECT funding (ie: not grant funding.)	2/5/2021 1:01 PM
245	1. Compel all relief associations to adopt and use computerized accounting/bookkeeping methods with true double entry accounting. Ideally the state would adopt a single vendor and secure a preferential purchasing agreement for the software. 2. Adopt rules that prevent conflict of interest such as not allowing related persons to serve as relief officers at the same time or not allowing relief officers to serve as fire co officers at the same time. Related persons should not be allowed to be check signers at the same time on the same check. 3. Require all relief associations to secure tax-exempt status from the IRS by being a 501(c)3 or 501 (c) organization and filing the form 990 as a public disclosure. 4. Reverse the trend to have relief funds subsidize activities like fire prevention or recruiting/retention that should be funded by either the municipality or fire company.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
246	Quit deferring so much money to muni pensions. Allow the funds to be used for a broader range of products.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
247	Tracking funding in house takes an insurmountable amount of time. It takes a half hour to write two checks. Which includes writing the check, categorizing the expenditure, logging the new inventory item and then just shuffling back and forth through the paperwork to do all of that.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
248	Pay the funds directly to the Relief Association and not the municipality. Remove the funds limit requirement for single financial institution to allow for an investment account.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
249	Direct deposit money to each relief association. Required year end expense reports. Change the formula for determining funding. Stop giving money to fire departments that have over \$1 million in a volunteer relief association account.	2/5/2021 12:51 PM
250	Possibly make the requirements easier for organizations to comply with requirements to include being able to use a debit card for purchases.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM

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251	The auditing process is a burden. You never know when items approved from year to year will be disallowed in the future. The AG has demanded funds be returned, three years later, and then politicized because of the high profile of the community.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
252	To allow more items to be purchased	2/5/2021 12:42 PM
253	none really	2/5/2021 12:40 PM
254	Split funding between Fire & EMS so fair funding supports both systems. Allow the local Relief have the ability to modify amounts needed for each entity.	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
255	go back to where the money is for safety items and training, we can buy way too many items now and the purpose seems lost	2/5/2021 12:36 PM
256	There are too many mandates on bookkeeping, inventory, what can be purchased and what can't.	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
257	None	2/5/2021 12:32 PM
258	Less restrictive	2/5/2021 12:30 PM
259	Stop distributing to separate organizations, don't limit to only volunteer organizations, stop being so restrictive on what funds can be spent on.	2/5/2021 12:28 PM
260	Modernize the auditing process.	2/5/2021 12:23 PM
261	Less red tape while keeping transparency and regulatory oversight	2/5/2021 12:06 PM
262	Liberalize the use of funds to anything that involves the health and safety of firefighters	2/5/2021 12:05 PM
263	They need to be based on a real Standards of Coverage that benefits the department to provide the need resources to operate.	2/5/2021 12:01 PM
264	copies of meeting minutes held records money in and records of money out all the extra records not needed 990s should be proof of audit	2/5/2021 11:57 AM
265	I get 10 k and write about 6 checks per year and it takes over a day to do an audit. I could put everything in a box and they could audit them in their office and call if there is a problem. Since we changed Auditor Generals the new people will make sure to disavow anything that happened prior years	2/5/2021 11:55 AM
266	Get DCED out of the business of giving pre audit advice. Close the loop hole the insurance industry is using to avoid paying the foreign fire insurance tax	2/5/2021 11:54 AM
267	Move to the State Fire Commissioners Office. Appoint a member of the local municipality to sit on the individual relief association boards. Do not allow individual relief associations to make bylaws that are in opposition to what the State says the funds can be used for. Come up with a basic minimum level for all departments.	2/5/2021 11:53 AM
268	The relief association shouldn't be a separate entity from the municipality	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
269	Allowing more items to be purchased than what is currently listed. Also, allowing career departments to use the funds.	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
270	Do not further.....dilute the OSHA PPE target of the relief monies.... OSHA PPE costs keep inflating...this fund needs more NEW money... or We collect it on the worker comp injury and death coverages...(no wonder SWIF is fighting the fire service...on claims..)	2/5/2021 11:48 AM
271	Better clarity in the guidelines for approved expenses. There seems to be a disconnect between what is listed as approved, and what the auditors say is approved.	2/5/2021 11:46 AM
272	easier formats of what is and what isn't allowed under the act. The online does not answer all questions, forcing us to call into Harrisburg for approval, which is not documented. We can only hope at the time of an audit that our word is accepted that someone in Harrisburg approved the expense.	2/5/2021 11:45 AM
273	Make simpler record keeping	2/5/2021 11:43 AM
274	Distribution is CORRECT, after years they finally get us what is paid by residents of where we protect. leave distribution formula alone!!!!!!!!!!	2/5/2021 11:42 AM
275	Need to broaden the use of funds. Combination departments should be able to purchase gear	2/5/2021 11:40 AM

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regardless of whether it is for a career or volunteer firefighter. Career firefighters are able to operate equipment purchase through relief funds so why not with wearing gear. Funding also needs to be available for construction of training facilities, not just props for use within.

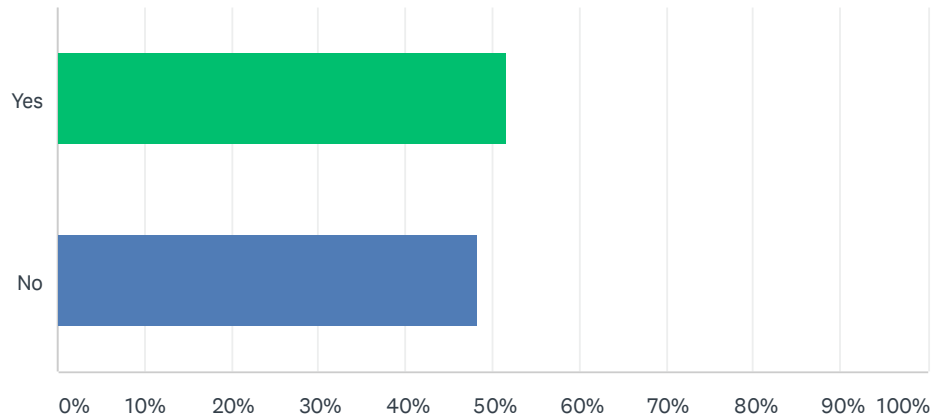
276	The inventory requirements are out of date. We conduct our inventory monthly electronically, but were advised that we needed to conduct our inventory, by hand, once a year. The auditing process has too many subjective hurdles, its almost auditor specific. The relief funding needs to start taking into consideration career staffing supplementing the volunteers, at least with the ability to purchase their PPE. We also feel that spending restrictions should come from the Fire Commissioners office and that one page list be expanded to include more items that are required to provide service.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
277	Reevaluate the entire relief program there are depts out of service still collecting refunds tie it to responses and training	2/5/2021 11:32 AM
278	Revise restrictions on purchases	2/5/2021 11:31 AM
279	Timely and the need should be proven	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
280	Reduce restrictions on spending in terms of recruitment and retention.	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
281	The ability to spend funds on a wider range of expenses that fire departments incur such as pay per call programs, grant writing courses for members, remodeling/improvements for stations such as emergency backup generators, better lighting for safety, etc., CDL training & costs associated with licensing members, advanced college courses, & maintenance of fire company equipment as well as fuel for equipment & insurance.	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
282	The funds need to be more equally divided with more funding going towards rural volunteer departments	2/5/2021 11:22 AM
283	Streamline ability to see approved type of expenditures before purchasing. Integrate approved Relief purchases into to the PA COSTARS program. Update relief audits to reflect technological changes. i.e.: upload receipts online into a preloaded folder for each fire Company.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
284	Have the funds available for out of town training.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
285	Ability to pay for training courses even if candidate does not complete the certification but attends all classes	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
286	Standardized record keeping template that can be downloaded and used by the treasurer	2/5/2021 11:20 AM
287	none	2/5/2021 11:18 AM
288	Lifting restrictions on certain items that are listed as not being able to purchase as well as a way to generate additional funds	2/5/2021 11:17 AM
289	On a local level I have little suggestions. Oh system is slip between three departments in one township. We have a great working relationship with the township treasurer. There has been zero issues with that system. However, I can see where a check to department with direct deposit would be easier. Furthermore, if a company has a poor relationship there could be issues. I have never experienced that though	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
290	Allow ledgers to come from financial software	2/5/2021 11:07 AM
291	Continue tight state oversight (audits) of the funds. Continue to correct issues while they are small and limit widespread abuse.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
292	Put a realistic minimum about that all relief's get.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
293	Take the Distribution of fund out of the hands of the Local Politicons ,their using it as a ploy to get their Political Agendas and have Funds Sent directly to the Relief Associations.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
294	Should have a formula for addressing Life and accident insurance for all members. Equipment should be limited to PPE and safety equipment only.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
295	change the audit process and make it more uniform	2/5/2021 11:02 AM
296	Open up for additional allowable expenditures	2/5/2021 11:00 AM
297	Allow for Recruitment and Retention efforts. Pay members up to \$599 checks.	2/5/2021 10:59 AM

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298	Money go directly to the organization involved instead of filtering through the local municipality	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
299	Increase funding Ease the restrictions on purchases	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
300	Allow Volunteer Fire Department's with career "house engineers" purchase turnout gear with relief funds for those Engineers. Possibly designate a quantity if paid staff...less than 15 paid staff or something similar. Many Volunteer Fire Companies have house engineer to supplement Volunteer yet thsjr gear, identical to the volunteers is covered. Makes no sense	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
301	More leeway in use of funds. Sometimes the restrictions limit what we can use as opposed to what we can get.	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
302	the distribution is unfair based on population. The rich get rich and the poor get nothing.	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
303	Dept's should have to submit a budget indicating what they will be using the relief funds for. Fund shouldn't be stock piled, it should be used for purchasing / updating equipment or paying for insurance or firefighter physicals.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
304	Formula for distribution amounts revised to be more representative of each community.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
305	spread the money out equally to all municipalities. do not give one municipality more money than others based off their demographics. the municipalities getting the majority of the relief monies do not need it anyway as they are already successful. give an equal share to other municipalities.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
306	Create an online database for each organization to submit expenditures and account for equipment. This will reduce the required paper trail, enhance the transfer of information in the event of leadership changes and reduce time spent during audits	2/5/2021 10:48 AM
307	Relax but do not eliminate the auditing of inventory. With a large department and dwindling volunteer staff time to do a full 100% inventory audit is becoming unmanageable. Also the auditors should be enabled to do more of the audit and exchange of records electronically vs printing everything.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
308	None	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
309	overhaul the entire system, include all fire department, move management to OSFC.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
310	Allow for career staffing payment options for items like gear and training as most organizations are moving toward combination	2/5/2021 10:43 AM
311	Fairer distribution to smaller companies. Change in how stringent the audit is. You have to realize we are volunteer and this isn't our normal job. Some of the requirements are entirely too strict.	2/5/2021 10:42 AM
312	Require that relief funds go only to organizations that engage in fire suppression. Volunteer ems organizations should not receive relief funds because they are able to bill medical insurance for services.	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
313	Not be listed as a pass thru for municipalities who show relief money as contributions to departments	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
314	None	2/5/2021 10:37 AM
315	Fire agencies dictate the use of the money not the local government.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
316	Change the auditing process. The current system is antiquated and burdensome on a volunteer system. It should be automated with standard accounting package requirements and electronic submission/review.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
317	Seems like the audit process is cumbersome and could be streamlined.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
318	The whole system needs updated by starting with equipment. Items also need updated that haven't been for years.	2/5/2021 10:32 AM
319	Review / modernize the restriction on what funds can be used for.	2/5/2021 10:29 AM

Q4 Do you feel Relief Association funds should be transformed to a "Block Grant" style program in which a local organization can "do what is needed" with the funds as long as it is related to emergency response?

Answered: 360 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	51.67% 186
No	48.33% 174
TOTAL	360

#	PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER?	DATE
1	Keep it the way it is to allow the organization to spend as allowed.	3/14/2021 1:53 PM
2	That may be a little to loose, it will create a controversy between the Reliefs and State Auditors "as to what is needed".	3/10/2021 1:58 PM
3	A block grant style program would be helpful for relief associations to be able to manage and understand as long as basic guidance as to what is "related to emergency response" is provided as part of the program.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
4	Anything that makes oversight quicker and easier, while still preventing misuse is always appreciated.	2/15/2021 12:27 PM
5	My real answer is, I don't know. How would you ensure that there are funds available quickly for emergency purposes. For example, relief would pay for long term care of a injured fire fighter, how do you ensure funds are quickly available without going through miles of red tape and approval processes? Right now, that approval process is left to the organization and funds can quickly be used. What about when relief owned equipment needs repaired, how do funds quickly get approved for those type of expenses, training too. This question needs more information so be fully answered.	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
6	I believe the current way of certain items is ok. The system for audits should just be easier	2/11/2021 9:26 PM
7	Preparing for audits takes a lot of time.	2/11/2021 3:07 PM
8	Departments currently use these funds for allowable CORE annual budget expenses.	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
9	Corruption is rampant	2/10/2021 10:01 PM
10	There are many companies that only exist because of their fundraising efforts. To be able to use a portion of FR funds to keep stations operating could go a long way.	2/10/2021 8:25 PM

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11	I have mixed feelings about this. Relaxing the spending rules could cut in both good and bad directions. It would really depend on how this spending was audited.	2/10/2021 8:08 PM
12	There needs to be justification to spending. We have people who end up responsible for massive amounts of money with no business planning backgrounds and certainly many have no idea about the strategies of local emergency planning needs. Why would we continue to give money to those that spend it unnecessarily in a system with very little checks and balance otherwise than an occasional haphazard audit.	2/10/2021 7:14 PM
13	That would eliminate the need to get approval from other fire departments to spend our funds for emergency response equipment	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
14	This could lead to more questionable uses of funds.	2/10/2021 3:45 PM
15	We will loose control over how the money is spent. I can see not having sufficient funds to provide insurance programs and other needed benefits for firefighters who have a need and as the relief program was designed to be used.	2/10/2021 1:18 PM
16	That is one way of opening the doors of access to monies for use directly associated with the fire department	2/10/2021 11:20 AM
17	too much freedom	2/10/2021 10:08 AM
18	Currently our relief reimbursement could take upwards of 4-6 months to complete	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
19	Very limited current regulations.	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
20	In the past few years, fundraising opportunities for Fire Companies/Departments have become scarce thus the importance of being able to use Relief funds with less restrictions	2/9/2021 4:08 PM
21	I believe there's more flexibility now	2/9/2021 3:58 PM
22	There are grey areas where you dont kniw if you can use the funds or not.	2/9/2021 3:55 PM
23	Yes but I would still recommend general guidance on what the funds could be spent on such as training, equipment, supplies and apparatus.	2/9/2021 3:17 PM
24	Within reason. I think the limitations do not allow the money to be spent in areas that is was designed to be spent. Some departments have too much money in savings, while others struggle. The law should work to limit the time and amount of money in savings, while allowing it to be spent.	2/9/2021 3:05 PM
25	the system seems to work that we have. this style would add more paperwork	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
26	The whole infrastructure of separate relief associations is an unnecessary complication adding layers which do not improve quality in the delivery of emergency service. Layers add confusion, reduce transparency and increase potential for fraud or abuse or mismanagement.	2/9/2021 2:14 PM
27	No I think it should remain to be spent on items on the list. I belive some items should be removed from the list. The list should include items to protect the firefighter. Going to a block grant will put a burden on inventory as well. As it stands now companies have items, some belong to the fire company, some belong to th relief.	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
28	Some controls are needed to make sure funds are spent on Firefighter health, safety, and welfare.	2/9/2021 11:14 AM
29	Currently many departments will but things they don't need just because they have to use that money in that area and forego needed equipment because they can't afford without relief money	2/9/2021 10:40 AM
30	Funds could be better and more efficiently utilized without burdensome tracking requirements and purchasing limitations.	2/9/2021 9:08 AM
31	The volume of money is so small in our annual budget, restricting the expenses to firefighter safety serves little purpose. Ultimately money from our general fund is used to augment firefighter safety projects. keeping two different equipment rosters is a challenge and only exists to meet relief standards.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
32	As long as funds could still easily be tracked with minimal administrative times	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
33	With Municipal budgets and funds being strapped, we need to have the ability to use Relief	2/8/2021 8:08 PM

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Association funds for Emergency Services.

34	To often the Fire companies need to handle purchases to assist with the fire company operations that fall outside of the designated list of approved items.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
35	In some organizations, maintenance issues can suffer when some of the items needed are not covered by relief laws and guidelines	2/8/2021 7:49 PM
36	Relief monies should continue to take care of the Firefighters	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
37	Insurance still needs to be the primary purpose to ensure our firemen are covered	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
38	It's difficult navigating the allowable expenses	2/8/2021 6:29 PM
39	some items we need to have on the Engine can not be purchased with Relief funds	2/8/2021 5:57 PM
40	Guidance is still required. If you give fire companies too much wiggle room to spend money, it opens up the opportunity for more questionable purchases.	2/8/2021 5:54 PM
41	That is already what we are doing now!	2/8/2021 5:53 PM
42	all funds should be justified to run a volunteer organization (e.g. have fewer exclusions limited to non fire department expenditures like t-shirts, picnics, banquets)	2/8/2021 4:18 PM
43	Too much political interference, The townships would not protect the members interests	2/8/2021 4:09 PM
44	No. The "block grant" concept would only be successful if a basic funding level was established to fund "required" expenditures including but not limited to insurance, education and training and personal protective equipment.	2/8/2021 3:29 PM
45	See answer 3	2/8/2021 3:04 PM
46	Less restrictive tracking would make it easier to use the allocated funds.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM
47	Current funding mechanisms allow for want vs need controls to be placed. Rather than spend just because we have it mentality	2/8/2021 2:57 PM
48	I feel the project should be spelled out for a review.	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
49	I think the funds should only be used for the designated products/services as determined and updated under Act 91.	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
50	As long as it is all related to the Fire Service equipment and nothing else.	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
51	Because the "rich" associations will use the funding for non firefighting items while less fortunate Relief associations will still struggle to buy necessary firefighting gear like turnout gear, scba, radios and hose to name a few.	2/8/2021 12:35 PM
52	I am open to that concept. I do not like the work "Grant" since my organization has put in for grants numerous times over many years and have not received grant monies. I do like the idea of the funds being a do what is needed as long as it relates to emergency services.	2/8/2021 12:06 PM
53	guidelines for expenditures are OK	2/8/2021 11:51 AM
54	Grants have a harder time tracking, auditing and fulfilling the need of the community.	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
55	See above	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
56	I think restraints are still positive since not all organizations are disciplined to retain liquid funds in case a firefighter is hurt or killed. A minimal "retainer" based on the number of firefighters provides security in case of a disaster and the rest could be under a "block grant"	2/8/2021 10:33 AM
57	what will the Block Grant program change and what would be the benefits?	2/8/2021 10:13 AM
58	I think there still needs to be accountability so that companies aren't spending money on ridiculous things like lighted signs on the front of their apparatus saying "Uptown Express" but are used for personal protective equipment	2/8/2021 9:57 AM
59	The expenses currently allowed covers the bulk of the needs; such as training, insurance protection, safety equipment. Putting it into a Block Grant type program would cause additional paperwork that is not needed.	2/8/2021 9:54 AM
60	just change what can be purchased	2/8/2021 9:45 AM

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61	Would help defray cost of operations to the supported departments	2/8/2021 9:25 AM
62	By limiting what a department can do, can really challenge those departments that spend wisely. If a department wants to take the \$15000 (maximum) and invest it versus spend it on equipment, they should be allowed to. In the long run, that \$15,000 could be a better investment than tools that have no return on the investment.	2/8/2021 9:09 AM
63	While there must be restrictions, I believe a broader use of the funds should be allowed. This may require some preapproval of purchases, however, certain expenses (i.e. utilities or vehicle insurance and maintenance or fuel) do have a direct relation to emergency response.	2/8/2021 9:05 AM
64	No a define list is great. If there is a need out side the area then they should apply for a special project	2/8/2021 8:27 AM
65	Yes, but should allow for the construction/remodeling of stations to bring them up to NFPA recommendations. This should include firefighting related portions of the building such as the apparatus bay, day room, sleeping quarters, bathrooms, etc. (not social quarters area).	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
66	Too much freedom in giving money away. Give fire departments free money and it goes to apparatus that isn't needed or tools that a department says they need because a neighboring department has it. Make restrictions necessary. No more free giveaways. Give the cash to departments that combine or consolidate. We have too many fire/rescue departments in PA.	2/7/2021 8:50 PM
67	The list should stay but updated regularly. This may the money is spent on what is needed for. Good checks and balances are important in this day and age.	2/7/2021 6:12 PM
68	I think what we can buy now is ok but to many large Relief Associations money needs to be spread around a little more fairly.	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
69	I think it fine the way it is just the money needs to be increases	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
70	Current funds are used for necessary and meaningful expenses. We rely on these funds and are content with how they are used.	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
71	Relief to an organization may look different place to place. By limiting how funds can be used, you're limiting that organizations relief ability	2/7/2021 4:12 PM
72	We have enough paperwork with it in grant form just makes us more work	2/7/2021 3:09 PM
73	I feel some departments would move to using the funds for "new shiny stuff" & ignore safety and training even more than is currently done.	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
74	Grants should be based on need and unavailability to fund and regionally.	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
75	It depends if it effects the funding to the Department	2/7/2021 1:50 PM
76	All our bills are approved by a vote of the Relief Assoc. That should be sufficient confirmation that the organization believes the bills are necessary.	2/7/2021 1:48 PM
77	The funds should only be used for training and equipment.	2/7/2021 1:00 PM
78	Yes if able to Pay per call or some other type of incentive to recruit and retain people if the RA can afford to do so. Municipal Pensions should be paid from a separate fund not lumped into Relief funding.	2/7/2021 12:54 PM
79	Relief funds should be limited to items necessary for firefighting, Firefighter safety, and recruitment & retention.	2/7/2021 12:53 PM
80	Would need to see more detail so we are not helping in one aspect and hurting in another.	2/7/2021 12:38 PM
81	I feel it should still continue to function as it is.	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
82	The distribution system used now is fine.	2/7/2021 11:56 AM
83	Already too permissive	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
84	IT HAS BEEN USED BY DEPARTMENTS IN THE PAST AND NEED NO CHANGES.	2/7/2021 11:31 AM
85	Most if not all relief associations have fixed annual expenses, applying for a grant would complicate things tremendously. As a relief treasurer I create an annual budget that is based	2/7/2021 10:59 AM

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upon the typical amount of our annual allotment. We have around \$100,000 in fixed expenses annually with insurances, turnout gear and training needs among other things.

