



**Arizona Department of Homeland Security**  
**Operation Stonegarden Grant Program (OPSG)**  
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

(Click on Link for Answer)

1. [Who is eligible to receive Operation Stonegarden Grant Program funding?](#)
2. [What is the normal performance period for OPSG funds?](#)
3. [What is the role of the Arizona Department of Homeland Security \(AZDOHS\) in OPSG?](#)
4. [What is the role of the Border Patrol in OPSG?](#)
5. [What is the role of the County Sheriff in OPSG?](#)
6. [What is the role of the Operation Stonegarden Integrated Planning Team in OPSG?](#)
7. [What type of equipment may be requested by an agency in an Operation Stonegarden Operations Order?](#)
8. [May an agency exceed the approved quantity limit on a type of equipment if the agency is able to find a lower priced quote on the equipment?](#)
9. [If money is left over after purchasing all of the approved equipment, may that agency be approved for a modification to purchase another type of equipment?](#)
10. [What is the applicable guidance on the use of dispatchers?](#)
11. [If an agency purchased a vehicle under OPSG, may this vehicle be used for purposes other than Operation Stonegarden?](#)
12. [If an agency was approved to purchase equipment to outfit vehicles \(i.e. cameras, license plate readers\), may this equipment be installed in a vehicle that is used for routine patrols?](#)
13. [What are some common items that are requested but are not allowable under the grant?](#)
14. [Do all operations need to be pre-coordinated with the Border Patrol Sector?](#)
15. [What is the reimbursement rate for mileage?](#)
16. [What is the 10% rule?](#)
17. [If an agency was awarded funding to purchase an item of equipment, but due to circumstances, would prefer to purchase a different item of equipment with the funding, how should that agency proceed?](#)
18. [What is the quarterly programmatic reporting requirement on this grant?](#)
19. [Can Operation Stonegarden Funds be used for "investigational" work?](#)
20. [Can Operation Stonegarden funds be used for field training?](#)

21. [Can Operation Stonegarden funds be used for detention and transport costs?](#)
22. [What is the policy on grant extensions?](#)
23. [What types of costs are allowable under the OPSG grant?](#)
24. [At the completion of the grant performance period, what is a stakeholder required to do?](#)
25. [Can our agency be reimbursed for costs related to salaried \(“exempt”\) law enforcement personnel working OPSG?](#)
26. [Does equipment purchased with Operation Stonegarden funds require labeling?](#)
27. [What types of “employee related expenses” \(ERE\) or benefit costs can be charged to the Operation Stonegarden grant?](#)
28. [Where can an agency get more information on the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program?](#)

### **1. What is the Objective of the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program?**

The FFY 2017 FEMA Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) states: The OPSG Program supports enhanced cooperation and coordination among Customs and Border Protection (CBP), United States Border Patrol (USBP), and Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies. The OPSG Program provides funding to support joint efforts to secure the United States’ borders along routes of ingress from international borders to include travel corridors in states bordering Mexico and Canada, as well as states and territories with international water borders

### **2. Who is eligible to receive Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) Grant Program funding?**

State, municipal, county and Tribal law enforcement agencies in Arizona with AZ Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission certified law enforcement officers who are able to work uniformed patrols in support of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP)/Border Patrol (BP) mission are eligible. Only those law enforcement officers having authority to enforce laws within the State of Arizona are eligible. Grant recipients must submit an Operations Order and Budget Template to AZDOHS to be eligible for grant funding. . The CBP/Border Patrol has final authority on the selection and participation of State, Local and Tribal law enforcement agencies in the OPSG Program. The OPSG grant is reserved for agencies where there is a Border Patrol presence to coordinate OPSG activities.

### **3. What is the normal Grant Period of Performance for OPSG funds?**

The performance period for OPSG Overtime/Mileage and Equipment grants will be determined by AZDOHS and is based on FEMA grant funding criteria. Agencies normally submit their annual Operations Order and Budget Template to AZDOHS in the spring preceding the awarding of grant cycle funding in the fall. Funds are usually awarded in the October to December timeframe, depending on final award and

approval of Operations Orders from the CBP/BP and FEMA. OPSG grant Performance Periods are usually 1214 months in duration.

#### **4. What is the role of the Arizona Department of Homeland Security (AZDOHS) in OPSG?**

Through an agreement with the Sheriffs of the four counties in Arizona that share an international border with Mexico, AZDOHS, which is the State Administrative Agency (SAA) for FEMA, administers OPSG grants - for all State, Local and Tribal law enforcement agencies participating in OPSG.

