

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 18, 2025

TO: York County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mark L. Bellamy, Jr., County Administrator 

SUBJECT: Federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant

As the Board is aware, the Department of Fire and Life Safety continues to have a need for improved staffing levels on fire and rescue apparatus. As part of the efforts to address this need, the County has been using a gradual approach to accomplish such. Therefore, the Department of Fire and Life Safety requested nine new Firefighter positions in their FY2026 budget request; however, due to funding limitations, we were unable to include these positions in the budget recommendation.

While we were unable to fund the requested positions in the FY2026 Budget, and because the need continues to exist, an alternative option to assist with the staffing improvement needs is through the Federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant program. In the past, the County has been successful in obtaining such grants. Last year, I authorized the application for such a grant, but we were unsuccessful during that process. Similarly, the SAFER Grant is again available this year, and I have authorized the application of such once again. For this request, we will be requesting funding for six Firefighter positions. We anticipate award notifications to begin in late summer or early fall, with awards occurring in subsequent months as well. If successful, the grant would provide funding of 75% in the first two years of the grant and 35% in the third year, after which the County would cover full funding of these positions. However, knowing that the positions are needed regardless, this is an opportunity to improve much-needed staffing with significant funding from the federal government during the initial years.

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