86	open it up a little more to for emergency purchases. You are limited to what you can purchase and sometimes it can be confusing on what you can and can not purchase.	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
87	I think there would be alot of misuse of funds	2/7/2021 10:36 AM
88	I believe that this may actually reduce the amount of monies received by small departments who may not be receiving appropriate financial backing from their municipalities and are already struggling to raise funds to continue operating	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
89	Relief associations often cover multiple fire companies in that area. Each one may have different needs and to force unnecessary and unneeded equipment on them is useless.	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
90	I think the restrictions help with only using the monies for items outlined in the current booklet.	2/7/2021 10:12 AM
91	Apply for grants is no guarantee of funding. Apply for grants for specific items is time consuming and burdensome on the volunteers.	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
92	The Primary function is to provide assistance to Volunteer Fire Fighters, not to ease Fire Company Budgets.	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
93	The current platform make it easier to make sure the departments are utilizing the fund for emergency response equipment. If changed to a block grant style it could open the department up in to legal issues with the state by purchasing items that aren't authorized.	2/7/2021 9:28 AM
94	This would definitely assist the department especially because of COVID and the potential of other issues this would be a great idea	2/7/2021 9:04 AM
95	Too much politics involved	2/7/2021 8:37 AM
96	Many organizations duplicate services that are provided nearby or in the same jurisdiction, essentially wasting the money.	2/7/2021 6:49 AM
97	But needs to stay safety of crew related	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
98	See previous	2/7/2021 2:19 AM
99	Companies struggle , they need some wiggle room to make it work for them to be effective	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
100	In the Fire Service, "what is needed is not always "what is needed". Monies should be strictly enforced and or approved by the governing agency.	2/7/2021 12:59 AM
101	We need to be accountable to the tax payers but still need flexibility to our organizations and residents	2/6/2021 11:06 PM
102	As long as the relief funds are spent on emergency services, they should be allowed. You should be allowed to appropriate funds for sub staining your services in the same manner as the grants offered by the Fire Commissioner's office.	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
103	The key is the term " related to emergency response". This is aligned to many expenditures, but could provide more flexibility, as long as the receiving agency can clearly demonstrate the nexus to emergency response.	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
104	As stated	2/6/2021 10:05 PM
105	It would make it easier for the officers	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
106	The items able to be purchased remains to restrictive and fails to allow appropriate placed funds.	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
107	The system for the use isn't broken, justifying your purchase isn't a hassle	2/6/2021 9:02 PM
108	good to reserve for safety of FFs	2/6/2021 8:59 PM
109	Funding is extremely limited to most vol. Fire departments. Restrictions on funds that could be utilized for fire and emergency response is antiquated.	2/6/2021 8:29 PM
110	The steady income is needed, there is no guarantee you will receive a grant. Current commonwealth community block grants are not always directed to where funds are needed most.	2/6/2021 8:27 PM

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111	Service area, population, business/resident per coverage area, call volume, and number of qualified trained personnel (Firefighter I, Firefighter II) should all be factored in.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM
112	The requirement in place to utilize VFRA funds for safety items should remain intact. Even now many of the authorized expenditures are a stretch from the original intent of VFRA's.	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
113	We have managed to spend our relief money on firefighters safety. Take money back from those million dollar departments and help small struggling departments actually buy safety equipment and gear for their firefighters.	2/6/2021 7:01 PM
114	The guidelines are clear and should be followed.	2/6/2021 5:42 PM
115	Should be used for safety	2/6/2021 5:40 PM
116	The list of allowed items is too restricted and should cover more topics for emergency response	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
117	Would make more tools and equipment eligible	2/6/2021 4:37 PM
118	Allow Co. Pres. and Relief Treasurer that all funds are expended per law. Use audits in suspicious cases. Prosecute illegal actions harshly.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
119	Funds should continue to be distributed to fire company's for fire fighter safety related items.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
120	Relief funds should be used to purchase safety equipment for fire personal and training. The administration of funds should stay similar to the format in place	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
121	We already have enough grants that we need to apply for. Adding more paperwork would be a burden. It's nice to have the money and do what you want with it (within reason obviously).	2/6/2021 2:33 PM
122	If the money is left open to be used at will, I believe there would be a lot of "frivolous" spending without oversight.	2/6/2021 2:32 PM
123	Allowing the funds to be opened up to purchase more items for the manner of emergency response will help lower the cost being taken out of the general funding.	2/6/2021 2:25 PM
124	I think the individual organizations could write bylaws on how and where to spend the money better than overarching organizations. Unfortunately, the original funding goes to the municipality, and if we go to a block grant style funding, they may allow the municipality to use the money how THEY see fit before it makes it to the fire company's relief organization.	2/6/2021 1:54 PM
125	The current restrictions ensure spending is on fire related equipment.	2/6/2021 1:43 PM
126	There should be a municipal checks and balance system in place to safeguard duplication of services and "freestyle" expenditures	2/6/2021 1:35 PM
127	Relief can purchase a whole lot more now than it could just 10 or 15 years ago. It's up to the people to ensure they're managing the FD and Relief properly.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
128	Misappropriation	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
129	There are some VFRA who can't afford insurance due to the amount of funds received. Unless local government changes and funds adequate insurance needs for fire companies.	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
130	I believe that a different formula of distribution would be better. Areas with money are going to be able to hire grant writers and politically obtain the funds easier than rural areas.	2/6/2021 12:00 PM
131	No that would allow for the expansion of properties and who determines it is used for emergency response or social activities?	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
132	Yes after providing for minimum relief insurance,	2/6/2021 11:52 AM
133	Yes and no, I believe it should still be given the way it is but ease up on spending restrictions.	2/6/2021 11:26 AM
134	Because too much would be left up to interpretation	2/6/2021 11:19 AM
135	Trying to follow "the rules" to avoid audit findings when an organization is trying to do what is right and meet the needs in the community should not be a volunteer worry.	2/6/2021 10:52 AM
136	This would reduce overall burden. I feel that most if not all PA fire companies have needs for equipment and operating costs and all use the funds to better their organizations. A reduction in the regulations and requirements would reduce the overall burden on the volunteers.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM

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137	See previous response. State restrictions prevent us from applying funds to best achieve our primary missions. Allow use to provide per diem pay for live ins or retention programs like LOSAP ...	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
138	BE less restrictive	2/6/2021 10:46 AM
139	Within reason and subject to yearly audit.	2/6/2021 10:44 AM
140	As long as it pertains to emergency services it should be approved spending	2/6/2021 10:37 AM
141	There is already an abundance of waste in volunteer emergency services. Lifting restrictions will only increase this.	2/6/2021 10:28 AM
142	To much room for fraud to come out. Emergency response would be twisted to fit ones needs.	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
143	Having a beer party or other social gathering costing hundreds or thousands of dollars could be considered recruitment activities for emergency response. Some fire companies would do this in lieu of buying safety equioment.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
144	Volunteers in rural PA find the restrictions confusing.	2/6/2021 10:09 AM
145	As long as there is a explanation and good records on how the money is spent.	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
146	Use of funds for a wider selection of equipment.	2/6/2021 9:28 AM
147	This is more of the ability to budget properly within an organization. Money can be shifted into any category especially if the limitation is emergency response. If relief money is eligible for ONLY category A, then fund raising and other revenue must be generated for category B through G. If relief funds can be used for anything related to emergency responses, then relief funds could cover categories A through G, fundraising or other revenue is still required o meet the budget numbers. Seems like spinning wheels in the mud to get to the same result	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
148	Better handling of funds	2/6/2021 9:15 AM
149	Death/insurance benefits will become lost in the equipment purchases.	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
150	There are a lot of things we can do with the money but we are limited to what they tell us to buy	2/6/2021 12:51 AM
151	Relief monies should not be used as a crutch to pay utilities and other items.	2/5/2021 7:54 PM
152	As of now we can buy attack lines with these funds but not supply line. You have to get water to the engine before you can get it to the attack lines. It would be nice to be able to use these funds to do equipment maintenance. Ladder maintenance on a truck is an important safety thing.	2/5/2021 7:51 PM
153	The rules on acceptable expenses are cumbersome, the auditing is cumbersome.	2/5/2021 7:47 PM
154	Expand the list of associated expenses.. pocket tools, leather-man for example, to be kept in their bunker gear	2/5/2021 7:33 PM
155	These grants are not applied equally and are politically motivated	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
156	Redo the allowable expenses list to meet the current needs of agencies receiving money.	2/5/2021 5:51 PM
157	The original intent of relief funds was for the protection of personnel, ie. insurance, PPE & training. The original intent has been has been stretched to the point that any item could be considered a safety item thereby causing some organizations to neglect relief funds primary objective. The current situation just proves that relief funds are being used to make up for the lack of operational money that should be the responsibility of the municipalities.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
158	If it went to block grant then the funds would not be monitored correctly.	2/5/2021 5:36 PM
159	I have been VFRA Treasurer for some 30 years and it is working. It just needs to be adjusted to accommodate the computer technique.	2/5/2021 4:58 PM
160	I just see accountability issues if you open the doors to buying more wasteful gizmos. Allow it to be used for incentive programs, stipends, or wages !	2/5/2021 4:49 PM
161	We have gotten to the point we have set expenses every year and these are not going down. That pretty much eats up our whole Relief monies. Audits make it very cumbersome and time consuming to do.	2/5/2021 4:36 PM

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162	What you can buy needs revised. Times and needs change.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
163	See above	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
164	If you are asking if we would like to use these funds for other items rather than just the allowed current items, Yes	2/5/2021 4:15 PM
165	This could make getting money fare across the board	2/5/2021 4:05 PM
166	Depending on how they fund it. With our three fire companies, one runs nearly twice as many calls as the other two, has many more active members than the other two, and has the majority of population and square mileage of the city in their first due area. If the funding takes all this into consideration and is divided accordingly then yes. If the funding is just split evenly three ways then no.	2/5/2021 4:04 PM
167	As volunteer numbers have declined, organizations need to be able to use all avenues of funding to survive, as long as it's related to sustain their operational readiness.	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
168	There seems to be a lot of administration from the state level for the program to verify qualifying purchases, inventory, maintenance, etc.	2/5/2021 3:56 PM
169	It should continue to be used for the safety and retention of volunteer firefighters. Otherwise, important safety equipment may go unpurchased.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
170	Too much leeway for departments to do as they please, losing focus on firefighter safety. State grant program provides this free-for-all currently.	2/5/2021 3:35 PM
171	I think the current system works fine so if it isn't broke don't fix it.	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
172	Your limited to what you can buy now it would be nice to be able to buy more	2/5/2021 3:26 PM
173	Have all department apply for funding every year for the next year.	2/5/2021 3:17 PM
174	Unfortunately, too many fire departments have loss touch with the real reason for the FRA funds. They should NOT be utilized for the day to day operations of the organization. FRA's funding should remain for the financial benefits of the volunteer firefighters.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM
175	I believe the spending on relief association funds should be kept within the original intent of the legislation, "to encourage individuals to take part in the fire service as a volunteer and to provide funds for the protection of the volunteer firefighter and their heirs." We have strayed too far with this intent.	2/5/2021 3:12 PM
176	Only if provided in a fair disbursement. Some departments get small amount of funds while the costs associated with emergency services increase	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
177	So as not to abuse the funding, specifics need to be in place. It's already been abused.	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
178	If you open up the funding opportunities for what the money can be spent on there will be more waste than what currently goes on in fire departments; especially in Allegheny County	2/5/2021 3:03 PM
179	It is after all to aid members that are injured you should have to retain a certian % to do that	2/5/2021 2:54 PM
180	Municipalities have the ultimate responsibility for public safety. Collaboration and oversight is a must if the programs shifts to a block grant-based approach, but if administered correctly, it would create more opportunity. This approach would work well as part of a regional approach to fire protection, standardization, and reduction in duplication of services.	2/5/2021 2:53 PM
181	As I just said things like a roof on a social hall where we make our money to support our fire fighters	2/5/2021 2:46 PM
182	This will provide increased flexibility in the utilization of funds	2/5/2021 2:36 PM
183	relief funding mostly supports our PPE replacement and repairs as well as communications equipment. Some other equipment purchases are usually done through out the years budget. Block grant would limit our funding and options.	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
184	With regulation on what it can be used for	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
185	I feel like there is enough room to utilize the funds	2/5/2021 2:23 PM
186	That will quickly get out of hand. The monies are appropriately assigned to life saving	2/5/2021 2:16 PM

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purchases and health and welfare of firefighters. Relegating to grants would simply put the best grant writers in the lead.

187	I feel that there should be emphasis on using the funds for firefighter safety. There are to many Relief organizations sitting on Millions of dollars and to many companies that need assistance not receiving enough.	2/5/2021 2:11 PM
188	there is needed equipment in some cases that is not able to be purchased with this money	2/5/2021 2:10 PM
189	yes and no. if the "local organization" is a municipality or gov't agency that deals with funding the fire services, then the answer is no. if the organization and funding stream stays the same, then yes, block grants would make it easier for organizations to spend the money	2/5/2021 2:09 PM
190	We do not receive the correct funding due to shared area codes	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
191	Authorities provide guidelines. we act.	2/5/2021 1:49 PM
192	A relief association is formed for the protection of firefighters and should be used to provide adequate protection for firefighters first. A minimum level of insurance should be mandated statewide. I favor a change in the Act to require the Fire Commissioner to establish a minimum level of insurance coverage for every firefighter in the commonwealth and fund the coverage off the top of foreign fire insurance tax proceeds. Block grants would open the door to use relief money to buy almost anything and not requiring a health and accident policy.	2/5/2021 1:44 PM
193	Only in the realm of helping due to Covid issues at this time.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
194	I agree with the usage guidelines.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
195	Volunteer organizations are less able to keep up with the regulatory aspects of the Relief Program. Frequently firefighters are tasked with also being the treasurer of the organization. We must continue to move to minimizing volunteer fire department administrative burdens. It would be nice to use relief funds to hire an accounting firm to administer the financial and administrative aspects of a volunteer fire company.	2/5/2021 1:30 PM
196	Too Bureaucratic. It will create unnecessary competition for funds and lead to organizations and municipalities stretching the truth like they currently do with other State/Federal grants. And then those with the better grant writers receive more funds than necessary and others who need the funds will be left out. The current distribution methods are fair. Distribute the funds still to the municipality and allow the municipality and it's chosen Chief (if they choose them) to administer the funds as needed. Many of the guidelines, processes and restrictions currently in place can work; however, the existence of a "Relief Association" changes the flow of funds and leads to misuse, abuse and probably even worse is having an organization (Relief Association) dictating how funds can or cannot be used for operational needs. The use if Relief Associations is antiquated. Some of the folks on relief associations never rode on a fire truck. It's nice to have civilian involvement, but they can be placed on the Board of Directors or on a municipal Board of the Fire Department/Company to be involved. Also, don't allow the municipality to redistribute the funds to another part of their budget. Designate the funds necessary for insurance plans as it is now. Remaining funds can assist operational needs.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM
197	Keeping it restrictive assures that funds are used properly	2/5/2021 1:22 PM
198	Too much money spent on redundant equipment within communities - just how many spreaders do you need in 12 square miles?	2/5/2021 1:21 PM
199	There still is a need to regulate funds to be used for the safety and well being of firefighters. Funds should not be used for "as needed" or "as wanted" projects or desires.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
200	The true mission of the Relief Association is to provide proper insurance and safety related equipment to our volunteers. You already have multiple Relief Associations failing to follow the rules. If you make it easier to not follow the rules more will. The guardrails are in place for a reason.	2/5/2021 1:08 PM
201	There still needs to be some parameters in place. Otherwise relief funds will be used for banquets and buying t shirts and sweat shirts	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
202	By constantly being tied to "approved" items, it limits the use of the funds. Also, it requires Departments to keep two sets of books. Using a block grant, and not having to separately account for each penny will ease the administrative burden.	2/5/2021 1:02 PM
203	Relief money should be used for its intended purpose. Over the years, eligible/authorized	2/5/2021 1:01 PM

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purchases have expanded to include items that fall outside of the scope of what the Act was designed for. It's to the point that Relief funds are being used to supplement lack of tax monies. In addition, I don't understand why fire companies fundraise for items like SCBA and turnout gear. That's what Relief funds are for. I also feel that Relief Associations tie up their money in investments rather than spend the funds for their original purpose

204	Using it for Fire Fighter Safety equipment and Training is Great. If you open it up it will be spent on items not associated with Fire Fighter Safety as originally set	2/5/2021 12:59 PM
205	The current set up is good, it stops fire departments from stretching the boundaries of what the money is intended to be used for. Certain departments, and I can think of a handful off the top of my head immediately, what they consider "related to emergency response" would surely be questionable to the rest of us in the field.	2/5/2021 12:55 PM
206	If this is done the money will go to activities that are not centered on safety or health. In the 50 years I have been a first responder I have seen too much waste and misuse of money because firefighters cannot resist buying any shiny metal object.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
207	While I think it's a great idea, I could see where organizations will misappropriation these funds. I understand why the state requires so much documentation, but it has to be able to be streamlined.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
208	As part of a growing municipality with population & property with an increase in fire rescue responses along with a growing group of firefighters, we need the funds to provide insurances allowable by relief along with PPE for a growing organization plus SCBA and other basic allowable equipment.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
209	The funding should be used to provide supplemental insurance for volunteers, training, vehicles and equipment related to providing emergency services only. T-shirts and awards is not an appropriate use of this tax funding. So many fire department cannot afford to provide each firefighter with basic PPE.	2/5/2021 12:51 PM
210	The requirements are often confusing as to what we can use Relief money's for.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
211	I don't trust the government to give us the funds allocated to the fire company if changed to a grant style program. We often save up funds for several years before making a large purchase (SCBA or radios cost three years' worth of relief funding).	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
212	Allows for easy h to use as they see fit	2/5/2021 12:42 PM
213	current regulations seem to be working fine for us and have caused no problems at all	2/5/2021 12:40 PM
214	The system of allocation t support volunteer to career must be changed. Another reason why volunteers are unable to continue	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
215	some FDs buy items that do not provide safe ops on calls	2/5/2021 12:36 PM
216	In these times of economic hardships, it would be helpful to be able to use the money for general operating expenses overall rather than the strict list of acceptable expenses that currently exists. Why should a volunteer fire department have to operate as two separate entities (the department and the department Relief Assoc.)? It is just extra unnecessary burden on "volunteers"!	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
217	If they need to use the funds to keep the lights to offer emergency services so be it.	2/5/2021 12:27 PM
218	PSFC offers a grant program for operations. Keep relief money for training and safety	2/5/2021 12:25 PM
219	Expand to allow use of funds to cover other expenses related to emergency services. Insurance, fuel, etc.	2/5/2021 12:23 PM
220	This would be a great help in the current economic environment, although there would need to still have some safeguards assuring that protective equipment had some level of priority	2/5/2021 12:05 PM
221	Clearly this is important as it allows the organization to assess the need and distribute the funds to enhance emergency services delivery.	2/5/2021 12:01 PM
222	as long as it is spent for emergency response use	2/5/2021 11:57 AM
223	It needs to be used for insurance and such.	2/5/2021 11:55 AM
224	Opens the door to abuse and thefts	2/5/2021 11:54 AM