#### **5. What is the role of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP)/Border Patrol (BP) in OPSG?**

Border Patrol is the lead agency for operations under the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program. Consistent with the FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity, OPSG funded activities and equipment shall support the Border Patrol mission. All OPSG activities must be pre-coordinated with your Border Patrol Sector:

- Tucson Sector – Agent Kristina M. Grys ( [kristina.m.grys@cbp.dhs.gov](mailto:kristina.m.grys@cbp.dhs.gov) 520-514-4846)
- Yuma Sector – Agent Roy Browning ( [roy.browning@dhs.gov](mailto:roy.browning@dhs.gov) 928-941-6099)

#### **6. What is the role of the County Sheriff in OPSG?**

Apart from participating in OPSG operations and activities, the County Sheriff of each of the border counties serve as Chairpersons of the Operation Stonegarden Integrated Planning Teams that meet to review county-wide OPSG operations and recommend funding. The County Sheriff is also required to submit an Operations Orders and Budget Template for the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program each year. These Operations Orders, when consolidated into a county-wide document inclusive of all participating law enforcement agencies, are used to set the overall policy for Operation Stonegarden within a county and also serve as the funding request to FEMA for Operation Stonegarden grant funding.

#### **7. What is the role of the Operation Stonegarden Integrated Planning Teams (IPT)?**

The primary function of the Operation Stonegarden IPTs as designated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity is to coordinate on all aspects of OPSG application, planning and de-briefings. . In making grant funding recommendation decisions, the OPSG IPTs take into account various factors, including the need for funding to certain agencies based on the illegal activity occurring in an area and the impact that the funding will have in that area in combating transnational threats. Other items such as the available manpower of an agency, past performance under the OPSG grant, past compliance with reporting

requirements and grant guidelines, the quality of the OPSG Operations Order and Budget Template and other factors all can be taken into account by the OPSG IPTs in making allocation decisions. The OPSG IPTs meet on an as needed basis. The IPTs consist of representatives from:

- Border County Sheriff (Chair)
- CBP/Border Patrol
- Up to two (2) municipal law enforcement agencies (two-year term)
- Tribal law enforcement agency (if applicable) (two-year term)
- Arizona Department of Public Safety
- Arizona Department of Homeland Security

**8. What type of equipment may be requested by an agency in an Operation Stonegarden Operations Order and Budget Template?**

Any equipment that is allowable under the OPSG section of the FEMA Authorized Equipment List (AEL) may be requested on the Operations Order and Budget Template. Additional items that are not on the AEL have also been considered for a waiver by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and may be eligible under the OPSG grant. Equipment requests must be pre-coordinated with the local Border Patrol Station prior to submitting the annual Operations Order and Budget Template. CBP/Border Patrol has final authority on equipment requests. **All requested and approved equipment must directly support the Border Patrol mission and border security.**

**9. May an agency exceed the approved quantity limit on a type of equipment if the agency is able to find a lower priced quote on the equipment?**

**No**, an agency will only be reimbursed for up to the quantity of approved equipment items as recommended by the CBP/Border Patrol, approved by FEMA and sub-awarded by AZDOHS. If an agency incurs a savings on a grant, the remaining amount of funds is returned to AZDOHS and is eligible for reallocation in the respective county.

**10. If money is remaining after purchasing all of the approved equipment, may that agency be approved for a modification to purchase another type of equipment?**

**No**, if an agency incurs a savings on a grant from the awarded amount, the remaining amount of funds is returned to AZDOHS and is eligible for reallocation in the respective county.

### **11. What is the applicable guidance on the use of dispatchers?**

Dispatcher overtime is allowable under the grant program; however, OPSG participants need to be aware that there are strict requirements for their use under OPSG. Dispatcher overtime is only reimbursable for dispatchers working in direct support of peace officers working OPSG overtime operations. The ratio of dispatchers to officers must be in alignment with the law enforcement agency's local policy. This policy and any related expenditures should be reasonable (i.e. one dispatcher for each OPSG officer working would not be considered "reasonable"). Dispatchers should also be utilized strictly for dispatch duties while working Operation Stonegarden and should not be assigned to perform administrative tasks not directly related to dispatch duties. Dispatcher overtime must be in an approved Operations Order.

### **12. If an agency purchased a vehicle under OPSG, may this vehicle be used for purposes other than Operation Stonegarden?**

Any OPSG grant-funded vehicles are to be used for OPSG deployments only. Exceptions are critical incidents (lost person, flooding, natural disaster, etc.) during which all agency assets, including OPSG vehicles, may be needed for response and mitigation.

