**Section 120.40 Application Submission and Notification of Grant Award**

a) Grant opportunities and awards will be administered in a manner that complies with all State requirements, including, but not limited to, GATA, the GATA Rule, and the Agency GATA Rule. Applicants and grantees shall review all application materials and grant award documents which will include the specific applicable requirements for the grant opportunity.

b) The NOFO will be published utilizing multiple methods of communication pursuant to the Act, including posting on IEMA-OHS's website.

c) Subject to appropriation, the grant application period shall be open for no less than 45 calendar days during the first application cycle each fiscal year, unless IEMA-OHS determines that a shorter period is necessary to avoid conflicts with the annual federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program funding cycle.

d) The NOFO shall include the period for submission of applications, including applicable deadlines. Applicants shall submit grant applications as indicated in the NOFO and this Part. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

e) IEMA-OHS may extend the application period or open additional application periods depending on funding provided by the Illinois General Assembly. This grant program shall only be available for as long as funding is appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly for this purpose.

f) An applicant may submit only one application for funding per project site per application period. An applicant may apply for multiple project sites as indicated in Section 120.30(b) and the NOFO.

g) The grant is for a three-year performance period; however, the Agency may extend the grant performance period for good cause upon request by the grantee. Projects supported by this grant may not begin or end outside the dates specified in the grant agreement described in Section 120.50, unless extended in writing by the Agency.

h) This is a competitive grant program. IEMA-OHS reserves the right to deny any grant application or to provide reduced funding to any grantee.

i) Grants will be awarded following a merit review by IEMA-OHS pursuant to GATA, GATA Rule and the agency's GATA Rule. In evaluating the applications, IEMA-OHS will consider the criteria listed below:

1) The high risk of the applicant's organization for threats, attacks, or acts of terrorism;

2) The necessity of the funding based on the vulnerability assessment provided by the applicant;

3) The ability of the proposed project to enhance the safety of the organization;

4) Coordination with broader State and local preparedness as described by the agency in the NOFO;

5) Sustainability of the project, specifically including compliance with Section 120.20(c) and review of proposed eligible equipment interoperability with existing equipment (if applicable);

6) An evaluation of the likelihood of project completion during the grant performance period;

7) Equity: 10 additional points will be added to the scores of applicants that are located within a disadvantaged community and demonstrate how they serve a disadvantaged community or population. The Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) will be used to identify these applicants using the address of their physical location; and

8) The availability of funding and whether applicants have received funding previously on the federal or State program.

j) For projects and applicants that meet the eligibility requirements, grant awards will be prioritized for applicants with the highest risk of threats, attacks, and acts of terrorism. Therefore, this criterion will be weighed most heavily during the merit review process. IEMA-OHS shall determine, in consultation with other State agency partners, utilizing the information provided during the application process and information obtained from the Agency's Office of Homeland Security, whether the applicant is at high risk of being subject to threats, attacks, or acts of terrorism.

k) Notification will be sent to the point of contact indicated in the application when final grant funding allocations have been determined.

l) Appeals. Appeals for this grant program shall follow the process provided in 44 Ill. Adm. Code 7000.350(g). All appeals shall be submitted in writing to the Deputy Director of the Agency's Office of Homeland Security.