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225	No it should stay the way it is but managed by the OSFC	2/5/2021 11:53 AM
226	see prior Answer....	2/5/2021 11:48 AM
227	I don't know enough on what a "block grant" is, so I can't answer yes. I didn't want to answer no, but there was NO OPTION for unsure.	2/5/2021 11:45 AM
228	Would be more beneficial to relief associations.	2/5/2021 11:43 AM
229	It will be abused	2/5/2021 11:42 AM
230	Government agencies have been trying to access relief funds. The primary intent of these funds is benefits for volunteer firefighters. Those funds must remain. Additional use for training, safety and equipment purchases, etc is allowed but should be controlled by the fire companies and relief oversight boards.	2/5/2021 11:40 AM
231	With the changes in fire service delivery in the last 20 years, we need to be able to adapt and provide what the community requires. While it shouldn't be a free for all on the spending, the money comes from a tax - it should be used to provide that service back to the taxpayer without a lot of restrictions.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
232	Because there will always be those that will manipulate the system to fit their agenda	2/5/2021 11:32 AM
233	Purchases are jumped back and forth from different accounts to buy what is legal for relief money.	2/5/2021 11:31 AM
234	Everyone's needs are different for sure, cannot be a cookie cutter process	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
235	See answer 3.	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
236	The ability to spend funds on a wider range of expenses that fire departments incur such as pay per call programs, grant writing courses for members, remodeling/improvements for stations such as emergency backup generators, better lighting for safety, etc., CDL training & costs associated with licensing members, advanced college courses, & maintenance of fire company equipment as well as fuel for equipment & insurance would ensure departments are able to deliver services at the current rate while not being so reliant on fund raising activities.	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
237	That is going in the wrong direction. The funding needs to be distributed differently. That will make it competitive funding.	2/5/2021 11:22 AM
238	NO! Too many sad examples of funds being embezzled by volunteer officers, administrative and line, in PA	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
239	Too broad of a requirement, should be targeted and tracked	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
240	I believe that the intent of the program is one that should not be disregarded, safeguarding our fire fighters should be a priority. Unfortunately, with the funding inequities through the years, smaller relief associations do not have the resources to make many of these member benefitting programs a reality. Being able to act on a regional basis to utilize strength in numbers would be a huge win for many.	2/5/2021 11:20 AM
241	the monies need to be priority for the safety and welfare of the membership. Emphasis should be placed on providing protective clothing (IE bunker gear, rescue gear) as well as SCBA. Also need to provide life and disability insurance for members to protect income should they become injured or worse.	2/5/2021 11:18 AM
242	The relief funds are already so heavily audited I don't feel that would be conducive to anybody. The problem with block style grants is that municipalities then get to determine who gets that money? Here is the problem when I see with that. When some municipalities get a hand on money to "use" it doesn't get used properly and will ultimately end up going to some projects instead of funding what is needed . I believe it could be a slippery slop that could see our vital relief funds going to something that it was not meant for.	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
243	This is what the fire commissioner grant is for	2/5/2021 11:07 AM
244	Such a program will simply allow municipalities to "cost shift" current obligations to Relief Associations. Keep focus on safety and benefits.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
245	i believe this system though intended to benefit the the have nots, would in the end be political and benefit the have, much like the current federal level grant programs.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM

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246	I am good with leaving it similar to what it is now so smaller departments can focus on firefighter safety	2/5/2021 11:02 AM
247	Would open up things. Also hopefully more equity	2/5/2021 11:00 AM
248	Let the FD's use their money anywhere that is relates to The fire dept and services offered. Including LOSAPS, Pay per call or other membership incentives	2/5/2021 10:59 AM
249	My answer is "maybe" depending on further clarification of how this would work	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
250	This would also ease restrictions on purchases and probably make audits as a whole, much easier	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
251	Actually is 6 of one half dozen of the other. A block style grant may be more beneficial to a smaller department with greater financial needs. Not necessarily an issue in my mind though	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
252	See above more leeway needed and less restrictions on use.	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
253	People try to make far reaches with the money as it is. Insurance and safeguards should remain primary uses	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
254	I think its important to have checks and balances, to just provide money in a Block Grant and say do what is needed can and will be dangerous.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
255	no, there are already organizations that use the monies toward questionable projects now, such as salaries and benefits to a small number of members. the monies are not there for personal gain and if you don't keep an eye on that it will become a slush fund for personal use.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
256	Fireman's relief monies are not intended to pay for utility bills I believe they should co tinue to be earmarked for equipment expenses	2/5/2021 10:48 AM
257	The funds should have some limits that follow the spirit of the original intent of the act where expenditures are safety related.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
258	It would be best if all relief associations received a base payout of equal amount per municipality, township or borough. Then provide for distribution with a new formula. Relief Assoc. that have over \$1,000,000 in assets should only receive distributions on a once in 5 year basis. The current appropriation formula does not provide a benefit for smaller departments within the Commonwealth. At least if all had a base payout that would provide for Accidental Insurance Coverage and basic AD&D for active members (Recruitment Tool)	2/5/2021 10:46 AM
259	I feel that the way it is currently done will keep more control of the money	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
260	Having the monies released to the departments in bulk allows for the planning to purchase relief related equipment	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
261	treat the fire service just like local government grants.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
262	Current regulations are very specific. As long as the Block grant is not to administratively heavy	2/5/2021 10:43 AM
263	Smaller companies especially are struggling and the requirements for "relief" money should be restructured so that these small companies can get by.	2/5/2021 10:42 AM
264	I think the current restrictions prevent money from being squandered by leas competent managers on things that could be labeled as "related to emergency response"	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
265	There needs to continue to be stipulations on what is covered, if an item is questionable or unclear then a determination is made	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
266	This is essentially a tax based on local property insured values. That is acceptable. Those with larger exposures have more requirements for service provision, those with low value, have minimal exposure and demand. In a way it is a user fee/tax. It needs to be driven by need and accounted for, not given as a grant.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
267	I think it's good that this money must be spent on safety related equipment that might otherwise be passed over.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
268	See number three. Often times the department may need to dip in to relief funds to pay a bill or replace broken equipment that is not clearly covered under the authorized purchases.	2/5/2021 10:29 AM

Q5 We know across Pennsylvania there are several ways to organize Relief Associations. Some local governments have three VFC's who are members of a single Township or Borough Relief Association. Some have three different Relief Associations which all need required EIN's, bylaws, and governance structures. How do you feel this should be modernized?

Answered: 327 Skipped: 33

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Mergers	3/18/2021 4:07 PM
2	Each fire company should have its own relief structure.	3/14/2021 1:53 PM
3	Vote to have it" one way or the other" not both ways.	3/10/2021 1:58 PM
4	As many organizations serve multiple municipalities the volunteer organization receiving the funds should have and maintain their own relief association to maintain consistency.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
5	It is long past time for the state to encourage regionalization in the volunteer fire service.	2/15/2021 12:27 PM
6	incorporate NFIRS data to ensure departments answering the alarms with trained personnel are being rewarded	2/15/2021 10:28 AM
7	1 relief association per fire company.	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
8	Not sure	2/11/2021 3:07 PM
9	Must be incorporated into 1 organization with municipal oversight.	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
10	Consolidation means survival.	2/10/2021 10:01 PM
11	Separate and equal. Each company already has their own organization structure. It is too easy for certain departments to curry favor with elected officials and effect the allocation of funds.	2/10/2021 8:25 PM
12	We just have one organization for the town so I do not have a strong opinion here but fewer administrative barriers seem like it would be more efficient.	2/10/2021 8:08 PM
13	They should be combined into one	2/10/2021 7:56 PM
14	We need single source control via the municipal government. We must eliminate some of the numbers of parties that are being tracked. The municipality should have some control over where these free funds are going and who ultimately controls them. This gives some legitimate power to municipal officials in relation to private department actions.	2/10/2021 7:14 PM
15	There are 3 fire departments in the Town of McCandless, Peebles, Highland and Ingomar. I am a member of Highland. Currently we need approval from the 2 department to purchase approved equipment using our relief funds. I feel the our state funds should be released to us and items purchased ed accordance with the management guidelines.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
16	The municipality I'm involved with previously had 2 companies with separate Relief Associations. As that was all I knew of, I was fine with it. Now that the 2 companies have merged, I kind of lean toward a municipality based Relief Association. In our case (we get along well with our municipal officials) it could lead to utilization of township resources such as secretarial or financial.	2/10/2021 3:45 PM
17	Leave it alone. Each fire company has its own needs and don't need to be told what to do with their money.	2/10/2021 1:18 PM
18	Our fire relief has their own EIN which they are responsible for their Fire Relief Audit. I believe this ensures the accountability usage of their funds.	2/10/2021 11:20 AM
19	no problem with the way it is now	2/10/2021 10:08 AM

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20	None	2/10/2021 9:57 AM
21	Everything needs to be standardized across the state	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
22	One per township	2/10/2021 5:29 AM
23	N/A	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
24	In favor	2/9/2021 4:08 PM
25	Each department should Handel there relief funds	2/9/2021 3:58 PM
26	No impact for us.	2/9/2021 3:55 PM
27	Not sure which method is best but whichever method fairly distributes the funds among those organizations. Currently it is up to the Municipalities to ultimately choose this. I believe a funding formula should be developed on how to split these funds when multiple emergency service organizations serve one municipality.	2/9/2021 3:17 PM
28	Relief associations should be by municipality and include all fire departments within the municipality regardless of volunteer, combination or career. Although not administered by the municipality.	2/9/2021 3:05 PM
29	One per township	2/9/2021 3:01 PM
30	add we have PAID departments that have relief assoc. I.E. Harrisburg. if companys merge or if a town has several companys then there should be one association between them	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
31	Transition away from relief organizations altogether. Different organizations handle priorities very differently and, in some cases, unfairly, when different organizations are involved.	2/9/2021 2:14 PM
32	Each fire company has their own relief. The municapalites who are covered by one fir company all relief money goes to them. Municipalities covered bymore thenone company can divide the money to each which is how it is done now with 2 municipalities w cover. It is easy and simple	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
33	If the combining of relief associations serving a specific municipal region makes fund distribution more manageable then it should be considered.	2/9/2021 11:14 AM
34	No comment.	2/9/2021 10:49 AM
35	Unsure	2/9/2021 10:40 AM
36	I think have one relief association in one township or borough	2/9/2021 9:55 AM
37	Keep it the same	2/9/2021 9:43 AM
38	No suggestion at this time.	2/9/2021 9:08 AM
39	I have no opinion. Our department is a single station in a single borough so we manage our own relief funds.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
40	unable to comment we do not have that issue	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
41	No Comment	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
42	Get rid of all the formalities needed around this organization and just allot money or have a way to submit invoices to be reimbursed.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
43	Single association for all the fire companies phsyically located in the township or boro. Not giving funds to fire companies outside of the township or boro.	2/8/2021 7:49 PM
44	Our Twp has 6 VFC's and one Relief Association & it works fine	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
45	Should be at local government level, not individual fire company level	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
46	Consolidate relief organizations by municipality.	2/8/2021 6:29 PM
47	The fire company should be the relief entity.	2/8/2021 5:54 PM
48	If possible, which I doubt, they should consolidate! Highly recommended but to many thick heads!!!	2/8/2021 5:53 PM
49	all should be one under each municipality. the more relief associations that exist cause	2/8/2021 4:18 PM

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additional burden on PA state auditor along with too many EIN's and administrative processes that usually break down the smaller and the more relief associations exist. Very easy to run as one association per municipality.

50	Relief organizations should be managed per municipality. Multiple departments serving the same municipality should form a joint relief association.	2/8/2021 4:10 PM
51	Not an issue for us	2/8/2021 4:09 PM
52	A forced modernization would never work in PA. Parochialism is too strong. The best opportunity to accomplish this is through creating a new partnership such as a merger or consolidation of the affiliated fire-rescue and ambulance organizations and then the VFRA's join together. Another possibility is if the municipality(s) chose to create a new single entity due to a specific local need.	2/8/2021 3:29 PM
53	Require that the monies be handled by the municipality in these cases. This may help municipalities with this problem to have the companies/departments merge/consolidate.	2/8/2021 3:04 PM
54	One relief association per township would simplify the management and administration of each Relief Association.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM
55	Monies should be equally divided based on the number of fire companies, not on the simple discretion of local ordinances	2/8/2021 2:57 PM
56	I think a single association per municipality would be OK.	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
57	1 Relief Assoc to 1 Fire Co/EMS org.	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
58	I feel that this can be done as long as the township and/or Borough oversees the financial records.	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
59	One organization per jurisdiction.	2/8/2021 1:05 PM
60	One per municipality.	2/8/2021 1:00 PM
61	No idea	2/8/2021 12:35 PM
62	Yes, One Relief Association per one entity.	2/8/2021 12:06 PM
63	Each township, city, Borough should be one relief assn.	2/8/2021 11:51 AM
64	No, leave this alone, let the local authority govern how they wish.	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
65	Should all made to be one company	2/8/2021 10:48 AM
66	Not sure. My VFD has a Relief organization, but it functions well with Fire Company as a whole	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
67	Each municipality should have one relief organization. This would promote purchasing PPE (and other bulk items) together and providing maintenance on a shared cost basis-such as equipment testing. The separate organizations promote redundant activities, responsibilities, and expenses.	2/8/2021 10:33 AM
68	Our relief is fine the way we do it	2/8/2021 10:21 AM
69	do not know.	2/8/2021 10:13 AM
70	Give the money to each company like a grant.	2/8/2021 9:57 AM
71	I have worked with both situations. Both worked fine, so I have no thought on any changes.	2/8/2021 9:54 AM
72	one relief association per municipality	2/8/2021 9:45 AM
73	No. Each Relief association has unique circumstances. However the fund distribution should be equal to all Associations within the Township or borough	2/8/2021 9:25 AM
74	Each municipality should be limited to 1 relief association with representatives from all departments and funds should be split evenly compared to call volume.	2/8/2021 9:09 AM
75	I see advantages to have both formats, however, I think a single entity for each municipality should be the uniform format across the Commonwealth.	2/8/2021 9:05 AM
76	Reduce the entities	2/8/2021 9:03 AM

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77	one for each municipality. With municipal appointed members	2/8/2021 8:27 AM
78	Not sure	2/8/2021 5:59 AM
79	Existing way is fine--up to the municipality.	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
80	One Relief Association per municipality and the home municipality determines the amount given to each fire department.	2/7/2021 8:50 PM
81	Not sure	2/7/2021 6:12 PM
82	Each Township or Borough should have 1 Relief Association with equal members from each department to vote on how money is spent	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
83	Right now it fair an could be kept the same	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
84	Use block grant restricted funds directly to organization and eliminate the need for a separate "relief association"/	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
85	The different ways to organize a relief association give individual fire departments and localities flexibility. The above example would happen due to choice	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
86	Na	2/7/2021 4:40 PM
87	Whatever is best for the municipalities.	2/7/2021 4:39 PM
88	1 association for 1 municipality	2/7/2021 4:12 PM
89	This does not need to change, it should always be left up to the local level to determine how to organize.	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
90	County wide or regional within a county.	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
91	They should all be under one association.	2/7/2021 1:50 PM
92	Leave the individual fire companies with their individual Relief Associations. It is easier to plan and budget individually.	2/7/2021 1:48 PM
93	no comment	2/7/2021 1:32 PM
94	This is not fair to all the single companies. Yes it should be modernized.	2/7/2021 1:22 PM
95	Should be all one relief association	2/7/2021 1:00 PM
96	Each Township or borough should only have One Relief Association and all dept. have equal seats at the table	2/7/2021 12:58 PM
97	Single RA with split percentages according to call volume makes sense but to each their own if they are in accordance with RA guidelines. Along with removing the pension portion until a time which FD can do RA funded LOSAP programs.	2/7/2021 12:54 PM
98	Each organization should have its own relief association	2/7/2021 12:53 PM
99	Create a fair funding schedule in today's volunteer fire service business it no longer makes sense to have so many pots that require money dumped into them.	2/7/2021 12:38 PM
100	I have no recommendations.	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
101	1 relief association per municipality	2/7/2021 12:07 PM
102	Allowing for joint boards where the fire company and relief officers can all be the same.	2/7/2021 11:56 AM
103	One statewide relief association	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
104	Should only be one relief per municipality	2/7/2021 11:33 AM
105	THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE THE MAIN SOURCE OF THEIR OWN USE OF THEIR POWER.	2/7/2021 11:31 AM
106	Our Relief Association is okay as is. Two companies are in the process of merging into one with one township association.	2/7/2021 11:06 AM
107	I don't see an issue with this. But if fire companies are consolidating the relief associations would have to do the same.	2/7/2021 10:59 AM

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108	not a problem or issue	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
109	They should be one and not individual entities with monies evenly distributed within regulations	2/7/2021 10:36 AM
110	Each municipality should operate under one, centralized relief association regardless of the number of stations/departments within said municipality.	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
111	Personally, I would like to see it done by county, up to a certain number of companies.	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
112	I think something needs to addressed for those local governments that participate in a merged department that crosses local jurisdictions.	2/7/2021 10:12 AM
113	No changes.	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
114	Leave the relief funds allocated to VFCs, not to the municipalities	2/7/2021 9:55 AM
115	1 relief assoc	2/7/2021 9:43 AM
116	The Relief Associations need the Flexibility to merge.	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
117	Currently have one relief for two separate companies. We have had year meetings and then bi-yearly meetings and not they want quarterly or even monthly meetings. Our relief funds aren't used on a monthly basis but monthly meeting are hard to do for two separate companies.	2/7/2021 9:28 AM
118	Put all under one relief if serving the same area etc	2/7/2021 9:07 AM
119	Unknown	2/7/2021 9:04 AM
120	Do not change. Politics will play favorites	2/7/2021 8:37 AM
121	A regionalized approach is needed to best serve the citizens of the Commonwealth. Services tend to get duplicated, not out of need, but out of ego and spite. This is a huge waste of money. A regionalized approach, with tricter guidelines, would assist in ensuring thay the best possible services are provided	2/7/2021 6:49 AM
122	One per municipality and the formation and function needs to be better regulated and defined	2/7/2021 6:21 AM
123	One Twp or Borough association With reps from each organization	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
124	Standard guidelines	2/7/2021 2:19 AM
125	Merge them and make it a battalion structure .	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
126	I feel this current way is fine.	2/7/2021 12:59 AM
127	Should leave it up to the fire department that is covering that area.	2/6/2021 11:27 PM
128	1 municipality 1 relief organization	2/6/2021 11:06 PM
129	Each chartered department should be able to use their relief funds. There should not be a need to have a different organization just for relief obligations. Earmark the money to each chartered department.	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
130	I realize I am not to mention funding formula, however, our allocation has not increased to keep pace with increase in training and equipment cost increases.	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
131	Each organization should be required to maintain their own funds, which are evenly distributed, to prevent popular organizations from bullying smaller departments	2/6/2021 10:05 PM
132	our township has one fire company and one relief asso.	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
133	1 ein per municipality bylaw ans structure	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
134	A collective board by municipality would/could a provide appropriate oversight and allow for an easier standardization between Companies	2/6/2021 9:19 PM
135	The system is fine	2/6/2021 9:02 PM
136	needs to be standardized - should be single Township, boro.	2/6/2021 8:59 PM
137	It should be based on municipalities served.	2/6/2021 8:27 PM
138	One Relief Association, one set of officers.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM

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139	That decision should be left to local needs.	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
140	combine them and stop duplication of services	2/6/2021 7:01 PM
141	Doesn't need to be changed	2/6/2021 5:42 PM
142	Should be left to the municipality to authorize	2/6/2021 5:40 PM
143	NA	2/6/2021 5:26 PM
144	Should fall under 1 single RA and 1 EIN. Will aid in cost savings and bulk purchasing.	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
145	One per dept	2/6/2021 4:37 PM
146	One Relief per Fire Company and report expenditures to Fire Company. Allow municipality review upon request.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
147	Mergers of fire companies, mergers of Relief Associations	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
148	Not sure how to answer this. We have two companies in one township with a combined relief association with a successful working relationship.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
149	NA	2/6/2021 2:33 PM
150	Allow the organizations to govern and organize as they see fit. It doesn't become broke until the state begins messing with it!	2/6/2021 2:32 PM
151	I think the relief association funding should be separate from the local government funding (if applicable). Because this way the VFC's know exactly what they will get annually and will not change like the out source of funding	2/6/2021 2:25 PM
152	I believe in terms of for the state, it makes sense to only have one organization for each municipality receiving relief money, but belonging to that type of system, we already run into issues with one company in favor of spending money and another being against it. I don't know that there's a one-shoe-fits-all approach to this. However, to lessen the burden on auditors and DCED, one organization per municipality seems more appropriate.	2/6/2021 1:54 PM
153	Regional office. Funds once granted to the department are held by the office. Department has an expenditure within the approved list of purchases relief sends the bill for reimbursement or payment to be made to said office.	2/6/2021 1:43 PM
154	The same organization only needs to recognize the organizations admin officers ,they are elected to a duty of the entire organization and these same duties should be transparent between both entities	2/6/2021 1:35 PM
155	All company's should have their own Relief Association	2/6/2021 1:28 PM
156	Mergers	2/6/2021 1:07 PM
157	Ensure the municipality fairly divvies the money's based on population and call volume.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
158	One relief for each municipality	2/6/2021 12:42 PM
159	Frequent elections, public input	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
160	Too many variables to answer	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
161	If they are truly separate depts . They should. There is a lot of replication of services across the state... Municipalities with more than one should be working with them as one dept and possibly still keeping individual stations for response and geographic locations to be determined by fire/elected officials.	2/6/2021 12:00 PM
162	Each Municipality should have one joint relief. I am in a township that has 3 companies and there is one combined relief that gets the funds. Its easier on the township to disperse checks, may bring unity and consolidation of some departments.	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
163	Not sure. Haven't studied.	2/6/2021 11:52 AM
164	One governing board by municipality	2/6/2021 11:38 AM
165	Yes, if supporting regionalization, there should be access to modernize relief associations.	2/6/2021 11:26 AM
166	Single organization with oversight from all participants	2/6/2021 11:21 AM