### **13. If an agency was approved to purchase equipment to outfit vehicles (i.e. license plate readers and thermal imaging units), may this equipment be installed in a vehicle that is used for routine patrols?**

**Yes**, as long as that vehicle will also be used on at least an intermittent basis for OPSG activities and supports the Border Patrol mission.

### **14. What are some common items that are requested but are not allowable under the grant?**

Some common items that are often requested, but are not allowable under the OPSG grant are:

- Weapons and weapon mounted systems
- Canines (K9)
- Infrastructure hardening items
- Regular operational equipment (i.e., bullet-proof vests, duty gear, )
- Body-worn cameras
- Non 4x4 vehicles
- Aerial Drones
- Armored vehicles

**SPECIAL NOTE:** FEMA Information Bulletin 407 (IB 407) provides detailed information on equipment restrictions. This IB is available at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/114557>

**15. Do all overtime operations need to be pre-coordinated with the Border Patrol Sector?**

**Yes**, all OPSG overtime operations **must be** pre-coordinated with the respective Border Patrol Sector Station. Activities that are not pre-coordinated as stipulated by your Border Patrol Sector Station are not eligible for reimbursement.

**16. What is the reimbursement rate for mileage?**

The Arizona State reimbursement rate for mileage is currently \$.445 per mile. This amount is designed to cover both fuel and maintenance costs for vehicles used in support of OPSG operations.

**17. Line Item Budget Cost Overruns (“The 10% rule”)**

Overtime/Mileage Grants: Grant recipients **are not allowed** to exceed their awarded Overtime allocations. Grant recipients can use awarded Overtime allocations to cover over expenditure in the Mileage category only. . This prohibition is a result of FEMA requirements for specific agency Overtime grant allocations in the areas of Overtime and Fringe Benefits (EREs).

Equipment Grants: The 10% rule allows agencies to exceed expenditures on an individual line item within their equipment grant by up to 10% of the total grant amount or \$25,000, whichever is less, as long as there is a corresponding under-expenditure of another equipment line item within the grant to offset the over-expenditure. This applies only if the awarded quantity of equipment items results in a higher cost than budgeted, and does not allow additional quantities to be purchased.

An agency is authorized to utilize the 10% (or \$25,000) rule, whichever is less, for Equipment purchases without prior approval from AZDOHS or the OPSG Integrated Planning Team. Agencies **must not** change the budget listed in their reimbursement request cover sheet when executing the 10% rule. Modifications that exceed the 10% or \$25,000 limit must be approved by the OPSG Integrated Planning Team.

**18. If an agency was awarded funding to purchase an item of equipment, but due to circumstances, would prefer to purchase a different item of equipment with the funding, how should that agency proceed?**

Mid-cycle grant modifications under OPSG are discouraged. Instead, that agency should forgo the purchase and allow the funding to revert to their county's OPSG Integrated Planning Team by making note of this on their next Quarterly Programmatic Report (funds that are unspent at the end of the grant performance period also revert to the county OPSG Integrated Planning Team). When the grant performance period is complete, the county OPSG Integrated Planning Teams will meet to reallocate the reverted fallout funding. All OPSG agencies in that respective county will have an opportunity to apply for this reallocation funding.

### **19. What is the Quarterly Programmatic Reporting requirement on this grant?**

Quarterly Programmatic Reports are required for every FEMA Homeland Security grant, including the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program, including Overtime/Mileage and Equipment grants. A separate report is due for each quarter covered by the grant period listed in the subrecipient agreement, regardless of whether any expenditure against the grant occurred during the quarter. Reports are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month after the end of each quarter:

- October 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>: Due January 15<sup>th</sup>
- January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>: Due April 15<sup>th</sup>
- April 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>: Due July 15<sup>th</sup>
- July 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>: Due October 15<sup>th</sup>
- October 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>: Due January 15<sup>th</sup> (following year)

Upon completion of the grant project, agencies can immediately submit a 'FINAL' Quarterly Programmatic Report to AZDOHS showing final obligation of grant funding. After this Report no further Quarterly Programmatic Reports are required. The Quarterly Programmatic Report template can be found at: <http://www.azdohs.gov/grants/>

### **20. Can Operation Stonegarden Grant Funds be used for "investigational" or "surveillance" work?**

**No**, the primary and dedicated purpose of Operation Stonegarden is for high-visibility, uniformed patrols in marked patrol vehicles along routes from the international border into the United States and for certain outbound operations or in accordance with approved operational deployments. **Agencies are prohibited from using OPSG grant funds to supplant inherent routine patrols and law enforcement operations.**

### **21. Can Operation Stonegarden funds be used for training?**

Training is limited only to overtime costs related to sworn peace officers attending US Code Title 19 training for Port-of-Entry Operations provided by CBP Office of Field Operations, training required for the use of specialized OPSG-grant funded equipment, and training in the certification for Federal designation in the 287(g) Program. All training and grant expenses related to training must receive prior approval from Border Patrol.

