
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1816 Session of
2019

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ULLMAN, MACKENZIE, SCHMITT, TOOHIL, GABLER, HICKERNELL AND
FRITZ, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in Commonwealth services, further
3 providing for assistance to volunteer fire companies,
4 ambulance service and rescue squads.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Section 7364(a)(1), (2), (3), (5), (6) and (7)
8 and (b) of Title 35 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes
9 are amended and the section is amended by adding a subsection to

10 read:

11 § 7364. Assistance to volunteer fire companies, ambulance
12 service and rescue squads.

13 (a) General rule.--The office is authorized, upon
14 application of any volunteer fire company, volunteer ambulance
15 service or volunteer rescue squad, to make loans for the
16 following purposes:

1 (1) Establishing or modernizing facilities that house
2 firefighting equipment, ambulance or rescue vehicles. The
3 amount of a loan for establishing or modernizing facilities
4 made to any one volunteer fire company, ambulance service or
5 rescue squad shall not exceed 50% of the total cost of the
6 facilities or modernization or [~~\$400,000~~] \$440,000, whichever
7 is less, and a notarized financial statement filed under
8 subsection (c) shall show that the applicant has available
9 20% of the total cost of the facilities in unobligated funds.
10 Proceeds of the loan shall be used only for purposes of
11 structure or land acquisition or renovation or construction
12 and shall not be used for payment of fees for design,
13 planning, preparation of applications or any other cost not
14 directly attributable to structure or land acquisition or
15 renovation or construction.

16 (2) Purchasing firefighting apparatus, ambulances or
17 rescue vehicles. The amount of a loan made for purchasing
18 firefighting apparatus to any one volunteer fire company
19 shall not exceed [~~\$200,000~~] \$220,000 for any single
20 firefighting apparatus equipment or utility or special
21 service vehicle or heavy duty rescue vehicle as defined by
22 regulation or guideline, or 50% of the total cost of the
23 equipment or vehicle, whichever is less, except for loans for
24 aerial apparatus as defined by regulation or guideline, which
25 shall not exceed [~~\$300,000~~] \$330,000. The amount of a loan
26 made to any one volunteer fire company, ambulance service or
27 rescue squad for any ambulance or light duty rescue vehicle
28 as defined by regulation or guideline shall not exceed
29 [~~\$100,000~~] \$110,000 and for a watercraft rescue vehicle shall
30 not exceed [~~\$30,000~~] \$33,000 or 50% of the cost of the

1 ambulance or rescue vehicle, whichever is less, and a
2 notarized financial statement filed under subsection (c)
3 shall show that the applicant has available 20% of the total
4 cost of the vehicle in unobligated funds.

5 (3) Purchasing protective, accessory or communication
6 equipment. No volunteer fire company, ambulance service or
7 rescue squad shall receive a loan for protective, accessory
8 or communicative equipment more than once in any five-year
9 period. Each volunteer fire company, ambulance service or
10 rescue squad may apply for a loan for a mobile and portable
11 radio unit for each existing serviceable apparatus equipment,
12 ambulance or rescue vehicle. Radio equipment obtained through
13 loans under this subchapter shall be equipped with a
14 frequency or frequencies licensed by the Federal
15 Communications Commission for firefighting or emergency
16 response purposes. A notarized financial statement shall be
17 filed and loans under this subchapter for the purchase of
18 protective, accessory or communicative equipment shall not
19 exceed [~~\$20,000~~] \$22,000.

20 * * *

21 (5) Repair or rehabilitation of apparatus equipment.
22 Where it has been determined that existing apparatus
23 equipment no longer meets the standards of the National Fire
24 Protection Association and the repair or rehabilitation of
25 such equipment will bring it in compliance with National Fire
26 Protection Association standards, loans for the repair or
27 rehabilitation for a single apparatus equipment shall be for
28 at least [~~\$2,000~~] \$2,200 but shall not exceed the lesser of
29 [~~\$70,000~~] \$77,000 or 80% of the total cost of repair or
30 rehabilitation.

1 (6) Purchasing of used firefighting apparatus,
2 equipment, used ambulances, used rescue vehicles, used
3 communications equipment, used accessory equipment or used
4 protective equipment, except that the used vehicles and
5 equipment shall meet the National Fire Protection Association
6 (NFPA) standards and loans for the purchase of a used single
7 apparatus equipment shall not exceed [~~\$120,000~~] \$132,000 or
8 80% of the total cost of the equipment, whichever is less.

9 (7) Purchasing Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting
10 System (PennFIRS) hardware and software. A volunteer fire
11 company shall be eligible to apply one time only for a loan
12 of not more than [~~\$4,000~~] \$4,400 or 75% of the cost of such
13 acquisition, whichever is less, and with a term not exceeding
14 five years for the purpose of acquiring the hardware and
15 software necessary to participate in the Pennsylvania Fire
16 Information Reporting System. The office shall develop, at
17 its discretion, such procedures and forms as it may deem
18 necessary to facilitate loans for PennFIRS hardware and
19 software. The loans shall be secured as required by law.

20 * * *

21 (b) Loans.--Loans made by the office in the amount of
22 [~~\$30,000~~] \$33,000 or less shall be for a period of not more than
23 ten years. Loans in excess of [~~\$30,000~~] \$33,000 but not in
24 excess of [~~\$100,000~~] \$110,000 shall be for a period of not more
25 than 15 years. The payback period of any loan in excess of
26 [~~\$100,000~~] \$110,000, except a loan for establishing or
27 modernizing facilities, shall not exceed 20 years. The payback
28 period for any loan in excess of [~~\$200,000~~] \$220,000 for
29 establishing or modernizing facilities shall not exceed 20
30 years. Loans shall be subject to the payment of interest at 2%

1 per year and shall be subject to such security as shall be
2 determined by the commissioner. The total amount of interest
3 earned by the investment or reinvestment of all or any part of
4 the principal of any loan shall be returned to the office and
5 transferred to the Volunteer Companies Loan Fund and shall not
6 be credited as payment of principal or interest on the loan.
7 Except as provided in subsection (a)(5) and (7), the minimum
8 amount of any loan shall be ~~[\$10,000]~~ \$11,000.

9 (b.1) Inflation adjustment.--Beginning one year after the
10 effective date of this section, and annually thereafter, all
11 limits for the amount of a loan under this section shall
12 increase at the rate of inflation as outlined in the Consumer
13 Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the Northeast Region for
14 the most recent 12-month period for which the figures have been
15 reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of
16 Labor Statistics. If the rate of inflation does not increase,
17 all loan limits shall remain the same as they were for the
18 previous year. The office shall transmit notice of loan limit
19 increases to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in
20 the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

21 * * *

22 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.