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167	Each fire co needs their own association	2/6/2021 11:19 AM
168	Relief associations should be organized by municipality or by district of multiple municipalities.	2/6/2021 11:15 AM
169	Relief organizations should be encouraged to consolidate to avoid administrative overhead.	2/6/2021 10:52 AM
170	Give the funds to each fire company instead of a separate relief association with the stipulation that funds must be used for actual costs for responding to emergencies, including fire equipment, apparatus, PPE, and any costs directly related such as fuel, cell phones, etc.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
171	One organization per fire department. When consolidation occurs the process for combining reliefs should be part of the combining of the new consolidated department.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
172	One relief association per company	2/6/2021 10:46 AM
173	Separate association. Some local fire companies do not get along and there would be fights over money and spending.	2/6/2021 10:44 AM
174	Yes	2/6/2021 10:42 AM
175	Possibly regionalization of associations	2/6/2021 10:37 AM
176	Mandate one Relief Association per municipality with the requirement to distribute funds to departments based on the formula used to calculate allocations to municipalities.	2/6/2021 10:28 AM
177	Without combining the reliefs and the fire departments themselves I do not ever see this happening.	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
178	Consolidation to one per municipality. That is where the money goes from the state. Also, not all departments in the municipality have the same population, manpower or needs.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
179	Single relief for said area OR have a pathway for municipalities whom don't have "1st due" coverage that can distribute towards another relief assoc	2/6/2021 10:19 AM
180	If it ain't broke ... don't try to fix it. What is "modernization" anyway?	2/6/2021 10:09 AM
181	Whatever works for each organization. If more than one fire company, funds should be evenly and fairly distributed	2/6/2021 10:00 AM
182	No suggestions	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
183	I think the extreme diverse makeup of the PA Fire services, there may be scenarios that both ways are needed.	2/6/2021 9:28 AM
184	There should be no more than one Relief Association per Municipality. The funds are generated on the Municipal level. The distribution of relief funds within the organization should be handled at the Organizational level if response district sizes are not equal	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
185	Tried having 5 township for company's in one relief. Too many disagreements	2/6/2021 9:15 AM
186	No! I come from a Area where we had one large Relief Association which can be manipulated to control purchases not looked at as needed. Refire companies outlook is different. Again I think are the guidelines over the years are become more relaxed and what can be purchased has become an equipment supply funding source. Not to provide benefits, which is a lot of times one of the only ways to protect and offer benefits to volunteers.	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
187	Don't have relief association. Give every department a lump sum	2/6/2021 12:51 AM
188	Unknown	2/5/2021 10:18 PM
189	Not sure	2/5/2021 9:19 PM
190	I feel that the funds generated by each household should go to the closest fire department.	2/5/2021 8:50 PM
191	Under the municipal EIN	2/5/2021 8:24 PM
192	No more than 1 relief association per municipality.	2/5/2021 7:54 PM
193	Why can't they use the company EIN?	2/5/2021 7:51 PM
194	Out township fire relief association is comprised of the two fire companies and ambulance squad located in the township. It works, but requires compromises on every decision.	2/5/2021 7:47 PM

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195	example, two companies in our township.. merge them.. controlled by 3 members of each company, with the township public safety official or fire marshal with a voice, but no vote	2/5/2021 7:33 PM
196	Focus should be on consolidating them to be for a single township.	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
197	Consolidation and coordination of fire departments within regions and municipalities; too many areas have duplication of apparatus/services and not enough personnel to staff these apparatus. These competing agencies do not utilize economies of scale and "try to keep up with the Jones'es" rather than think of the public they serve. They forget who they serve, spend money like it is someone else's and forget what their true mission is to their community.	2/5/2021 5:51 PM
198	One association for each municipality with representatives from each VFC.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
199	This should be broken down based on coverage area and mileage	2/5/2021 5:36 PM
200	Population or call volume based funding	2/5/2021 5:11 PM
201	Combine the VFRA'S into one Association and each given a share of the Municipal allocations.	2/5/2021 4:58 PM
202	Unknown	2/5/2021 4:49 PM
203	We are good the way we are. 1 Relief 1 EIN	2/5/2021 4:36 PM
204	In my municipality the funds are divided between 4 departments soon to be 3 with a pending merger, when we merge we continue to get a distribution as if we are 2,it is supposed to entice depts to merge. The relief distributions should reward the departments that merge much like the Pa Grant program does.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
205	Some municipalities have more than one FD - there should be choice to merge into one Relief Assn. if desired, but I don't see it happening.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
206	One organization per twp. or boro	2/5/2021 4:15 PM
207	Not sure	2/5/2021 4:05 PM
208	Our city has 3 separate vol. stations which belong to one relief assoc. I believe this works well. Although not perfect, I think this works out better than having 3 separate organizations.	2/5/2021 4:04 PM
209	I do not have experience in this so I do not feel comfortable answering. I run in one municipality, under one relief association that supports several VFC's.	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
210	It should be done at a single RA for each municipality. DO NOT got to the county level for control or distribution.	2/5/2021 3:56 PM
211	I'm not sure if it should be changed. Consolidation should not be mandated if each association is effectively managed.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
212	N/A	2/5/2021 3:35 PM
213	Three VFCs who are members of a single Township Relief Association seems the best because the then three VFCs can determine, based on the current needs of the VFCs, how to split the funds rather than the Township determining how to split the funds because politics will likely be mixed it to the Township's determination. They have already attempted to do this.	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
214	Make it the same across the board	2/5/2021 3:26 PM
215	Don't know	2/5/2021 3:18 PM
216	All insurance should go thru the state that way everyone pays the same.	2/5/2021 3:17 PM
217	Mergers are great.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM
218	Mergers and consolidations of VFCs should be encouraged, and become the responsibility of the municipalities. So too should it be the responsibility of determining if there's a need for multiple RAs.	2/5/2021 3:12 PM
219	1 organization per municipality or district	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
220	Consolidate where possible.	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
221	The modernization needs to happen by the merging of departments;; this more sits on a fundamental level mores than the Relief association level	2/5/2021 3:03 PM

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222	Only have one organization so i would not want to answer	2/5/2021 2:54 PM
223	If a municipality is engaged in a regional delivery of services, then the association works best at the municipal level.	2/5/2021 2:53 PM
224	It needs to be a separate entity	2/5/2021 2:46 PM
225	We had two and merged them into one in 1988. It proved a positive step.	2/5/2021 2:36 PM
226	one municipality should only be allowed one relief association. This should help with starting to merge and consolidate services.	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
227	Money granted to each Fire Dept based on the geographic area of coverage of said township. One relief per department that is required to report electronically as to the spending of their yearly funds all of which should be accessed via a state website for reporting of expenditures	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
228	perhaps by individual fire companies as this may allow the flexibility of funds that the survey is drilling down on	2/5/2021 2:23 PM
229	I don't know if any changes need to be made	2/5/2021 2:22 PM
230	Should be up to local fire companies to decide this.	2/5/2021 2:16 PM
231	make the companies themselves take the responsibility. In many cases the same FC officers are also running the RA	2/5/2021 2:10 PM
232	the municipality should be on relief association and monies split equally amongst organizations. if they become separate relief organizations, some companies will receive more money based on development further causing a divide between the haves and have nots.	2/5/2021 2:09 PM
233	yes	2/5/2021 2:02 PM
234	There should only one relief assoc. assigned to a municipality	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
235	yes	2/5/2021 1:50 PM
236	You allot us funds, we account for them.	2/5/2021 1:49 PM
237	There is no need to modernize. These. Local decisions have generally worked well over the years.	2/5/2021 1:44 PM
238	We do not have that situation so it doesn't affect me. Seems to me it should be run through the municipality to help ease the burden and duplication of efforts.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
239	each have their own identity.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
240	Not familiar a enough with the current structure to comment.	2/5/2021 1:30 PM
241	Eliminate the use of "Relief Associations". The process is antiquated. The funds are generated by tax and are initially distributed to the municipality. Keep this process, but allow the expenses to be governed within the governmental process through the Fire Chief. Those who have individual local Fire Company Chiefs may remain volunteer, but they should become municipal officers and officially recognized by the municipality as their Chief. Local governments are ultimately responsible for the provision of fire services, yet we allow relief associations to dictate operational expenses. Some members of 'Relief Associations' have never been involved operationally. Fiscal oversight is good, but it can occur either at the municipal level or at the Fire Company level with the Board of Directors. Relief Associations have no accountability to the individual fire companies or the municipalities. The abuse normally occurs with the hoarding of funds and not allowing operations to be adequately and safely equipped. And some Chiefs or the municipality have no control over those decisions. 2 examples: 1. A FD with 5 local fire companies in the same municipality are part of the relief association. Portable radios are purchased and the relief association delegates wanted to vote on how and to whom the radios will be assigned. The was no regard for need and operational efficiency. 2. 3 Separate fire Companies all within the same municipality. The 3 companies comprised the relief association. Annual Operational funds were budgeted to each fire company equally: 1/3, 1/3, and 1/3 for each company. One fire company had 4 trucks, a boat, 1 station and responded to 115 emergencies a year. The 2nd fire company had 4 trucks, 1 station and responded to 300+ emergencies a year. The 3rd fire company had 2 fire stations, 9 trucks and responded to 700+ emergencies annually. Yet, the distribution of operational funds from the relief association were controlled by the 2/3 of the organization with the lesser needs.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM

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242	Unfortunately, I do not think there is one magic solution that will resolve this. In many cases the municipal boundaries do not coincide with fire districts, so a single municipal entity could be served by multiple different fire organizations, making the distribution of the funds difficult to manage. To modernize this structure there would almost need to be something to force mergers, so that one relief association is for one department and manages one municipal boundary. A fete that is not likely to occur because of various political influences and personal agendas	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
243	No response since not an issue with us.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
244	I don't know why this is a question on this survey. The local jurisdiction is entitled to organize how they seem fit. Depending on their choice, they need to organize accordingly.	2/5/2021 1:08 PM
245	One township or borough relief association to cover all FDs in that municipality	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
246	I think that funding needs to be based on need rather than arbitrary. In the Township we are located in, it is served by 3 Departments and the funds are split. However, one of those Departments also gets the full funding from their borough, and the other gets the full funding from their Township. We are the only Department in our Township, yet have to share the funding. This creates a situation where our annual allotments are always a lot less than those 2, yet we have the same needs.	2/5/2021 1:02 PM
247	The PA fire service needs to be overhauled. Less fire companies equal more available funding. I feel the Relief Associations should follow suit. Regionalize, merge, consolidate, whatever. But as long as we battle for funding and find "creative" ways to shoehorn a Relief purchase into a term of "safety" items, we're going to continue down this path. Companies are buying expensive apparatus and are parting out lights, equipment, etc. Just to be able to afford the apparatus. This should not be.	2/5/2021 1:01 PM
248	If two or more Company's share a municipality I think they should merge and have one Relief organization governing both Companies	2/5/2021 12:59 PM
249	Current program is fine	2/5/2021 12:55 PM
250	Yes, there should never be more than one relief association per municipality regardless of the number of individual fire companies in that municipality. This reduces operating costs and simplifies procedures.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
251	May not need to be changed	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
252	No idea	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
253	A single relief entity is preferable in a single municipality. However if a municipality relies on fire rescue service outside of their municipality as primary, the relief allotment should be divided by the number primary fire organizations providing service to that municipality. Consideration should be given to population coverage area and not just geography size of the response area.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
254	Each fire department should have there own relief organization and the funding should be directly distributed to the Relief associations, not the municipalities.	2/5/2021 12:51 PM
255	I can't speak to this subject.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
256	Having the relief association as a separate paper entity is a burden on the company. Transferring funds between relief and fire company become a challenge. The fire company should be registered/linked to the fire company EIN and not treated as a separate entity.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
257	We have 3 companies in the same township under 1 relief and I think it works well	2/5/2021 12:42 PM
258	no comment since this does not apply to us	2/5/2021 12:40 PM
259	we are one relief association covering two departments.	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
260	ok if the AHJ divides the money per Fd responses and proper usages	2/5/2021 12:36 PM
261	Why is it even necessary to have chartered "Relief Associations"?	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
262	No	2/5/2021 12:32 PM
263	Not sure	2/5/2021 12:30 PM

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264	Don't distribute to separate RA's. give funds directly to recognized fire departments.	2/5/2021 12:28 PM
265	We have (3) depts. in our relief assoc. I think it stream lines things and requires less admin. folks	2/5/2021 12:27 PM
266	One relief association per fire department.	2/5/2021 12:25 PM
267	These associations should be considered one entity.	2/5/2021 12:23 PM
268	Continual equity across all associations	2/5/2021 12:06 PM
269	We currently have one association for two companies and are satisfied with this structure	2/5/2021 12:05 PM
270	Consolidate the 3 departments.	2/5/2021 12:03 PM
271	Streamline the process and take the Bureaucracy out of the process.	2/5/2021 12:01 PM
272	combine into one relief and governed by a board with equal representation	2/5/2021 11:57 AM
273	What ever works for each organization	2/5/2021 11:55 AM
274	That's a local decision and the state should stay out of it.	2/5/2021 11:54 AM
275	There should be one relief association for each municipality and a member of the municipality should sit on the board.	2/5/2021 11:53 AM
276	The municipality should be responsible for the relief association funding and it should not be a separate entity	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
277	Combination into one association per municipality. To include municipal government oversight.	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
278	See prior two answers ..If the core purpose is not protected...the entire relief program will just become the state annual grant...The relief program is really a great program...if not diluted...	2/5/2021 11:48 AM
279	I'm not affected by this, so I don't know if the current format works or not and what the problem is.	2/5/2021 11:45 AM
280	not necessary	2/5/2021 11:43 AM
281	We are unsure. Locally here every fire company has it's own relief association	2/5/2021 11:42 AM
282	Organizing by municipality seems to make the most sense.	2/5/2021 11:40 AM
283	I feel that it might be beneficial to provide the money directly to the fire company and eliminate the relief association all together. If the block grant theory becomes realty, it would make it much easier to provide our services.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
284	1 relief association per municipality	2/5/2021 11:32 AM
285	not sure about that	2/5/2021 11:31 AM
286	Each Town or Township should have one association	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
287	I think that if all the VFC are under one municipality, the funds aren't distributed equitably. Each VFC may have different needs based on response areas.geographics/demographics that need addressed individually.	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
288	I think this is a great concept & furthermore would make it easier & more attractive for VFDs to merge/consolidate/shutdown which ultimately would lead to a better, cheaper streamlined service delivery model - in theory.	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
289	All relief funds need distributed to the municipality the fire departments are located within	2/5/2021 11:22 AM
290	In larger suburban townships, that are very busy, separate Relief organizations are efficient. Trying to get several organizations to get together to try to agree on PAFRA issues is counterproductive and adds an additional burden on an time stressed system.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
291	Relief per department	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
292	With the politics involved in many community VFD's, I do not see any way to modernize this	2/5/2021 11:20 AM
293	YES. Monies should be delivered to the relief association and not by the municipality. In cases where more that 1 relief association provides service to a municipality the moneys may not be	2/5/2021 11:18 AM

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split fairly. Not sure how to solve this problem however.

294	Yes. It should be one FRA for each municipality	2/5/2021 11:17 AM
295	That system in my experience isn't the worst. I believe it holds the individual department accountable for their actions. I have managed our departments relief association for 10 years. During those audits it was the best way to hold the departments accountable. Right before I took over, There was issue with misappropriation of funds. Fortunately that was caught and with swiftly and criminally. If those protections were not in place things could have turned out much differently.	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
296	Each township should have 1 relief association	2/5/2021 11:07 AM
297	Each municipality should have one association.	2/5/2021 11:07 AM
298	One Relief per municipality... less complex and reduces administration expenses and bureaucracy	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
299	No, i believe letting each municipally govern how is do in their jurisdiction.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
300	Belonging to 1 Relief Association made up of 3 Borough Fire Departments is not working out in our case.The Municipality has decided that because the one Department has organized it's own Relief Association that they are getting all the funds. There is a problem on how the Funds should be spent.Also in a Council of 7 Members ,4 belong to the Relief Association that the monies were given to.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
301	Each community should have only one relief association there are so many reasons this makes sense.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
302	It should be one large relief for the township not individual	2/5/2021 11:02 AM
303	No change	2/5/2021 11:00 AM
304	More emphasis and bonus money to progressive and merged depts to increase efficiency and effectiveness. We have too many FD's in PA and a lot of wasted money given to sub par performances	2/5/2021 10:59 AM
305	Absolutely	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
306	All under one blanket EIN and 1 association	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
307	One Relief Association per Municipality	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
308	It good as is	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
309	One relief for each municipality since there is only one government.	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
310	unknown.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
311	One association per community.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
312	make the state of PA the only relief association and allow the state to issue out funds to each municipality in one flat rate check.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
313	Mandate considations in this manner and establish a board of representatives. This will also promote the educational aspects of how relief associations work	2/5/2021 10:48 AM
314	There should be guidance on how to merge relief associations but no mandates as each local area should decide on what structure is best for their needs.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
315	No. Township or Borough should provide equal distribution under either area coverage or population served equation.	2/5/2021 10:46 AM
316	No comment. We are a small local fire department.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
317	All monies should be allocated to primary governing body	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
318	one relief per community.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
319	Explore regionalization of relief	2/5/2021 10:43 AM
320	Get rid of "relief associations" and distribute funds directly to the fire companies.	2/5/2021 10:42 AM

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321	I think each company should have it's own relief association	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
322	Provide some incentive for the 3 separate entities to be listed as one relief association. However there may be a valid reason why all 3 separate associations exist	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
323	One relief association per municipality.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
324	Single relief association to the municipality and according to laws passed in 2008, let muni decide the oversight process for one or all fire companies and be responsible for the use and accounting of funds.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
325	Since the money is distributed to the township, it seems there should be one relief association managed by the township.	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
326	Should be changed to only 1 department is filed under relief	2/5/2021 10:32 AM
327	While department politics will prefer the three separate relief association, a single municipal controlled / board controlled entity would be more effective and reduce duplication of services. Consolidations/mergers should be looked at in these scenarios anyway.	2/5/2021 10:29 AM

Q6 In today's world do you feel a Relief Association organization is needed that is difference from the regular fire company? State Relief funds could deposited and tracked in a special regular fire company bank account for auditing

Answered: 340 Skipped: 20

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes	3/18/2021 4:07 PM
2	Keep the relief fund separate from regular fire company funds	3/14/2021 1:53 PM
3	No, I think that it could create more issues. Relief invoices getting mixed up with Fire Co. invoices. We have two meetings, one each for Relief and Fire Co.	3/10/2021 1:58 PM
4	I think the funds need to be deposited and tracked in a separate bank account than the company's general fund. A bank account specifically in the relief association name seems to remain the most intuitive way to manage the funds.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
5	With modern financial accounting systems and electronic banking, it would not be overly burdensome to remove the need for relief funds to be handled by a separate entity, as long as the Fire Company can maintain separate funds/books.	2/15/2021 12:27 PM
6	Could be simplified	2/15/2021 10:28 AM
7	I think this is easy to do, but I am very smart with money and finances. That said there are A LOT of fire companies that still use paper and pencil to track finances, I think there is more room for error that way and by intermingling funds you can cause extra work on the state auditors and firefighters alike.	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
8	That would be fine. It is a burden of already stretched volunteers to manage an entire second organization, inside the main one	2/11/2021 9:26 PM
9	This would really help to streamline things. One less set of financial books. One less set of meeting minutes. Less headache deciding what Relief should or could pay for.	2/11/2021 3:07 PM
10	Yes, to maintain separation of funds. Or the consideration of being built into existing municipal fire budgeting. (I.E. like pension funds)	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
11	That could help stop the misuse of funds.	2/10/2021 10:01 PM
12	Yes. Too much money in one account without adequate documentation is set for abuse, either by certain individuals or unintentional bookkeeping errors.	2/10/2021 8:25 PM
13	I think a single organization with multiple bank accounts would be more efficient and a positive change, but would have to see what the rules would be around combination departments that have both career and volunteer members. A state owned account with transactions audited in real time would seem to be an efficient implementation of this single organization multiple account model.	2/10/2021 8:08 PM
14	Ok	2/10/2021 7:56 PM
15	no response	2/10/2021 7:14 PM
16	Yes a separate bank account could be should be used for auditing purposes.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
17	I believe it could be done if the fire company were diligent in following the rules set by the state. I could also see the opposite side where it is not tracked and things go poorly.	2/10/2021 3:45 PM
18	Heck NO. There will be a constant problem with spending the money and surely the benefits provided by the Relief will be reduced in favor of buying equipment or apparatus. Besides they are two different incorporated bodies.	2/10/2021 1:18 PM