**22. Can Operation Stonegarden funds be used for detention and transport costs?**

**No**, detention and transport costs are not currently covered under the Operation Stonegarden program in Arizona.

**23. What is the policy on grant extensions?**

Grant period extensions for Overtime/Mileage grants normally are not approved because the new grant year funding is usually available for Overtime/Mileage by the time the previous year's grant expires.

Grant period extensions on equipment grants only *may be* considered if there is strong and adequate justification. Extension requests up to 3-months require AZDOHS approval. Extension requests for more than 3-months require approval by the county OPSG Integrated Planning Team. The Extension Request Form can be found at the following link: <http://www.azdohs.gov/grants/>

**24. What types of costs are allowable under the OPSG grant?**

Overtime, fringe benefits/employee related expenses (EREs), mileage, travel and equipment expenses are the primary categories of funding for OPSG. The overtime line item of a grant can also be used for expenses such as dispatcher overtime costs, costs to bring a part-time law enforcement officer up to 40 hours full-time status and costs to pay reserve AZ POST-certified law enforcement officers up to 40 hours per week. Overtime for specific classifications of employees must be in an approved Operations Order. All law enforcement officers working OPSG activities must be AZ POST-certified law enforcement officers and eligible to enforce Arizona State laws. FEMA Grants Program Directorate Information Bulletin #321 includes other costs that could be allowable under OPSG:

<http://www.fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/bulletins/info321.pdf>.



**25. At the completion of the grant performance period, what is an OPSG agency required to do?**

All stakeholders are required to submit the following documents within specified time periods after the end of the performance period:

- E-mail the Final Quarterly Programmatic Report to AZDOHS at [lsinghurse@azdohs.gov](mailto:lsinghurse@azdohs.gov). Required within 15-days. (<http://www.azdohs.gov/Grants/index.asp#Forms>)
- Mail the Final Reimbursement Request Form and all supporting documentation to AZDOHS. Required within 45-days. (Grant-specific Reimbursement Request forms are provided to each agency)
- E-mail the Property Control Form (for equipment grants only) to AZDOHS at [wseltzer@azdohs.gov](mailto:wseltzer@azdohs.gov). Required with the Final Quarterly Programmatic Report submission. (<http://www.azdohs.gov/Grants/index.asp#Forms>)

**26. Can our agency be reimbursed for costs related to salaried (“exempt”) law enforcement personnel working OPSG?**

Exempt law enforcement officers (those compensated as salaried as opposed to hourly) may work and be reimbursed for OPSG operations under the following criteria:

- If they are acting in a non-supervisory role
- Participation in OPSG must be in compliance with the United States Code of Financial Regulations (CFR) number 2 CFR Part 225 – Cost Principles for State, Local and Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87)
  - Appendix A.C.1.e “Be consistent with policies, regulations, and procedures that apply uniformly to both Federal awards and other activities of the governmental unit.”
  - ([http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr225\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr225_main_02.tpl))
- In compliance with the agency’s local Human Resources/Personnel policies related to exempt employees and overtime allowability
- The subrecipient policy must be on file with AZDOHS.

**27. What types of “Employee Related Expense” (ERE) or fringe benefit costs can be charged to the Operation Stonegarden grant?**

ERE/fringe benefits are allowable if they are costs that are associated with an officer’s participation in overtime OPSG deployments. They must be an ERE/fringe benefit cost that increases based on the

overtime hours worked as a result of participation in OPSG activities (“Variable Expenses”). ERE/fringe benefit costs that are a flat fee per employee (“Fixed Expenses”) are not allowable for reimbursement.

The allowed variable ERE/fringe benefits are:

- Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) (certified staff)
- Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) (non-certified staff)
- Worker’s Compensation Insurance
- Social Security (FICA)
- Medicare (FICA)

**28. Where can an agency get more information on the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program?**

For further questions, please contact William D. Seltzer, OPSG Strategic Planner at (602) 542-7044 or [wseltzer@azdohs.gov](mailto:wseltzer@azdohs.gov).