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19	I believe that the fire relief funds should be in their own separate account. Ensures accuracy and accountability for auditing their books.	2/10/2021 11:20 AM
20	no	2/10/2021 10:08 AM
21	No	2/10/2021 9:57 AM
22	Yes	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
23	This could be done and handled appropriately	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
24	yes	2/9/2021 4:08 PM
25	I think the relief can be operated by just the company and managed with today's software	2/9/2021 3:58 PM
26	I dont have a problem having a separate entity for tracking it. But the inventory each year is difficult for items like pagers or gear. Tracking them is a req pain	2/9/2021 3:55 PM
27	If the proper rules and regulations are in place I can see the funds being deposited and tracked in a special regular fire company bank account. My concern would be the municipalities act as if they are providing these funds so they withhold additional funding when in reality these funds are specifically earmarked for these purposes and they are just the conduit for such funding.	2/9/2021 3:17 PM
28	I think that system would only work if there was only one fire company per municipality. Otherwise, a different program would be needed.	2/9/2021 3:05 PM
29	No, leave it the way it is. It would be too much for one person in a fire co	2/9/2021 3:01 PM
30	yes. that type of system would see abuse of funds. not every co. has great bookkeeping.	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
31	It is time to transition away from the separate relief organizations.	2/9/2021 2:14 PM
32	I think it shuld be as it is now. By depositing funds in a seperate account maintained bythe fire company I think would lean to the mingling of funds and difficult to keep seperate. I think the fire company and relief need to be kept independent.	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
33	Not sure if some departments would manage these accounts properly.	2/9/2021 11:14 AM
34	I do feel this is an unnecessary burden on the fire companies.	2/9/2021 10:49 AM
35	Separate organizations seem unnecessary	2/9/2021 10:40 AM
36	Yes	2/9/2021 9:55 AM
37	It could be a fire company nightmare trying to keep the fund tracking separated. Keeping it the way it is, is better for accounting. Do way with the audits from the state.	2/9/2021 9:43 AM
38	No.	2/9/2021 9:08 AM
39	In our department, protecting the funding stream is important but It would be easier if it were managed like the Fire Commissioners Grant Program or Block Grant.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
40	This makes the most sense. Volunteerism is not the same and it creates people to wear several hats in a department. This could reduce time needed and streamline funds etcetera.	2/8/2021 9:15 PM
41	no	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
42	Already have this model.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
43	Absolutely not, the current volunteer shortage makes running a fire house hard enough. To have unneeded administrative overhead stresses the already overtaxed volunteers.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
44	no	2/8/2021 7:49 PM
45	I believe it best the way it is	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
46	I believe separate organization keeps better accountability, just need to streamline the requirements	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
47	This would simplify things.	2/8/2021 6:29 PM
48	no	2/8/2021 5:57 PM
49	No	2/8/2021 5:54 PM

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50	The money would be gone in no time and nothing available if a firefighter requires medical treatment long term! Relief Associations should carry insurance for their firefighters!!!	2/8/2021 5:53 PM
51	it is needed for protection of the funds from fraud and being subject to audit by the state. It's important to specify the controls needed around these state funds since individual fire departments internal controls are not very strong	2/8/2021 4:18 PM
52	No. Funds should be distributed directly to the fire department	2/8/2021 4:10 PM
53	Yes - Relief associations have different agendas than fire companies	2/8/2021 4:09 PM
54	Yes. The mission of the VFRA is different from the mission of the volunteer fire company, ambulance and rescue squad. Also, since we do not have a single fire-rescue and ems model in PA, local needs "may" be compromised. In a different model/system, this may work but I'm not sure if it would work in PA under the current system.	2/8/2021 3:29 PM
55	In our instance, we are one fire company within our municipal boundaries and I feel we do not need organization is different. For municipalities with multiple VFC's it may have to have a stand alone Relief Organization for the Municipality. (See Answer above with multiple VFC's in a municipality.)	2/8/2021 3:04 PM
56	Yes, since this could alleviate some politics and allow individual fire company to use the awarded monies as they see fit.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM
57	While general fund distribution sounds great on the surface, co-mingling of funds is never a good idea	2/8/2021 2:57 PM
58	In our organization, the relief association is held directly after the department meeting as needed. the gavel drops to adjourn, then the gavel drops to call the meeting to order. Separate minutes, etc are kept as required. I think the idea of a special account within the Company is worth exploring.	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
59	That would simplify record keeping and duplication of effort.	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
60	There have been cases were Treasurers, Fire Chiefs and Presidents have stolen monies from the relief accounts. There has to be two signatures on checks and the Township/Borough has to over see the financial accounting. All Relief Officers should be Bonded.	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
61	Absolutely this is a great idea. There is no need for a relief association any longer as we move into 2021 and beyond.	2/8/2021 1:05 PM
62	Yes	2/8/2021 1:00 PM
63	Keep relief as is.	2/8/2021 12:35 PM
64	No, I do not feel a Relief Association organization is needed. It is too taxing, the volunteers already have numerous rolls to fill and relief is just an added weight. Yes deposit and track the funds through a bank account for auditing through the fire co.	2/8/2021 12:06 PM
65	yes	2/8/2021 11:51 AM
66	Yes, would eliminate the need to separate EIN & tax filings	2/8/2021 10:55 AM
67	this would be good, if you have seperate relief organizations. Getting people to serve on the relief is getting harder to find to commit their time.	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
68	Yes	2/8/2021 10:48 AM
69	I do not think they need to be separate. With modern accounting systems, the money can be tracked easily.	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
70	With proper regulations in place, a responsible fire department could manage it appropriately. As I mention before, disciplined organizations handle their funds well.	2/8/2021 10:33 AM
71	Yes	2/8/2021 10:21 AM
72	No. That would be another account the fire company would have to deal with.	2/8/2021 10:13 AM
73	No. It can be tracked like a grant	2/8/2021 9:57 AM
74	Keep them separate. In small companies, that is not a problem. In bigger Associations, or	2/8/2021 9:54 AM

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associations with multiple departments within the Association, that could be messy. And even with big single organization Relief, to put the money into the fire company, with same officers, may give an easier means of "Commingling of Funds".

75	Yes, co-mingling of funds would only lead to larger theft reports and misappropriation of relief funds by the regular fire company.	2/8/2021 9:45 AM
76	This would streamline the accounting but not necessary	2/8/2021 9:25 AM
77	Yes. There still needs to be regulation and accountability of funds. We still see too many instances of people misappropriating funds or stealing outright. Many departments are not performing audits as they cant afford them. In this case, the state is performing the audit where it is no cost essentially to the association.	2/8/2021 9:09 AM
78	Interesting thought. A separate organization can act as a check and balance. I don't know if a separate organization reduces or, in fact, encourages fraud. If the Relief funds were more actively monitored by the general membership, as is suggested here, there could be less a chance for misuse.	2/8/2021 9:05 AM
79	Our primary purpose for relief funds covers the additional insurance above and beyond the workers compensation	2/8/2021 9:03 AM
80	I would say let treat it like grants. When you have a single department in a municipality that department should be the organization.	2/8/2021 8:27 AM
81	Yes	2/8/2021 5:59 AM
82	I would keep the Relief Association as is--with some changes to the membership/board.	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
83	That could work but with strict rules.	2/7/2021 8:50 PM
84	Yes	2/7/2021 6:12 PM
85	Well in our department it's the same members but with the book keeping and inventory I believe it's better to have a different set of officers to do relief	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
86	That would help stream line the relief. I would have the fire chief oversee the funds	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
87	See #5 above.	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
88	That would be a nice change.	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
89	No	2/7/2021 4:40 PM
90	No I don't feel it needs to be separated.	2/7/2021 4:39 PM
91	Personally if the department is performing annual audits, can account for all money, and support each purchase, no real need for separate organizations. Just adding more stress to over taxed personnel.	2/7/2021 4:12 PM
92	This would help, however the state oversight must remain strong. Here again, it should be left up to the association how they would like to meet guidelines	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
93	No	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
94	Yes	2/7/2021 1:50 PM
95	It would simplify things to have one meeting and one set of minutes, but the Relief finances would be in a separate account.	2/7/2021 1:48 PM
96	yes, please simplify.	2/7/2021 1:32 PM
97	Yes due to the insurance coverage that Relief associations carry is different than fire company. We could have a person on the board who is a specialist like in insurance but is not an officer in the department except Relief.	2/7/2021 1:22 PM
98	Yes because this way the money doesn't go missing and used for something else	2/7/2021 1:00 PM
99	We feel it would be better to keep them as two different organization. for accountabilty and in funding reasons	2/7/2021 12:58 PM
100	Yes Separate RA allows for cleaner tracking of purchases and our particular association ALL	2/7/2021 12:54 PM

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members can vote vs requirements to vote in FC

101	Yes	2/7/2021 12:53 PM
102	As long as there are ways to audit and track those monies it could be structured into a fire company budget. The problem is the fire companies that don't have strong policies and guidelines to protect and govern themselves much less something more to track and be responsible for.	2/7/2021 12:38 PM
103	Yes	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
104	I cannot answer this question	2/7/2021 12:07 PM
105	This system would be fine as well as the current.	2/7/2021 11:56 AM
106	Still separate	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
107	Generally speaking if funding can be tracked for auditing purposes, I do not see a need to have relief association	2/7/2021 11:33 AM
108	IT HAS ALWAYS HAD IT OWN ACCOUNT FOR THE FUNDS TO BE USED NOT FROM THE GENERAL ACCOUNT.	2/7/2021 11:31 AM
109	Our Relief Association is already organized that way. Funds are audited by the state every three years.	2/7/2021 11:06 AM
110	I would keep them separate. Some fire companies aren't managed that well and the wrong people are handling the funds.	2/7/2021 10:59 AM
111	I do not think it is necessary to have a relief and general fire company. I believe it could be combined. But monitored by the state and also have a yearly audit. I love the audit!	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
112	no	2/7/2021 10:36 AM
113	I believe that requiring a stand alone association and requiring that association to hold meetings separate from the regular monthly meeting of the parent department is an antiquated concept that should only be required in municipalities that has multiple stations/departments that operate under the umbrella of one relief association	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
114	Relief associations often cover insurance costs for the companies and only receive a portion of the actual funds. Over half of our relief funds goes directly to insurance costs.	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
115	yes	2/7/2021 10:12 AM
116	Relief money should be allowed to be deposited directly into a specific fire company account and dispersed from there.	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
117	That does make sense.	2/7/2021 9:55 AM
118	Yes	2/7/2021 9:43 AM
119	Yes, I do. This is needed to provide some level of protection to members who are no longer first line firefighters.	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
120	The way our current setup is with two separate companies with on relief, Yes. If it was on relief one company then just a separate account would be sufficient	2/7/2021 9:28 AM
121	Yes	2/7/2021 9:07 AM
122	Yes, I feel that some government entities might try to utilize this or supplement the funds to the department by deducting this money from a current budget	2/7/2021 9:04 AM
123	Not needed	2/7/2021 8:37 AM
124	Again, regionalization!!!!	2/7/2021 6:49 AM
125	Only would see this as acceptable if I could see the mechanism in place first to ensure proper accounting and oversight	2/7/2021 6:21 AM
126	Agreed BUT in some organizations the fire company is social driven I could see issues in those organizations	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
127	No	2/7/2021 2:19 AM

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128	Yes	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
129	Yes, keep as is.	2/7/2021 12:59 AM
130	No	2/6/2021 11:27 PM
131	No, as long as a separate account is maintained the relief association is still maintained by the fire company	2/6/2021 11:06 PM
132	It is redundant to have a relief association that mirrors the chartered department. Especially in today's world with limited resources, you have members duplicating roles in both the department and the relief association.	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
133	There needs to be separation	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
134	Lifting restrictions and applying annual allotments to be used as the company sees fit would eliminate the need for special audits and programs.	2/6/2021 10:05 PM
135	It would make it easier for the fire companies	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
136	This still should remain	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
137	This would be one way to prevent comingling of funds.	2/6/2021 9:19 PM
138	Yes Keep them separate	2/6/2021 9:02 PM
139	separate	2/6/2021 8:59 PM
140	I do not see a need for a separate relief association, however when auditing it is easier to keep track of expenses and purchases	2/6/2021 8:27 PM
141	Yes.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM
142	Yes. In my experiences, some fire company's leadership are clueless as to what VFRA funds may be used for and VFRA rules are more stringent in accounting practices.	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
143	So what is the question?	2/6/2021 7:01 PM
144	Absolutely not	2/6/2021 5:42 PM
145	Makes sense	2/6/2021 5:40 PM
146	No	2/6/2021 5:26 PM
147	No it should remain separate from regular fire company	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
148	Yes don't change that aspect of it.	2/6/2021 4:37 PM
149	2 meetings, 2 sets of minutes, 2 sets of financial records. Sure can be modernized, and documentation is greatly reduced. Of course the Auditor Generals staff should expect downsizing.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
150	Keeping the separate Relief Association tends to ensure that funds received are utilized for their intended purpose.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
151	I think it is a good idea to keep separate relief associations	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
152	Yes	2/6/2021 3:00 PM
153	No	2/6/2021 2:33 PM
154	Not sure that I understand the question	2/6/2021 2:32 PM
155	No, for easier tracking, accountability, and to cut cost for a RA it does make sense to have one organization and allow a set of bylaws or regulations to govern how the RA funding is to be used	2/6/2021 2:25 PM
156	Also a valid option, and I'm not against it, but it would likely increase the number of audits needing completed across the state based on combined relief associations currently. Also, even though we have 3 fire companies, we have the money split 4-ways and 1/4 is a administrative fund for general items, insurance, death benefits ETC. Who would hold the fourth fund?	2/6/2021 1:54 PM

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157	Yes! Relief needs to be kept separate and monitored. Fire service is changing to include loss of small/aging departments. Funds need explicitly accounted for.	2/6/2021 1:43 PM
158	No - as long as there is accountability, why should we maintain accounts being charged by financial institutions because these allotments are not enough to maintain free accounts . They are often charge fees for balances less than a certain amount	2/6/2021 1:35 PM
159	No they should be able to put funds into regular fire company accounts and have special bank account for relief funds	2/6/2021 1:28 PM
160	I do agree. Lack of volunteers makes the same people running both ready.	2/6/2021 1:07 PM
161	Fire companies are moving to joint or same makeup of boards, so it could fit in to just allocate separate accounts under 1 administration.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
162	True	2/6/2021 12:42 PM
163	Yes	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
164	Agree that RA and FC could be one in same with different \$\$ accounting.	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
165	I have no issue with separate organization and accounting. I believe it might even possibly be easier for all parties.	2/6/2021 12:00 PM
166	No Relief is needed and state governance is needed. With the rise in misappropriation of funds in some companies, we need to ensure these funds are used by and for the appropriate personnel.	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
167	That would be ok after paying for minimum insurance	2/6/2021 11:52 AM
168	No for fire companies For multiple departments yes	2/6/2021 11:38 AM
169	I think for simplicity there should be two separate association.	2/6/2021 11:26 AM
170	No	2/6/2021 11:21 AM
171	I am ok with the different organizations	2/6/2021 11:19 AM
172	As long as the funds are audited, relief money should be able to combine with existing company funds.	2/6/2021 11:15 AM
173	This idea makes some sense, but for others the regional option with standardized bulk purchasing may provide more benefits.	2/6/2021 10:52 AM
174	Do not need a separate organization. I have no issue with requiring a separate bank account that is then audited by the state.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
175	This is a poorly worded question just like the current religion guidelines and policies, makes no sense. I have no idea what you are asking here.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
176	No deposit in general funds account	2/6/2021 10:46 AM
177	Separate. Creates a checks and balances system so money is not squandered and nothing is done illegally	2/6/2021 10:44 AM
178	Yes	2/6/2021 10:42 AM
179	Yes	2/6/2021 10:37 AM
180	No. I think a special account would suffice. It is a nuisance to deal with equipment purchased by a department but maintained by relief and vice versa.	2/6/2021 10:28 AM
181	No. Once again too much room for fraud and theft in the fire department side.	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
182	No.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
183	Yes, too many issues not to be this way.	2/6/2021 10:19 AM
184	The main drawback to this would be the complexity of the Audit of the regular fire company books by the Auditor General's office. They are understaffed and would need to increase staff. Having one consolidated administration for the VFC and Relief makes perfect sense. This would take some serious training efforts across all of the VFC, however, this model could be an option for VFC to consider. Perhaps there could be an incentive to consolidate.	2/6/2021 10:09 AM

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185	Yes	2/6/2021 10:00 AM
186	Should be separate from fire company.	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
187	As long as there is still accountability, there doesn't need to be a separate organization.	2/6/2021 9:28 AM
188	Where this would be beneficial is when there is more than one VFC in a municipality and there is a distinct difference in coverage area. For example, my Fire Company covers approximately 75% of the municipality while the other VFC in the municipality covers 25%. However, relief funds are split equally.	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
189	No to much confusion	2/6/2021 9:15 AM
190	No! Checks and Balances! Although I think the meets could be ran together. There is always to many meetings!	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
191	I agree with that. Disband the relief associations and give the money to the fire company	2/6/2021 12:51 AM
192	Separate accounts	2/5/2021 10:18 PM
193	Yes separate organizatiln	2/5/2021 9:19 PM
194	I feel that a separate group is not needed.	2/5/2021 8:50 PM
195	Yes	2/5/2021 8:32 PM
196	No need for separate funds organizations	2/5/2021 8:24 PM
197	No	2/5/2021 7:54 PM
198	No a separate origination should not be needed. The co. has everything needed. Relief is a duplication of what is already in place.	2/5/2021 7:51 PM
199	The money should go straight to the fire companies.	2/5/2021 7:47 PM
200	Yes	2/5/2021 7:33 PM
201	It would be difficult to do this as the corporation and the relief rules do differ sometimes. It would also require the fire department to have a similar membership rule so that the correct members vote. I still see many departments that have social members to the bar and they could potentially have influence over these funds.	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
202	YES!!	2/5/2021 5:51 PM
203	Under the current rules you need to provide an audit trail for each item purchased and maintain an inventory of those items. I believe that this must be maintained to keep everyone honest. I will say that small expendable items should be assigned a service life and after the appropriate time be written off.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
204	Agree! This could be monitored by the Fire Department as funds from the Municipal government. Many don't even comply as it is with the proper procedures.	2/5/2021 5:36 PM
205	Could be combined into same organization. Would need separate bank accounts with separate audits	2/5/2021 5:11 PM
206	This would be to risky and easy to mix the funds. Keep it separate!	2/5/2021 4:58 PM
207	I don't agree with mixing them, the auditors have enough problems now !	2/5/2021 4:49 PM
208	For auditing = Yes. But the Audits need to be streamlined	2/5/2021 4:36 PM
209	Yes, personally I think the separation is needed to control spending	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
210	That could also be a better way of operating / streamlining it.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
211	A seperate line item on the regular fire company books would be great	2/5/2021 4:15 PM
212	Yes because you can keep better tract of the money	2/5/2021 4:05 PM
213	See my answer above. It depends on how the money would be divided among the 3 companies. One company runs nearly twice as many calls as the other two companies, has many more active members as the other two and has the majority of the population and square mileage of the city in their 1st due area. So if the City's relief allocation is split evenly 3 ways	2/5/2021 4:04 PM

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then no. If the money is split according to call volume, population and square mileage then yes.

214	Not necessarily. Having the two organizations (a relief and a seperate fire company) is how we operate. It allows for some "checks and balances". Are you saying that instead of having a relief Assoc, the funds would go into a special bank account for the VFC which would be tracked/audited? In some areas this could be beneficial (more rural areas).	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
215	This would be difficult in a multi-served municipality unless there was a mechanism for the municipality to define the distribution.	2/5/2021 3:56 PM
216	Yes	2/5/2021 3:50 PM
217	Yes, With the greater cost of equipment and less manpower to do fund raisers it is needed	2/5/2021 3:49 PM
218	Yes. As long as the Auditor General is auditing the funds, there should be separate accounts.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
219	No. 90% of fire companies cannot manage their own accounts. I am in finance and see this daily!	2/5/2021 3:35 PM
220	I think a Relief Association is needed because then the State Auditors will not be able to stick their inquiries in =to how the VFC is spending its non Relief funds.	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
221	Yes	2/5/2021 3:26 PM
222	Yes	2/5/2021 3:18 PM
223	No. It is beneficial for the state to audit funs given to each department. Too many department do not know how to handle funds from the state.	2/5/2021 3:17 PM
224	I do not. As previously mentioned, FRA funding should be utilized for firefighter safeguards, not the general company funds. Keeping them separate helps with transparency.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM
225	I believe ALL funds used to provide for emergency services should be subject to reporting and audit requirements to both the local municipality and the Commonwealth. Relief funds should not be co-mingled with FC funds, but all funds of the FC should be subject to public transparency and audit.	2/5/2021 3:12 PM
226	Yes, It makes it easier to track received State Funding	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
227	No need for a separate organization within a department. That's a ridiculous rule	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
228	I believe a streamlining of the process could be beneficial but In the same regards there would need to be just as many restrictions if not more on how the funds can be spent	2/5/2021 3:03 PM
229	I would be all for that if it would relieve some of the expenses such as bonding and other operating expenses that organizations all ready pay, but auditing would still be necessary to make sure money is spent correctly.	2/5/2021 2:54 PM
230	Streamlining and blending allow municipalities to have better control and flexibility over how the funds are spent. Yes.	2/5/2021 2:53 PM
231	Yes I think it is easier with a separate account	2/5/2021 2:46 PM
232	I still maintain that a separate organization provides the ability to separate funds and manage such including asset inventory	2/5/2021 2:36 PM
233	yes keep the relief association separate. The fire service already has enough problems with theft of money. The audits provided in the current method help prevent that.	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
234	That would be fine, and then the Fire Dept would be responsible for the reporting and should be held responsible	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
235	it could be broken out for the more individualized usage of funds	2/5/2021 2:23 PM
236	Not as long as all purchases are put in a line item. For relief money	2/5/2021 2:22 PM
237	No	2/5/2021 2:17 PM
238	Keep the same. Local municipalities will quickly make a grab for this money or reduce the limited funding they distribute .	2/5/2021 2:16 PM

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239	no, My department has separate accounts for grants, small games of chance and bingo that can easily be audited. the relief can be the same way	2/5/2021 2:10 PM
240	yes a separate relief is needed and be spent solely on fire operation activities vs going to a company that may spend it on social quarters	2/5/2021 2:09 PM
241	no	2/5/2021 2:02 PM
242	The separation is important for continued checks and balances. If the funds are co-mingled it is difficult to track	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
243	Yes	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
244	yes	2/5/2021 1:50 PM
245	Yes.	2/5/2021 1:49 PM
246	Stay the course.	2/5/2021 1:46 PM
247	The relief association needs to be a separate organization formed explicitly for the protection of firefighters. A relief association has a different responsibility than a fire company and needs to be concerned about firefighters.	2/5/2021 1:44 PM
248	Yes	2/5/2021 1:42 PM
249	No I do not. Ours is set up that the relief approves the expenses but then the general membership is made aware of the expenses. Again, this seems like duplication of efforts.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
250	if you continue to have guidelines for usage you need to be separate	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
251	I don't think a separate organization is required, just financial tracking to control fraud and abuse.	2/5/2021 1:30 PM
252	A relief association organization is not needed and yes the the State funds could be audited through regular fire company or municipal accounts.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM
253	No	2/5/2021 1:22 PM
254	No, keep the funds totally separate from the fire companies.	2/5/2021 1:21 PM
255	I do not feel a separate organization is needed, as long as the finances can be appropriately tracked for auditing. If a fire department has the means to track all the relief funds and can do so utilizing their current accounts and systems, I am okay with that.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
256	Remain the same as now, different organization form the fire company.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
257	Yes keep the organizations separate.	2/5/2021 1:08 PM
258	No as long as it's a separate account you shouldn't need a separate organization	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
259	NO	2/5/2021 1:02 PM
260	I agree that there is always a concern (and history has shown us) that Relief funds are ripe for misuse in the PA volunteer fire service. Oversight is needed without bureaucratic red tape. Perhaps the state could certify CPAs throughout the state as Relief Association certified accountants to help with the oversight. Maybe at an established rate?	2/5/2021 1:01 PM
261	I'm good with that	2/5/2021 12:59 PM
262	There is no need for a separate associations, I think this setup was backwards from the beginning	2/5/2021 12:55 PM
263	Too many fire companies operate on the basis of voting by the general membership on most issues. Putting relief money in the "general fund" permits ignorant simple-minded fools to dominate spending decisions and not use prudent decision making especially in matters of spending priorities (health and safety) and investment decisions. Segregation of money is the best way to prevent this.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
264	No	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
265	That's debatable. The state would need to streamline their tracking of these funds before considering moving to something like this	2/5/2021 12:53 PM

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266	Yes as long as their are specific banking requirements placed upon relief funds and specific limits on what relief funds can be used for. How else could these funds & purchases be tracked for relief purposes. If these requirements are removed, they can then go directly to the fire company's general fund.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
267	It would be impossible to accurately audit if the funding was mixed. The state has an obligation to ensure the money is spent legally and responsibly. A year end report similar to how the state fire grant is closed out should be adopted.	2/5/2021 12:51 PM
268	I actually think that keeping them separate might be easier to track than having them in the same accounts	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
269	Should be one entity. Having separate boards, bank accounts, multiple EIN, create issues in tracking equipment and invoices when we all know it is a single entity in reality.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
270	No I dont.	2/5/2021 12:42 PM
271	no. in fact I prefer the seperate	2/5/2021 12:40 PM
272	NO keeping things apart not muddy any waters and easier to manage	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
273	lots of luck with that not all FDs can manage their own account let do a relief one	2/5/2021 12:36 PM
274	No (as explained in previous answers)	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
275	Yes	2/5/2021 12:32 PM
276	No	2/5/2021 12:30 PM
277	NO!	2/5/2021 12:28 PM
278	I truly believe this could be handled by a local fire dept. as a line item.	2/5/2021 12:27 PM
279	No, keep it separate for accountability.	2/5/2021 12:25 PM
280	I agree that providing these funds to the fire company and not having a separate organization, accounts, etc. would be simpler. It would simply many aspects from negating the need for multiple organizations, financial accounts, record keeping, etc. The money is going to the same cause.	2/5/2021 12:23 PM
281	Yes	2/5/2021 12:06 PM
282	We would prefer that the funds were dispersed directly to the Relief Association. We have significant shared expenses that are more efficiently handled from a single point	2/5/2021 12:05 PM
283	Most departments use the same officers for both.	2/5/2021 12:03 PM
284	No, it needs to be modernized. See my last answer.	2/5/2021 12:01 PM
285	no separate accounts	2/5/2021 11:57 AM
286	It would make life simple but there are still stupid people who would screw this up	2/5/2021 11:55 AM
287	Yes	2/5/2021 11:54 AM
288	Yes	2/5/2021 11:53 AM
289	No	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
290	No, could be combined into one.	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
291	yes..definitely	2/5/2021 11:48 AM
292	Yes, that would reduce the redundancy in administrative positions between the Fire Company and Relief.	2/5/2021 11:46 AM
293	As long as their are regulations on what can be purchased, and if audits continue, then yes it needs to remain separate.	2/5/2021 11:45 AM
294	Should be kept seperate	2/5/2021 11:43 AM
295	I agree with this concept. Streamlined yet can be monitored. We do this currently with all federal or state grants. They go into a dedicated account so they can be tracked and audited.	2/5/2021 11:42 AM

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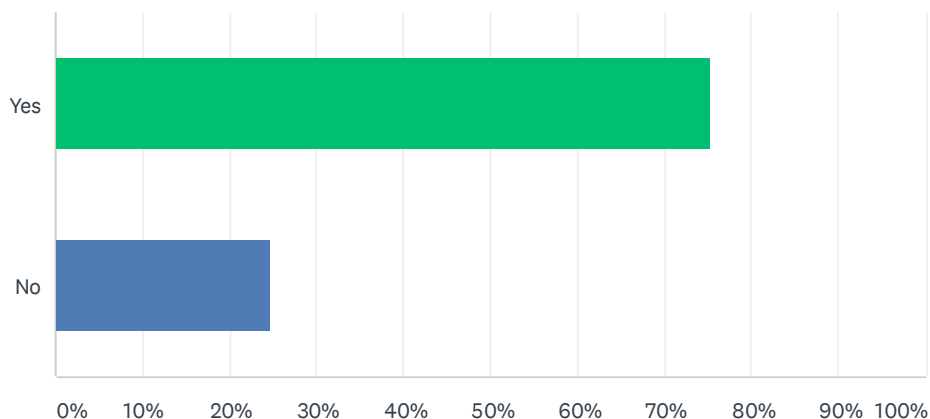
296	Yes. Provides segregation of duties.	2/5/2021 11:40 AM
297	I agree with this approach. As a growing organization with a multi-million dollar budget, it would be easier to include this into our normal accounting operation instead of having a totally separate chart of accounts and process to meet relief requirements.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
298	Would be something to consider	2/5/2021 11:32 AM
299	yes	2/5/2021 11:31 AM
300	Yes, it should be tracked separately	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
301	As long as proper auditing is done, I'm not sure of the difference or need for multiple organizations, but it may be aser to track funds.	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
302	This is a great idea, however, I feel that many VFDs are stuck in their ways & because they've always had a relief association they may be resistant to such a change. Of course, if they were forced to go this route I think the majority of VFDs would do what they needed to do to get this funding.	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
303	Yes. This should remain the same	2/5/2021 11:22 AM
304	Yes. State oversight through the FR Act on this fund is proper and necessary.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
305	Yes especially when departments operate a social club or bar	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
306	That would make things a lot easier and less time consuming	2/5/2021 11:20 AM
307	it would depend on how the organization is set up. For instance in our department the entire membership has votes on how the relief monies are spent. Members are part of the relief association from the day they make application and the application is accepted. Our general funds are under the control of our board of directors and the membership has representation on the board but have no direct vote in how funds are to be spent. By putting the monies in a regular fire company just earmarked for the relief monies and audited would eliminate the need for separate EIN numbers and Tax exempt numbers.	2/5/2021 11:18 AM
308	Yes	2/5/2021 11:17 AM
309	I also believe it still should be separate. I just believe it makes it easier to separate those funds and use them appropriately. Based on my experience as well if funds are not separate there is more for errors and fraud. It may cause frustration but if done properly I feel the separation is needed	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
310	In today's world it should all be one and just tracked differently	2/5/2021 11:07 AM
311	Yes, still needed until all fire services for a particular municipality is delivered by one organization.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
312	They should be tracked as they are now, it is too tempting to spend co-mingled money.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
313	Yes,we have our on 501c3 Status and it makes the funding accountable.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
314	No should remain separate. We don't need this money being looked at as a municipal donation that could offset other funding	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
315	Special bank account would be better than a separate organization.	2/5/2021 11:02 AM
316	Does need scrutinized	2/5/2021 11:00 AM
317	As long as money is appropriated to FD's. It doesn't matter.	2/5/2021 10:59 AM
318	Does not need to be separate	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
319	Apathetic Pros and cons to both I personally like having it as a separate entity all together	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
320	Relief funds should be able to be tracked in the fire company's regular finances and the responsibility would be on the fire company to provide proper documentation. Issue would be how the monies are split between multiple VFCs in one municipality (equally or by territory size). There may also be inadvertent cost increases for items like insurance that become individual versus group rates.	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
321	Yes	2/5/2021 10:51 AM

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322	I do feel that the relief portion is usually a redundant portion and should be combined.	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
323	I think the Relief Association is still a good idea but a more modern approach should be looked at. However, just giving the money to the FD without requiring a budget or plan is a BAD IDEA.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
324	Agree	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
325	The current system I believe is easier since it already speerarws funds and in some cases ensures that reimbursements are also tracked	2/5/2021 10:48 AM
326	Should stay a separate organization to ensure better compliance with regulations vs in some cases uncontrolled spending.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
327	Yes.... Relief Associations should be separate and guidelines set by the Fire Commissioners Office as to authorized purchases.	2/5/2021 10:46 AM
328	I feel that it should be kept as it is.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
329	yes. since all members of my organization belong to the relief and company.	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
330	Not needed	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
331	Agree	2/5/2021 10:43 AM
332	No, in most cases the fire company and relief company are the same people and having separation is redundant and antiquated	2/5/2021 10:42 AM
333	No	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
334	Keep it separate it keeps checks and balances on the relief association. If a department wants it that way they should be able to petition it	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
335	With the auditing process I feel there is no way to put the funds into the same account as firehouse funds. You will never be able to properly conduct an audit.	2/5/2021 10:37 AM
336	No need for a separate organization	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
337	See answer to 5	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
338	That is a good thought but with some fire companies having members that are not business oriented or not savvy enough, there might be confusion and a co-mingling of funds resulting in potential mismanagement	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
339	That's the way it should be	2/5/2021 10:32 AM
340	Not entirely. The PA volunteer fire grant and FEMA grant requires special accounts and documentation requirements. Create less paperwork headaches for those involved.	2/5/2021 10:29 AM

Q7 Do you feel that Relief Associations should be mandated to provide a basic level of insurance coverage for members? This would be needed to cover the gap between what PA Workers Compensation pays and their regular wage.

Answered: 356 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	75.28% 268
No	24.72% 88
TOTAL	356

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	DATE
1	Relief was founded to benefit the members of the fire company.	3/14/2021 1:53 PM
2	This is long over due.	3/10/2021 1:58 PM
3	The insurance provided by fire companies and/or municipalities varies. It seems unnecessarily prohibitive to mandate the relief association must insurance coverage for members. If insurance is to be mandatory I think it should be worded in such a way to prevent redundant coverage for organizations who may already carry such coverage through other funding sources.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
4	More funding would be required for smaller organizations	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
5	additional fund will need to be added to achieve this... do not take out of the money already given	2/11/2021 4:47 PM
6	If provided correctly, it will also ensure additional coverage as a benefit.	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
7	Additionally a death benefit should be mandated as well. This would go far in retention and recruitment also.	2/10/2021 8:25 PM
8	Mixed feelings on this one too. It is important that someone is closing this insurance gap. If there is to be a mandate, I do not think the burden should be on the individual relief associations to make the purchase, but rather the state should buy the required gap insurance across the board with the foreign insurance money prior to computing the distribution amounts, and then the remaining money after the insurance purchase should be allocated to the individual departments. If the mandate is placed on the individual departments post allocation I can envision this crushing departments that typically get small allocations. Associations wishing to purchase more than the mandated minimum could then upgrade the coverage with	2/10/2021 8:08 PM

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post allocation dollars. Hopefully with so few insurance companies offering coverage for volunteers, the state's purchasing power could get better rates than what individual departments are able to obtain. I would also support a similar mandate and approach for life insurance.

9	Currently the McCandless Volunteer Fire Department Relief pays for accident and death insurance for each member thru Provident insurance for Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Services. This insurance is paid out of the yearly allocation moneys from the state.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
10	Actually they should be mandated to spend a designated percentage of their allocation just for insurance.	2/10/2021 1:18 PM
11	We have a policy	2/10/2021 9:57 AM
12	PA workers Comp should cover it all. It is another burden on the states volunteers	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
13	I could see this if the relief association was guarantee to get at least \$10,000	2/10/2021 5:29 AM
14	Without more money in the fund this is impossible	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
15	Not mandated but allowed. I would not want the money to be decreased to pay for a mandatory insurance.	2/9/2021 3:05 PM
16	heathcare today is out of control with there costs	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
17	Not a "gap" insurance, it should be a certain minimum payment regardless of whether or not an injured / sick member is employed at the time or, if employed, regardless of their income. Members risk job loss if they are injured / sick separate from their other employment.	2/9/2021 2:14 PM
18	Our relief associate now maintains a policy to provide life insurance and payroll protection should they be injured or killed in the line of duty. This should be mandated, not an option to do it.	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
19	Some departments do not have sufficient funding/savings to cover this added expense. While some relief associations are well endowed , while many others barely scrap by with their funds. Paying this type of insurance would decrease the funds available to cover equipment, training expenses,death benefits,etc.	2/9/2021 11:14 AM
20	I believe we owe it to the men and women risking life and limb for free	2/9/2021 10:40 AM
21	A life insurance policy yes. Injury or sickness no. The municipality should cover the gap. The volunteers are working for them.	2/9/2021 9:43 AM
22	I think standards at many levels are important. Training, response, standard of cover and more. Why is mandating insurance more important than mandating training and best practices? Is it important, yes. Is it the most important? I am not sure.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
23	in a volunteer world no one should be penalized for attempting to volunteer	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
24	We already provide supplement insurance and has benefited	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
25	Insurance and medical care. Firefighters have a higher percentage of getting cancer and we do nothing about it. Our gear is sometimes literally killing us. I just buried a friend who died of colon cancer and brain cancer, a 2 for 1 deal from being a life long firefighter. I also had cancer and am in remission. Absolutely ridiculous the organizations do nothing and only contributes to the attrition of the volunteer industries.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
26	Firefighters come 1st	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
27	Should remain top priority	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
28	Fix the insurance issue, you just identifies it. Fire companies need to stop getting jerked around by workers comp.	2/8/2021 5:54 PM
29	Absolutely	2/8/2021 5:53 PM
30	This along with basic education and training and personal protective equipment.	2/8/2021 3:29 PM
31	It should be up to each organization if they want to have additional insurance.	2/8/2021 3:04 PM
32	Yes, since this is an additional operating expenditure that some fire companies will simply not be able to afford.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM

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33	If financially possible, yes.	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
34	I do think a basic level of insurance should be mandated for all Emer service personnel in PA. My concern is that some departments receive such small amounts of Relief funding which would keep them from using funds for equipment/training/ etc.	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
35	They should have an extra accident and death insurance policy.	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
36	Maybe a low percentage based off what the individual deposit is	2/8/2021 12:06 PM
37	There are too many instances where an insurance check comes in well before the workers comp.	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
38	I think the State should mandate, through the Workers' Compensation Act, that any volunteer fire fighter injured in the Line of Duty, should be compensated and made whole to the level of their actual income. A volunteer firefighter should not lose financially if they are injured in the Line of Duty as they volunteer to perform a high risk job. They should not be punished for that.	2/8/2021 10:43 AM
39	A supplemental insurance would equate the volunteers to municipal firefighters in fiscal coverage under the Heart & Lung Act. I was lucky enough to have supplemental insurance when I was out of work provided by my volunteer fire company and feel no firefighter should be without it.	2/8/2021 10:33 AM
40	We already do	2/8/2021 10:21 AM
41	What kind of insurance coverage would the be, would it be life or disability?	2/8/2021 10:13 AM
42	Not out of the allotment to each company. If we had to do that, it would greatly affect our ability to buy necessary equipment. If you were going to do that, it should be a state policy off the top of the funds before they are distributed	2/8/2021 9:57 AM
43	It would be nice, but for some smaller organizations, the funds they receive would barely cover the insurance premium and would not leave any funds for anything else. My department had that situation, years ago, under the old formula, where the money we received was only \$18 higher than the sickness and accident policy we had and it was a crappy policy from the 1970's to boot. To mandate that may just handcuff small organizations that may need that money for training, safety equipment, etc.	2/8/2021 9:54 AM
44	A minimum allotment of funds would need to be created to assure proper funds are available to the poorer relief associations	2/8/2021 9:45 AM
45	PA Workers compensation should be raised to a level to provide adequate coverage to everyone. There is too much duplication in coverages everywhere. It should be one place and not everywhere.	2/8/2021 9:09 AM
46	the majority of our allocation goes directly towards this insurance	2/8/2021 9:03 AM
47	However, additional funding would be needed by the smaller Relief Associations. Ex: Relief Association gets \$16,000 a year, but the insurance coverage is \$10,000, does not leave enough to purchase equipment and other expenses.	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
48	We do and it helps if a firefighter gets hurt they should not lose money because they are hurt volunteering but again some Relief Associations in our area don't get enough funds to buy insurance and other things that are needed	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
49	The funds are used for safety equipment so use it to take care of the personnel as it should	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
50	We already do that. However, that mandate then takes away the individual governance of the local FRA	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
51	Most municipalities provide state level workmen's compensation insurance that is inadequate	2/7/2021 4:40 PM
52	This would be simplest way to provide "relief" to its members. Why should a member be penalized for getting injured volunteering. By filling the gap you're ensuring members and their families are protected and provided for.	2/7/2021 4:12 PM
53	This is what funds should be designated for, not putting a more flashy warning package on the new Engine	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
54	We have sufficient coverage, but there should be minimums to protect those smaller fire companies.	2/7/2021 1:48 PM

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55	I have had instances where worker's comp paid but our extra insurance picked up the bill for a ramp to get into said members house.	2/7/2021 1:22 PM
56	There should be a min amount to ALL associations to be able to provide for equipment, insurances, gear to insure that small depts can provide adequate coverages for all.	2/7/2021 12:54 PM
57	None	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
58	Protecting the financial safety of the firefighters is the top priority	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
59	OUR DEPARTMENT HAS AN EXTRA MEDICAL POLICY TO COVER OUR FIRE PERSONS.	2/7/2021 11:31 AM
60	A basic level of insurance coverage should be provided by the state to all volunteers in Pennsylvania without having to use Relief funds for this.	2/7/2021 11:06 AM
61	Insurance is the primary purpose for the existence of relief associations. I would suggest coverage levels be recommended by the DCED or whomever to ensure the coverage is realistic in today's world.	2/7/2021 10:59 AM
62	We are all volunteers and one added bonus would be insurance coverage life, health, cancer etc. That is the least we can do to protect the folks.	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
63	I am unable to fully support an answer for either side of this topic at this time. But I can see this concept being beneficial to the smaller department that operate in the more depressed or rural areas of the state.	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
64	There should be provided a decent level of coverage by the state for our volunteers. They donate so much and with the current pandemic, being able to use the full relief funding for their local needs would be phenomenal.	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
65	Mandated insurance payments on a small fire company is burdensome and takes away available funds that could be used to purchase life safety equipment. Our current insurance payment for benefits is \$34k per year. Our allotment is only \$84k. Leaving only \$25k per fire Company to purchase much needed equipment.	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
66	I think that the state (worker's com) should cover 100% of the wage for volunteers. Relief funds could then be used for more equipment purchases	2/7/2021 9:55 AM
67	This is a priority, but may lead to a reduction of Workman's Compensation protection by the State to ease their budget concerns.	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
68	A lerson who volunteers should not have to worry about money, if they are injured in the line of duty	2/7/2021 6:49 AM
69	Should be a municipal Function Career departments have heart and lung, volunteer departments should have the comfort of knowing their municipalities are going to offer the same protection	2/7/2021 6:21 AM
70	Gap insurance Similar to Aflac	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
71	Yes , it's a dangerous job that's already being done by people who are not compensated. The least the local and state gov could do is cover them in case of injury or death.	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
72	No, other priorities such as PPE and such may exist and prioritize any given year.	2/7/2021 12:59 AM
73	You are now getting into unfounded mandates. Stipulateing what the funds are used for is getting back to the way things used to be. If money is used to pay insurance, for most companies that will hardly use it, you are taking away funds from other uses, like PpE or other equipment, that may benefit the department better.	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
74	I feel that is a good idea, however, our allocation sometimes does not even cover our training costs for the year, let alone needed equipment. Thus, without modernization of a funding formula that matches rate of inflation this is realistic for many relief associations	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
75	I fell that is very important	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
76	Many departments already carry this	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
77	This should be handled by the municipalities the fire department serves. The archaic way of Fire Departments funding the total costs of fire protection is absurd. The municipalities need to	2/6/2021 8:27 PM

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take a more proactive stance for funding fire departments. Insurance and workman's comp should be paid by tax payer a and not taken out of needed relief money.

78	But you must increase the funds for the relief association for this to happen.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM
79	Some VFRA'S would be unable to afford the premium cost.	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
80	We already do that, so there is not enough to buy new gear and SCBA when needed.	2/6/2021 7:01 PM
81	Not until there is a minimum amount of funding provided to each department	2/6/2021 5:40 PM
82	Absolutely! Death benefit should also be provided when possible.	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
83	Not an excessive expense to provide for Volunteers who may incur a need due to their service.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
84	We already do that.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
85	We need to make sure volunteers are kept whole in the event of an injury. Insurance is always a good idea.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
86	I feel like maybe there should be legislation that the insurance should exist, but I don't agree with it coming directly out of relief. That may be covered by the municipality, the fire company, or the relief organization. Mandating it out of relief may likely leave some organization lacking money for equipment, especially smaller relief organizations who receive 10,000 a year or less.	2/6/2021 1:54 PM
87	That would be nice.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
88	Funding for gap insurance should come from municipalities along with other costs of running the fire department. Time to stop calling Relief funds free \$\$\$ by the municipal leadership.	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
89	We currently provide this for our members. It is a benefit that should continue.	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
90	Volunteers need to be protected for the huge value they provide and the huge amount of money that they save the state.	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
91	Relief association should not be mandated for anything. See previous responses about letting the local department determine the nest way to use these funds	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
92	But with that you will need to increase funding to the relief. Many departments do not even have enough funding to provide for this.	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
93	The fire company would need proof of earnings for all covered firefighters.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
94	Our company offers this additional coverage to our members.	2/6/2021 10:09 AM
95	none	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
96	If the system is overhauled so organizations that receive minimal amounts, can get additional money to cover the insurance. To mandate insurance and divert money from equipment would be detrimental for those agencies.	2/6/2021 9:28 AM
97	Although it may not be appropriate to mandate it since some VFC use relief money for badly needed equipment, it should be a priority type review.	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
98	If we want to continue the volunteer fire fighter program. I feel we absolutely need to provide gap insurance for the difference between Worker's Comp and loss of wages. Also a death benefit and or retirement type of benefit funding.	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
99	Not all organization have enuff money to fund it	2/5/2021 9:19 PM
100	Not needed	2/5/2021 8:50 PM
101	This is a municipal function	2/5/2021 8:24 PM
102	We do this already in our relief association.	2/5/2021 7:47 PM
103	Wage gap insurance is a great idea.. eligible for as long as it occurs on L.O.D or training, detail..	2/5/2021 7:33 PM
104	I feel the state comp should be amended to reflect the volunteers regular wage.	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
105	Some smaller agencies may not receive enough money to do this. This is one area needing revision. PA Workers Compensation guideline/standard has not been updated for volunteer fire	2/5/2021 5:51 PM

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	agencies since the 1980's.	
106	It makes sense to protect your members.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
107	This is becoming something that should occur, however, some places don't get enough for equipment let alone insurance.	2/5/2021 5:36 PM
108	A supplement policy would cover the individual sooner then workers comp does.	2/5/2021 4:58 PM
109	no mandatory, but there should be sickness and accident policies a	2/5/2021 4:49 PM
110	Not unless they can afford it. We do provide it but I am sure others cannot afford it.	2/5/2021 4:36 PM
111	I believe that is a departmental decision. Some departments simply can't afford it	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
112	Absolutely.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
113	Allow each department the choice of how much insurance they want to cover.	2/5/2021 4:15 PM
114	Only if the relief allocation is increased. With the current amount received, many relief organizations, mine included spend the majority of their funds on insurance, and have little left to spend on equipment.	2/5/2021 4:04 PM
115	I would need more information: why don't relief associations currently do this? Is this a matter of not having enough money? If doing this takes money away from spending in other areas than that is an issue. However having that coverage to ensure FF's are covered should they be injured is important, so members have assurance that should they get injured doing this for free, someone has their backs to help pay their expenses.	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
116	Depends on what the purpose of that insurance would be. Why can't that be funded at a higher level instead of removing much needed equipment and training funding for the organization.	2/5/2021 3:56 PM
117	Very important if you want to maintain volunteer firefighters.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
118	This is one of the primary benefits of Relief funds.	2/5/2021 3:35 PM
119	The pay of the various members is not known by the VFCs or the Relief Association and should stay that way.	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
120	That is the purpose of the FRA's. Buying firehose, etc doesn't accomplish that purpose.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM
121	The original intent of the legislation creating RAs was "to encourage individuals to take part in the fire service as a volunteer and to provide funds for the protection of the volunteer firefighter and their heirs". A minimum of funds should be allotted to every viable RA so a basic level of insurance can be purchased.	2/5/2021 3:12 PM
122	I would agree if the amount of funding is increased. For example, for my department to provide insurance it would expend half of its small allotment received, leaving little funds available to upgrade equipment	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
123	I think it should be mandated, but I do not think it necessarily has to be done by the relief association. Again, different agencies have different financial needs and should have the ability to adhere to that requirement in the way that it makes the most sense to them financially.	2/5/2021 2:53 PM
124	Our Association provides a AD&D policy which is our largest allocation of funds annually	2/5/2021 2:36 PM
125	State workers comp should cover it. Better yet it should be mandated that in order for insurance companies to provide insurance in the state of PA in any fashion they should have to insure Fire depts. problem is they are too large and will just put the cost of insurance back on the insured	2/5/2021 2:25 PM
126	can be achieved by supplemental coverage however I am not in favor of a mandate for such coverage	2/5/2021 2:23 PM
127	After all these years, I had assumed all fire companies have allotted relief funds to insurance for their members. Those that don't will need some guidance.	2/5/2021 2:16 PM
128	There are Relief Organizations that have done absolutely nothing to update insurance coverage and when its discovered it is usually to late after an injury or death.	2/5/2021 2:11 PM
129	We have had accident and sickness policies for 20+ years for that purpose through our relief	2/5/2021 1:56 PM

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130	but until the funding level is on an even playing field this is not possible by some of the smaller departments	2/5/2021 1:50 PM
131	We (Meredith) do this.	2/5/2021 1:49 PM
132	Yes as mentioned earlier in this survey. The insurance needs to cover more than just the workers comp difference. Health and accident coverage should be sufficient to provide all firefighters with a level of coverage to permit the firefighter to maintain a normal lifestyle and to provide enough funds to survivors of line of duty deaths to live like they are used to.	2/5/2021 1:44 PM
133	That money should come from the municipalities and monies for Fireman's Relief should not need to be used for this.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
134	That should be the first expenditure !!!!	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
135	A strong recruitment tool.	2/5/2021 1:30 PM
136	This is definitely needed to help our volunteers. IT can still be managed through the municipality or through the fire company. Insurance coverage can remain the first priority of the funds and operational needs secondary.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM
137	I do not think the law should specify any specific way the funds must be spent. Again each department is different so a one size fits all approach will not work. Sure for a department that has 2 million surpluses funds accruing in an investment account a minimum insurance premium may be financially feasible, but for a department that expenses their entire relief income every year just to purchase the minimum needed equipment it would be unfair to regulate how they spend their relief dollars. Perhaps if a redistribution of wealth was completed and the departments that truly need the relief funds were getting more than those that are just sitting on the funds with no means to spend them, then perhaps it could be considered to mandate a specific amount be set aside for the insurance gap.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
138	Some relief associations barely get enough money to do that. Without changes to the funding formula to provide that money to all associations I don't think you can mandate it. The funding formula has not changed in decades. As populations and real estate values drop in rural counties, we are getting less allocations from the Commonwealth, while the cost of purchasing safety gear keeps going up. Increase the pool and change the funding formula	2/5/2021 1:08 PM
139	The additional funding needed to provide this is not there statewide	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
140	Absolutely	2/5/2021 1:01 PM
141	Need for some level of life coverage and supplemental medical/disability coverage as well is essential.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
142	This answer is also more complex. For small rural departments who absolutely depend on every penny of these funds, a 4k insurance bill may take away from other extremely important purchases. But for companies who run 300, 600, 800 calls a year, and also those who may have instituted a fire tax should consider this. Not all volunteer companies across PA should be considered equal. This in Bradford County should not be lumped into something that may only work for companies in Montgomery County just outside Philadelphia.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
143	This would help the members maintain their level of income because Workers Compensation doesn't pay 100%.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
144	Volunteer firefighters should be provided quality insurance coverage. The community expects the world from their local fire company and then throw away members like garbage.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
145	YES!!! we have learned that local government is not the best policy and coverage. They provide whatever is the cheapest. Only way to the volunteers and the families.	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
146	members benefits to cover cost for family members if FF is in hospital should be gotten, they buy too many "toys" and do not take care of their valuable resource the FF-- some do this not many	2/5/2021 12:36 PM
147	Let the decision up to the individual departments.	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
148	We currently do.	2/5/2021 12:27 PM
149	We already do this	2/5/2021 12:05 PM

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150	Should be paid for by the municipality.	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
151	better coverage for active firefighters	2/5/2021 11:43 AM
152	We need to ensure we are providing the best coverage for firefighters who are performing dangerous jobs.	2/5/2021 11:40 AM
153	I would still believe the purpose of the relief funds would be firefighter safety. We purchase a considerable amount of supplemental insurance to ensure our people are covered should they be injured in the line of duty.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
154	Encourage people to join the Volunteer Fire Service	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
155	Relief doesn't need additional financial burdens.	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
156	If this could be done on a statewide basis it might be relatively cheap due to scales of economy. If not, maybe by regions or at least at the county level.	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
157	The only way this is possible for the rural volunteer fire departments is to increase their funding	2/5/2021 11:22 AM
158	Undecided on this. Would need more info.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
159	If the funding is available to accomplish same	2/5/2021 11:20 AM
160	Mandated no. Is it recommended 100% yes. The reason I say no to the mandate is some associations have limited funding to pay for this coverage and would leave them little money for bunker gear, SCBA and other safety gear. I would be in strong support of a statewide insurance program to cover all PA firefighters with a life insurance policy of \$200,000 for on duty death, And a short and long term disability program to cover the gap realized in work comp and the actual wage. We also need to have coverage for medical such as Heart Attack and stroke that are not covered by the Workers Comp. Put together a good plan and pay for it out of the relief monies so all PA firefighter have the same coverage be it a larger "rich" association or a smaller poor relief association. Pay for the insurance coverages for all then divide up the funds by population and property value. While off the subject but in line with distribution of the money there should be a minimum per relief association of \$10,000 or \$15,000 as well. That is per association not per municipality so that department that covered a bough and 2 townships would get the minimum between all 3 areas they cover and not minimum per township.	2/5/2021 11:18 AM
161	This has been the standard for my department since the early 1970s. When I took over in 2010 I was shocked to find out there was other departments that did not have this standard. I do believe we should get additional funds to cover those purchases.	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
162	Without a doubt, it is most critical that our firefighters do not suffer financially due to their service.	2/5/2021 11:06 AM
163	A majority of our funds go for 24 hour Ad&d ,A group life policy of 5000.00 for our members and the rest if any goes to Allowable Equipment Purchase.	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
164	should be a state wide minimum requirements	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
165	Because that just takes away from the yearly allocation and some small volunteer departments already do not get enough Relief	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
166	N/A	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
167	Not required but sure as heck would be the right thing to do for our Volunteers	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
168	ABSOLUTELY!	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
169	They most definitely should provide the additional insurance.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM
170	Safety is safety. We market ourselves to the public and in many cases personnel would not survive on one insurance coverage in the event of a life changing injury preventing them from working	2/5/2021 10:48 AM
171	Not mandated but recommended. Depends what other programs the local municipality provides. One size does not fit all.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
172	Being injured on the Fire Ground and out of work for 18 weeks the supplemental payments covered my cost to travel to physical therapy and office follow ups.	2/5/2021 10:46 AM

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173	I also feel that better workers compensation policies need to be available	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
174	That would just add more of a burden on some fire companies who are struggling so as it is. Get rid of "relief associations" and just distribute funds to the fire companies with some sort of formula that favors small, struggling companies. That fact that Harrisburg City relief has millions of dollars sitting there is an example how the system is broken.	2/5/2021 10:42 AM
175	That is a big part of what Relief Associations roles is	2/5/2021 10:39 AM
176	This was the initial intent of the system, to provide relief for injuries and death. Insurance coverage should be first and foremost, especially the way firefighters are treated by SWIF. Over the years we have allowed the system to be compromised to NOT focus on firefighter relief	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
177	The gap between workers comp and full pay would be beneficial to all fire department members. Even more critical to those who are members of departments that have low training standards where accidents are likely more prone to happening.	2/5/2021 10:29 AM

Q8 Please provide additional feedback as needed:

Answered: 183 Skipped: 177

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Relief law can be difficult to interpret and volunteerism is at an all time low. Therefore, changes should be made with a goal of fairness while also creating as much ease of access as possible.	2/15/2021 9:10 PM
2	Nothjng	2/12/2021 8:43 AM
3	Spilt apparatus payments should be disallowed since the apparatus is built to NFPA standards. This current practice causes undue financial tracking and is hard to calculate the repayment to the Relief Associations even if you use a percentage formula when the apparatus is first purchased. If total ownership of apparatus is through the Relief Associations, then proper tracking and repayment would be clear, not split between the relief and fire compnay.	2/11/2021 12:11 PM
4	Not related to the distribution of funds, I wish it was easier to get advice on what is and is not allowed. When relief officer positions turn over the local level institutional knowledge gets lost and there always seem to be gray areas where a new person could use some outside advice. It would also be nice to see aggregated data across all relief associations covering things like how much is being spent per volunteer in the various categories, what the average cash on hand is, and other data points that would let you benchmark what you are doing against the average. Some of that information is in the individual audit reports but you would have to open each one separately to collect the data. Other information just does not seem to be available at lower levels of detail.	2/10/2021 8:08 PM
5	I believe the program needs to be modified / updated to be less of an administrative burden on the fire companies.	2/10/2021 4:15 PM
6	Thank you for soliciting the input of the fire companies. It's a welcome change to be asked for our opinions before changes are made.	2/10/2021 3:45 PM
7	I am president of 2 Relief Associations WillowGrove Relief Association 227 Davisville Rd WillowGrove 19090 Weldon Relief Association 412 N Easton Rd Glenside Pa 19038	2/10/2021 1:18 PM
8	Expand the usage for fire relief funds, but keep the tracking and accountability limited to their own separate account.	2/10/2021 11:20 AM
9	None	2/10/2021 9:57 AM
10	None	2/10/2021 6:06 AM
11	Redo the formula for disbursement of funding. Need better funding.	2/9/2021 7:58 PM
12	As mentioned earlier, the inventory is crazy. We buy pagers, they are assigned, bit thwy are lost, new ones are assign, they break, give them a new one and send out to get fix. Same with gear, people cone and go, tracking it takes a lot if time. We dont buy specific items due to this, like hose fittings. The get switched between trucks.	2/9/2021 3:55 PM
13	I think the concept of the Relief Association has merit but the policies and procedures need to be updated to reflect the current and future of the fire and EMS services these funds are supposed to support.	2/9/2021 3:17 PM
14	better audit system we have been audited every 2 years 3 years and once a year and half after another. for years it was every three	2/9/2021 2:17 PM
15	I have been the treasure for 36 years. I use to attend relief seminars every other year that went over procedures, expenditures, etc and took with me new relief officers. This program was stopped and should be reinstated. It was very helpful to new officers	2/9/2021 12:45 PM
16	A major issue exists with the wording and interpretation of what coverage a career Firefighter is entitled to when functioning as member of an all volunteer department or a combination department , not in the capacity of the full time job. Many career firefighters are long time	2/9/2021 11:14 AM

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members of volunteer/combination departments and respond as volunteers in their off duty hours. With the shortage of volunteers in the state these members provide needed manpower for some departments when they respond on their own time. Plus we discriminate against career firefighters acting as volunteers but yet allow municipal and state police officers, municipal DPW employees ,etc. to be volunteers covered by relief funds. Please feel free to contact me for further discussion on this topic. A latest state audit of our relief association is a perfect example of this issue.(Dorranceton Firemen's Relief Association covering Columbian VFD serving Kingston Fire Dept in Luzerne County.)

17	Relief association is in my opinion a vital part of our fire company. It gives us a place to go to the board to purchase equipment that we don't need to go into our fire companies account to buy equipment	2/9/2021 9:55 AM
18	Thank you for the opportunity to submit our opinion and trying to better the fire service in Pennsylvania.	2/9/2021 8:55 AM
19	na	2/8/2021 8:53 PM
20	Any pressure you can also put on the industry to combat the cancer causing agents of firefighting would be much appreciated.	2/8/2021 8:08 PM
21	I believe the Firefighters & their families well being should remain a top priority.	2/8/2021 7:34 PM
22	N/A	2/8/2021 7:25 PM
23	The system needs fixed and I am not confident in PFESI or the Fire Commissioners Office to fix this.	2/8/2021 5:54 PM
24	the process works pretty well right now albeit a lot of administrative hoops but that's mostly for the protection of the state funds being spend correctly and accurately. Until the state auditor finds that fire departments are properly spending and accounting for these funds, any changes could reduce the safeguarding of these state assets	2/8/2021 4:18 PM
25	Personally this survey seems like it is looking for a particular outcome	2/8/2021 4:09 PM
26	No additional feedback.	2/8/2021 2:58 PM
27	Please do away while local township control. Depending on who is elected the funds are allocated based on friendships rather then pure needs	2/8/2021 2:57 PM
28	nothing	2/8/2021 2:08 PM
29	Overall the current program is effective but does need modernized. The Audits while necessary, sometimes feel a bit like you are on trial. The auditors I have worked with have been very helpful and are doing their jobs as instructed.	2/8/2021 1:31 PM
30	The State has to STOP taking Relief Association monies out to pay for the Police Pension Fund!	2/8/2021 1:16 PM
31	Make auditing auditing easier.	2/8/2021 1:00 PM
32	Their really needs to be a case by case evaluation of the "Rich" Relief Associations to determine if they should continue to get an annual allotment. Any Relief Association that doesn't spend 40-50% of their annual allotment, this could be and average of 5 or so years, and has \$250,000 plus in their account should not receive an annual allotment. These withheld allotments could go back into the main pot for distribution.	2/8/2021 12:35 PM
33	you have my feed back above, give the funds to the fire company and dissolve the relief associations. This is not an end all be all, it will only help for a little bit. At the end of the day I truly believe in the future this money will not be here for the volunteer fire companies and will be dissolved into the commonwealth somewhere as there is so much debt and I feel that is where the money is going now which is why there is less in relief funds to the individual fire companies every year.	2/8/2021 12:06 PM
34	none	2/8/2021 11:51 AM
35	if this is for PENNSYLVANIA why is their Province?	2/8/2021 10:51 AM
36	Make the audit work with the volunteers not the auditor who is getting paid	2/8/2021 10:21 AM
37	If the law is updated, clearly state, without gray areas or individual interpretation, who is	2/8/2021 9:54 AM

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eligible for funds. In the early 1990's, EMS services, not directly associated with fire services were allowed to be received Relief funds, if recognized by the municipality as being part of the Fire Service. Year (20+) later, someone else interpreted differently and said they were not eligible. If you going to Change the Rules in the middle of a game, then change the law....not someone's interpretation of the law!

38	ok	2/8/2021 9:45 AM
39	While this may not be within the scope of this survey, I think there should be a cap on how much an organization can have in their accounts.	2/8/2021 9:05 AM
40	N/a	2/8/2021 9:03 AM
41	The Relief Association should only be made up of active firefighters/fire police officers--with exception to the Treasurer's position-who may be a CPA or other business person. Members should meet minimum requirements to be considered active-example: current HazMat annual class, etc.	2/7/2021 10:24 PM
42	I just believe that the money has to be distributed more fairly as I stated before it's not fair when one department gets 80,000 plus and the next get 3 or 4 thousand their gear and needs are not being met and the other has 100 of thousands in relief funds put away	2/7/2021 5:12 PM
43	None	2/7/2021 5:02 PM
44	None	2/7/2021 4:43 PM
45	Basically I feel association's should be allowed to use modern accounting software. If forms are required, they should be electronic, supplied by the state. I thing each Association should be allowed to decide if they are incorporated separately as now or folded into the department with a separated account. Either way I also feel the strict oversight needs to be kept in place to prevent misappropriation of funds	2/7/2021 2:46 PM
46	Some relief associations have thousands and millions in the bank while other departments use their relief funds for real needs.	2/7/2021 2:18 PM
47	Our biggest complaint is the diversion of funds that have affected our budget. We have been spending more annually than we take in. Five sets of turnout gear (just coats & pants) were \$20,000.	2/7/2021 1:48 PM
48	The relief regulations, distributions of funds to auditing our so outdated. It truly does not help todays fire service. Most large volunteer organizations just have an opportunity to bank more funds. Smaller organizations struggle to survive	2/7/2021 1:32 PM
49	Something needs done to make sure all depts are getting there fair share of the allotment. Not one getting 6 figure amounts and some getting 3 figure amounts.	2/7/2021 1:22 PM
50	we feel that all dept. should have equal funds. if Depts. have Millions of dollars relief money in banking accounts then they should receive less annual payment. when some organization receive hardly enough money to provide the basic insurance coverage for their members	2/7/2021 12:58 PM
51	Then allot the remainder to the depts. The pensions allotment still dwarfs FD allotments which the majority are for PD not FD.	2/7/2021 12:54 PM
52	None at this time.	2/7/2021 12:13 PM
53	N/a	2/7/2021 12:07 PM
54	There needs to be more flexibility to allow smaller departments to combine resources. Both financial and manpower	2/7/2021 11:56 AM
55	Money is split too many ways.	2/7/2021 11:36 AM
56	It's a crime how underfunded fire companies are in PA. Volunteer firefighters who can document active status should have their state taxes waived and receive insurance coverage provided by the state.	2/7/2021 11:06 AM
57	One thing I see becoming an issue soon if it isn't already, is how to handle the migration of volunteer to part paid. As I understand it, VFRAs can only pay for volunteer firefighter insurances, training and equipment. So how do we handle a transition to part paid / combo type arrangements? This will likely be effecting my relief association in the next year or two.	2/7/2021 10:59 AM

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58	They could do a better job of allocation distribution of the funds through the townships. We cover four townships. Two townships we get money and the other two we do not get any money. I also find it hard to keep track of the commutative inventory. There should be a better system.	2/7/2021 10:42 AM
59	None at this time	2/7/2021 10:30 AM
60	As treasurer for a relief association, I see the day to day needs of the companies. In the current pandemic, we sometimes have issues where they want something paid for by relief but may not have a company meeting to approve it for a month or two. Suppliers are not exactly willing to wait for their payment that long.	2/7/2021 10:26 AM
61	none	2/7/2021 10:12 AM
62	Mandate the relief association payouts to be matched by the local municipalities which would go to the volunteers. To many towns are getting "free" fire protection because of the lack of local government funding. The cost of running a modern E911 response service is far more expensive today to rely on hoagie sales and bingo to pay for the much needed equipment. Most local politicians have cut funding to all emergency services over the past 4 years.	2/7/2021 10:04 AM
63	Rules should be written to limit OPTIONAL life insurance funding to active members only and for LODDs only. Our Association is spending 1/3 of its allocation on life insurance premiums that cover anyone who is on the roster - active or not - and for any cause o f death.	2/7/2021 9:55 AM
64	Na	2/7/2021 9:43 AM
65	I have presided over two separate Relief Associations and two Fire Company's in my service. It is always a challenge to keep the spending separate from the Fire . Company. These are my opinions, not official department opinions.	2/7/2021 9:29 AM
66	N/A	2/7/2021 9:28 AM
67	Could be run like the State Fire Commissioner Grants	2/7/2021 8:37 AM
68	Nothing additional	2/7/2021 6:21 AM
69	I believe that as long as you are doing things correctly and noting in minutes you could combine company and relief into one meeting Believe bylaws both company and relief would need working Although you maybe able to just run simultaneously and have relief members vote as it moves through Should request if answered by a relief officer or fire officer ? I'm Chief and Relief President	2/7/2021 5:19 AM
70	None	2/7/2021 2:19 AM
71	Focus on recruiting!!!	2/7/2021 1:22 AM
72	None	2/6/2021 11:27 PM
73	Relief rules are antiquated and place a huge burden on companies for funds that are necessary to company survival, also some associations are sitting on loads of relief money, all funds given should be spent annually or a new formula needs to be made up	2/6/2021 11:06 PM
74	Fireman relief is one of the few ways the State contributes to volunteer departments. It should continue to be a benefit to the departments with no additional mandates other than how, when and what the funds can be spent on.	2/6/2021 10:42 PM
75	I believe the general concept and allowances of relief associations should stay intact. However, more flexibility and modernization in the areas I discussed are needed.	2/6/2021 10:11 PM
76	With how busy the fire companies are now days any way you can cut out any extra work it would be beneficial to the fire company.	2/6/2021 10:03 PM
77	Not at this time	2/6/2021 9:36 PM
78	This is a long time coming. The antiquated system needs to be reviewed and overhauled	2/6/2021 9:19 PM
79	I am a chief of a small fire department. We run around 200 calls a year and receive approximately \$14,000 a year in relief money. We use this money for larger purchases such as a recent cascade system. However this also depleted my funds for 4 years.	2/6/2021 8:27 PM
80	Thank you for asking for our input.	2/6/2021 7:53 PM

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81	None at this time	2/6/2021 7:30 PM
82	We have always had a problem with the amount of money received when residents have mailing addresses that indicate they live in other communities when they actually live in our Township. The township is surrounded by 4 different mailing addresses on the compass that identify surrounding towns not in our township.	2/6/2021 7:01 PM
83	The regulations are fine and just need to be followed	2/6/2021 5:42 PM
84	NA	2/6/2021 5:26 PM
85	Oversight is needed for the timeline the Twp/Borough's release funds to RA's.	2/6/2021 5:00 PM
86	Companies beginning LOSAP programs will require all their funding to go to investment to make the LOSAP succeed.	2/6/2021 4:31 PM
87	Fire companies need to be encouraged to apply solid business management principles to operating and managing their Relief Association activities.	2/6/2021 3:05 PM
88	.	2/6/2021 3:00 PM
89	The state needs to make changes to relief fund allocations. Large municipalities receive VERY large amounts that already have a tax base to support them while small municipalities are left to starve. The relief money should be divided up equally thus allowing all departments the chance to survive.	2/6/2021 2:32 PM
90	Glad that the RA is being looked at more and looking forward to seeing any changes that will be made to bring the RA up to today's age!	2/6/2021 2:25 PM
91	I think the funding and formula is going to be a huge battle. As soon as that gets opened up for discussion, the police union is going to ensure they get more money. Fire departments will MOST CERTAINLY lose money. While I appreciate what PFESI does for the fire service, I can assure you that the municipal governments, and the police unions/associations have more money, political connections, and power than the fire service in PA ever will. They will have people at the capital every day being paid to advocate and lobby on behalf of EVERYONE but us. I see opening relief as a lose/lose for the fire service and it truly worries me. They likely won't take anymore or very little additional money in, but everyone will find a way to lobby for that money, leaving us sitting with less - we've already seen it with the tax credits for development that left relief associations with less money but the police retirement supplements were untouched - and that wasn't by accident.	2/6/2021 1:54 PM
92	Formula update	2/6/2021 1:07 PM
93	Look at the city of Reading, sitting on 3+ million and the 2 things they spend money on are officer salaries, and death benefits. Numerous individuals get paid hefty and the only thing provided by the association is death benefits (which is great). It's blatant theft.	2/6/2021 1:03 PM
94	Be careful not to change the original intent of the relief \$\$\$!	2/6/2021 12:28 PM
95	I think that upon an audit by the front of an organization, and they have a set limit in their accounts, they shouldn't receive additional funds until they are below a determined amount. Andat this point that money redistributed to less fortunate departments... Possibly a second option is if a dept purchased a rescue, engine or ladder... And they are replacing every 5,10,15 years - that apparatus and equipment goes directly without payment to less fortunate depts. There are truly depts that receive less than \$2000/year... They cannot even but a set of gear.	2/6/2021 12:00 PM
96	Limit funds an association can have. If they aren't using it look at dividing that up amongst associations that could use it in the ways it was intended to be used.	2/6/2021 11:53 AM
97	None	2/6/2021 11:52 AM
98	Increase funds	2/6/2021 11:21 AM
99	Na	2/6/2021 11:19 AM
100	I think I've made my opinion clear in previous responses	2/6/2021 10:50 AM
101	Nothing additional at this time.	2/6/2021 10:44 AM
102	Protection of the volunteers should be priority one.	2/6/2021 10:42 AM

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103	Something needs to be done with departments that are sitting on large sums and not using the money	2/6/2021 10:37 AM
104	None	2/6/2021 10:27 AM
105	Thanks for asking.	2/6/2021 10:22 AM
106	As a financial professional and a 40 year volunteer, I'd be happy to assist the Office of the State Fire Commissioner in any way.	2/6/2021 10:09 AM
107	Our company is using the relief money for equipment, trucks insurance and loans for trucks. Are we ok with this arrangement?	2/6/2021 9:52 AM
108	n/a	2/6/2021 9:17 AM
109	Great program!	2/6/2021 5:55 AM
110	The process of doing a relief association is to difficult and time consuming. It should be simplified and should not have audits that take up to much time	2/6/2021 12:51 AM
111	None at this time.	2/5/2021 10:18 PM
112	Na	2/5/2021 8:50 PM
113	Relief funds need to be increased and allowed for PPE for career personnel at paid departments.	2/5/2021 8:32 PM
114	If a relief association in a combination goes defunct those funds need to stay in the municipality.	2/5/2021 8:24 PM
115	All insurance companies should be paying into relief associations as all insurance companies are affected by fire depts within the commonwealth.	2/5/2021 7:54 PM
116	none	2/5/2021 7:51 PM
117	the money needs to go straight to the fire companies and not through the township. Our township treats relief association money as their contribution to the fire companies when in fact they have no part in it other than being a conduit. Te township is disingenuous in the presenting this view	2/5/2021 7:47 PM
118	The relief funding does need some changes but changing it to cover other regulatory shortfalls would not be helpful as many use these funds for safety and training	2/5/2021 6:22 PM
119	The Relief Association guidelines/standards need updated!!	2/5/2021 5:51 PM
120	Not every VFC is the same when it comes to the amount of funds received but the cost to provide the service is the same whether you come from a suburban area or are located in a rural setting. Rural areas cannot meet NFPA standards as a VFC located in Montgomery County. It is very difficult for a small company to do so. In the end it boils down to amount of liability risk you are willing to assume to protect the community.	2/5/2021 5:50 PM
121	The Audit Process is VERY TIME CONSUMING. They are just making their hours and at our expense. We volunteer for this. We have other jobs. They don't want to hear that.	2/5/2021 4:36 PM
122	As I said it is not right that some departments really have more money in their associations than they know what to do with while others struggle to meet their basic needs.I have had this conversation with numerous state reps,they treat it like the plague,too afraid to introduce legislation for fear of not getting elected again,sadly some of these reps have numerous departments in their jurisdictions that are woefully underfunded! Sad and unfair.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
123	There needs to be a more fair distribution of funds. Some communities are banking hundreds of thousands of dollars, while some communities can't even buy insurance for their members with their allotted funds. Basically, some municipalities find ways to "waste" funds, while others struggle to make ends meet.	2/5/2021 4:29 PM
124	I believe the funding formula for relief needs to be changed. Companies in more economically depressed areas with high unemployment and poverty rates should get more money. I see ads in PA Fireman and other places for companies offering live-in programs with no fund raising responsibilities. These same companies are the ones getting large relief allocations. Our 3 companies all do fund raising literally 365 days a year, and get about 38000 in relief funds. I don't have an answer as to how to change the formula, but unemployment rate, poverty rate,	2/5/2021 4:04 PM

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and median household income should all be considered in the funding formula. Our city and county have a high unemployment and poverty rate and a low MHI, thus our fund drive is not nearly as successful as a company in a more affluent area, and of course the company in a more affluent area gets a higher relief allocation under the current formula.

125	Should his also be tied to members who are trained? Ensuring all firefighters have their ProBoard FF 1?	2/5/2021 4:01 PM
126	Pensions should be considered a priority. If a member can volunteer for 20 or more years, they should be compensated with some type of pension to supplement retirement.	2/5/2021 3:37 PM
127	The only problems I see with the Relief Associations is how the allocations are determined and the legislators steal funds for other projects they have which are not related to the fire service but this is not within the parameters of this survey.	2/5/2021 3:33 PM
128	Like I said earlier, the state needs to be in charge of the insurance. That way all department have on point to go to for insurance. The Municipalities are always looking for cheaper insurance coverage.	2/5/2021 3:17 PM
129	As you can clearly see, I am a proponent of the way the current FRA is set up. Having taken over as the treasurer of our FRA 35 years ago when the annual funds were about \$750 a year, we have strived to focus solely on the mission of the FRA as it was intended to be, for the fire fighters. We are now in a better position to accomplish those tasks.	2/5/2021 3:13 PM
130	Overall funding needs to be increased, especially for smaller communities. Further the amount of funding has decreased by 30% over the years, we used to receive close to \$18,000.00 per year now we receive around \$13,000	2/5/2021 3:06 PM
131	I also feel that we shoyld change the way funding is collected from insurace. It should be a fee on all fire insurance to provide more funding. We also need to fix the problem of decreasing funding to this purpose	2/5/2021 2:54 PM
132	I would like to see the amount of money that a Relief Organization can sit on without spending is capped. Organizations sitting on Millions of Dollars that are not used while other fire companies struggle is a shame. There are Relief Associations that have basically become protected businesses and receive money continuously for volunteer companies that really are no longer existent since a career department has taken over the response duties.	2/5/2021 2:11 PM
133	.	2/5/2021 2:09 PM
134	Please updated and increase funding	2/5/2021 2:02 PM
135	Thanks for seeking input	2/5/2021 1:56 PM
136	I feel things just need to be made easier, for everyone. More online record keeping that would make audits easier. Maybe even online banking, then checks don't need sent to the municipality then handed to the fire company. Things like that.	2/5/2021 1:33 PM
137	Please see the notes above.	2/5/2021 1:27 PM
138	I feel rather than some of the proposals in this form there should be a maximum amount set at what relief associations can have in reserve. I have said it multiple times on this survey, there are several career departments that are sitting on millions of dollars, because as career tax funded organizations they are extremely limited on what they can spend the funds on, so much so that their incoming funds exceeds those expenses, so the y have a surplus every year. Once the maximum amount is achieved (whatever that is set at), then those departments should no longer receive relief funds, until such a time that their balance is below the max, and then they should only receive either their allotted amount, or the amount that would increase their worth to the maximum amount (whichever is lesser). That would leave more funds to be distributed to the departments that truly need it. This would take a re-write of the current laws, as I know the relief monies are designated for the areas that they are assessed on, but that may not be the most appropriate use of the funds.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM
139	Small associations receive less money than larger, although this is common sense, expenses are then same for both. Realizing larger groups have the need for more equipment, insurance etc. there is a limit that enough saving/investments are needed. Smaller groups seem to just "get by" and never be able to grow and prosper. There should never be "million dollar" relief associations when fund distribution could possibly be accolated to assist more firefighters.	2/5/2021 1:11 PM

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140	Can't think of anything else	2/5/2021 1:07 PM
141	Less Relief Associations is always a good thing, as does less volunteer fire companies in our Commonwealth. I support the regionalization, merger, consolidation, or whatever method is necessary to ensure the continuation of services. Less is better.	2/5/2021 1:01 PM
142	All relief funds should be audited annually, not every two to three years which is the reality. The state should consider using independent CPA's as auditors to enlarge the workforce and assure adequate supervision.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
143	There should be more transparency at the state level on how the funds are allocated.	2/5/2021 12:54 PM
144	An online tracking application where income and expes could be tracked, easily categorized and inventory lists easily created should be considered.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
145	Remove the Relief Association from the Auditor General's office and put in the Fire Commissioner's office with staffing if needed. See my other comments.	2/5/2021 12:53 PM
146	The main problem is the level of funding. Each relief association should get a minimum of \$20,000 and then distribute the remaining funding by population formula. There are a lot of fire department that cannot provide basic PPE and insurance for their volunteers.	2/5/2021 12:51 PM
147	More reward for fire companies that merge and participate in the regional response. The moochual-aid is burning out companies by providing service to other communities who are unwilling to support their own failing fire companies. When it takes 15+ fire companies to respond to a working fire during daylight to get enough firefighters on the scene, there is a major problem with the system. Provide regional or county-based fire companies for significant monetary reward over those companies that remain independent or refuse to collaborate with other fire companies. Allow relief funds to be used for recruitment and retention rewards including nominal payments for a response. People no longer volunteer because they need a third and fourth part-time job to make ends meet at home. Provide additional funds for fire companies that meet state standards. For fire companies to claim they can't train their members because they spend too much time fund-raising is a major red flag for the state of the volunteer fire service. No amount of bingo or chicken dinners will ever pay for half-million-dollar fire engines. Provide a state dollar match for local communities that contribute to the local fire company. It is criminal that many communities provide nothing to pennies to the local fire company or claim the relief association funds as their contribution. PA treats merged fire companies as eligible to receive money as if they were separate for three years, and then they become one fire company. Consider changing to the population served or calls answered in the formula to receive money. Create a grant assistance position(s) to assist fire companies to apply to the many grant opportunities. The current grant writer assistance is predatory with much bad information.	2/5/2021 12:49 PM
148	I think the relief is a good thing	2/5/2021 12:42 PM
149	We really need to update the regulations and provide better funding for each service side of the stations.	2/5/2021 12:38 PM
150	None other than already expressed	2/5/2021 12:35 PM
151	None	2/5/2021 12:32 PM
152	I think the state needs to monitor and not let the out of state insurance companies self report I believe the responders are being short changed in the current process.	2/5/2021 12:27 PM
153	don't understand why monies have been dropping off every year.	2/5/2021 11:57 AM
154	They audit every FRA the same. If I have a million dollars or ten thousand I get the same level of scrutiny. It is hard enough to get people to hold office.	2/5/2021 11:55 AM
155	This is a good first step in reform.	2/5/2021 11:53 AM
156	As stated before, relief funding should be the responsibility of the municipality to manage, not a separate entity.	2/5/2021 11:52 AM
157	call to discuss 724-832-8700 kim houser	2/5/2021 11:48 AM
158	We need authorization to establish a pension fund with the 2% FF money.	2/5/2021 11:45 AM
159	FYI This response is for Cressona nd Lilly VFC's in Cambria County. We are in the process of	2/5/2021 11:42 AM

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	merging	
160	We need to change the oversight mechanism to allow the state fire commissioner to have greater input. He/she is closer to the fire service needs than the state auditor general. However, the auditor would still provide auditing and account of fund usage.	2/5/2021 11:40 AM
161	The Commonwealth needs to stop taking a large portion of the relief funds and injecting into the general funds. Our fire companies would be much better off if they realized the true benefits that the tax passed.	2/5/2021 11:36 AM
162	None at this time	2/5/2021 11:32 AM
163	It's tone to update this process, long overdue	2/5/2021 11:30 AM
164	Thank you	2/5/2021 11:29 AM
165	The need to revamp relief association laws, regulations, & rules is long overdue so any amendments would be a welcome sight!!!	2/5/2021 11:28 AM
166	These comments are my individual opinions. They do not represent any organization that I am affiliated with.	2/5/2021 11:21 AM
167	need to be making sure all the foreign insurance companies are paying into the fund. Also no more selling credits in lump sums to make it cheaper for the insurance companies in the future. This just decreases the amount of money in the pool to divide up.	2/5/2021 11:18 AM
168	I believe that adjusting to payer matrix is the most important issues facing release associations. Have I don't disagree with monetizing the process of how relief funds are distributed. I currently believe the biggest issue facing the departments would be overshadowed. My other concern is how those funds are allowed to be used. The system is already so heavily audited that I think there should be more allowable purchases that are encompassed in the relief buying power. No I will mitt that the expansion Over the last 10 years have been staggering. However I do not believe that we are where we should be in terms of the allowable purchases. The other huge factor is that the state controls how much are given out to each department regardless of what the townships decide once they receive the funds. I've seen a \$15-\$20,000 influx over the last 10 years that really can affect the individual department. Also this could be a good chance to eliminate office of the state fire commissioner grants and role them into the relief funds. Then changing the relief funds and allowing more access and more ability to purchase additional items.	2/5/2021 11:16 AM
169	Relief needs to be fair across the board and then monies divided up by the formulas in place. Insurance should be a priority and every fire company should receive a minimum of \$10,000 for PPE	2/5/2021 11:03 AM
170	None	2/5/2021 11:00 AM
171	Need to eliminate waste and reward proficient performers.	2/5/2021 10:59 AM
172	As a one time thing, I would like to see before any money is disbursed, money be taken off the top and all the modules of Emergency Reporting (including CAD integration) be purchased and made available to all departments. Hopefully this would get every FD in the Commonwealth onto the same system and we can standardize the incident reporting process across Pa. I think that a formula can be developed where each volunteer department receives the same amount. It is not fair that some VFD's have hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars stashed away yet within miles of them, another volunteer company can barely survive off their yearly allotment.	2/5/2021 10:57 AM
173	The funding needs increased or spread out evenly across the board. I see way to many wealthy companies getting a lot more money than us departments from small towns that get a measly amount of money. It's insulting and absolutely ridiculous the way the funds are spread out. It needs to be spread out across the board evenly.	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
174	N/a	2/5/2021 10:53 AM
175	Na	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
176	SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY...	2/5/2021 10:51 AM
177	This needs to be modernized, just giving money and not requiring budgets and follow up is dangerous.	2/5/2021 10:49 AM

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178	I feel the audits are a good thing. They just need to be able to more electronically.	2/5/2021 10:47 AM
179	As a past treasurer and former fire chief, for a small rural department for 25 years in following the guidelines, changes and audit procedures have been very helpful. If handled in the proper way and IF distributed funding would be appropriate to provide a base distribution. It would benefit smaller departments in meeting NFPA Gear, SCBA replacement guidelines. SAFETY SAFETY SAFETY	2/5/2021 10:46 AM
180	None	2/5/2021 10:45 AM
181	None	2/5/2021 10:43 AM
182	none	2/5/2021 10:35 AM
183	Would be very helpful also to change the way purchases are made. It's tough sometimes how paperwork is made to the company from vendors.	2/5/2021 10:32 AM