

**South Plains Association of Governments**  
**Emergency Responder Advisory Committee (ERAC)**  
**Operating Policies and Procedures**

**1. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

All policies, rules, and regulations set forth in this document are in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC).

**2. REGIONAL GRANT APPLICATIONS**

All regional grant applications must meet the following criteria to be considered as an eligible project:

- The application must be for the purpose of increasing regional resiliency.
- The application must be for a project located within the SPAG region or directly impacting a jurisdiction, agency, or organization within the SPAG region.
- The application must meet a homeland security or emergency management need identified within the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), State Preparedness Report (SPR), Implementation Plan, or any other regional emergency management plan.
- No applications will be accepted from organizations outside of the SPAG region.
- Proof of a completed grant application in the Office of the Governor grant portal must be submitted to SPAG staff.

**3. GRANT APPLICATION WORKSHOP**

All regional grant applicants are required to attend a mandatory grant application workshop with SPAG staff prior to submitting an application.

The grant application workshop will provide grant applicants with the following elements of the process:

- A description of who can apply and what activities are eligible;
- A description of the appropriate eGrant application process, including requirements for the project summary, problem statement, existing capability levels, capability gaps, impact statement, homeland security priority action, project activity, performance measures, milestones, and budget categories and line items;
- The project period or performance period for each funding opportunity;
- A description of the applicable rules, regulations and certifications required for each funding opportunity;
- A description of any prohibitions;
- A description of the civil rights rules related to applicant employees and projects or activities;
- A description of State strategies or funding preferences;
- A description of the priorities identified by the ERAC related to homeland security and emergency management issues;
- A description of how ERAC will review and prioritize projects, including but not limited to, local policies and procedures, the region's methodology for risk-informed scoring/prioritization, scoring instruments, the criteria used in scoring/prioritization applications and other relevant materials that affect the prioritization process; and
- Due dates for applicants to submit and certify applications for the funding opportunities.

SPAG staff will aid applicant SPAG participating jurisdiction(s) or agency(ies) in completing and submitting their application(s) by the deadline established for the receipt of applications. SPAG staff will provide a technical assistance overview for all other organizations, agencies, or non-participating jurisdictions by appointment.

**4. SPAG MANAGED PROJECTS**

SPAG staff may submit grant applications for regional projects for consideration along with jurisdictions and agencies. SPAG staff will follow all rules and guidelines that apply to jurisdictions and agencies when submitting regional grant applications.

SPAG staff may submit grant applications for jurisdictions in the following circumstances:

- When grant administration and management costs become too cumbersome for the jurisdiction;

- When multiple jurisdictions are seeking the same grant items; or
- As identified by a recommendation of the ERAC, Board of Directors, or SPAG Leadership.

In SPAG managed projects, SPAG staff are responsible for the administration and management of all grant deliverables and grant allocations in accordance with SPAG policies and procedures.

SPAG will be responsible for developing and maintaining a fair and equitable application and allocation process for jurisdictions to apply for and receive resources acquired under a SPAG managed project in accordance with SPAG policies and procedures. SPAG staff shall report all resource allocations as they occur to the ERAC at each subsequent committee meeting. .

ERAC members are strictly prohibited from interfering in the distribution or allocation of resources in SPAG managed projects. Interference in the distribution or allocation of resources will be handled in accordance to the ERAC policies and procedures on conduct of members.

## **5. THIRA/SPR/IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING**

The THIRA, SPR, Implementation Plans must be reviewed and updated annually to be submitted on or before a date designated by the Office of the Governor. SPAG staff are responsible for coordinating stakeholder meetings with committee members to review and update prior to the deadline assigned by the Office of the Governor. Non-committee members provide valuable feedback and information that is critical to the review and update of these plans.

ERAC committee members are responsible for ensuring that meeting invitations are forwarded to the proper stakeholders that can provide information critical to the review and update of the THIRA, SPR, and Implementation Plans.

As identified above, all regional grant applications reviewed and scored by the committee shall meet a need identified in the THIRA, SPR, or Implementation Plan and must detail the specific area the project will target.

## **6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All determinations of conflict must be determined prior to the regional grant application presentations at the committee scoring meeting. The determination must be verbalized during the meeting (prior to presentations) and recorded in the official minutes.

While a conflict of interest will typically apply to committee members, SPAG staff, and Board of Directors; in accordance with the ERAC Bylaws, committee membership is appointed by the SPAG Board of Directors but does not consist of SPAG Board of Directors. SPAG staff are prohibited from scoring or voting on regional grant projects.

SPAG staff shall ensure that the members of the committee abstain from scoring or voting on any regional grant application during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree of consanguinity (blood) or within the second degree by affinity (marriage):

- Is employed by the applicant agency or works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;
- Serves on any governing board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;

- Owns or controls any interest in a business entity or other non-governmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activities with the applicant agency; or
- Receives any funds, or a substantial amount of tangible goods or routine services, from the applicant agency as a result of the grant, if awarded.

Immediately prior to a grant presentation in which a committee member(s) has abstained, the committee member(s) will leave the meeting room during the presentation. SPAG staff will notify the committee member(s) to return to the meeting room upon conclusion of the presentation and questioning.

If any applicant, SPAG staff, committee member, or other individual has reason to believe that favoritism or inappropriate actions were displayed during the scoring or prioritization of regional grant projects, these are reported by making a written statement to SPAG leadership. Upon validation of submitted concern, SPAG leadership shall ensure that the concern and validation are shared with the Board of Directors and the appropriate grant authority as soon as possible.

Votes that are cast in violation of this section are not counted.

## **7. TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT**

ERAC meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act as described in Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.

The Committee Chairperson may close a meeting when national security, critical infrastructure, or cybersecurity matters need to be discussed in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.

Regional grant applications that meet those criteria as defined by Texas Government Code 551 may be discussed and presented in closed session; however, scoring and voting shall occur in open session in accordance with Texas Government Code 551.

## **8. NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS**

SPAG shall notify potential applicants regarding grant application submission deadlines.

Recommendations made by the ERAC will be presented to the SPAG Board of Directors at the next Board meeting following the scoring and prioritization meeting. The recommendations made by the ERAC will be presented to the Board by SPAG staff with the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson in attendance.

Upon action by the Board of Directors, the recommendation and scoring becomes final with no appeal process.

SPAG shall notify committee members and applicants of grant priorities in writing within ten (10) calendar days of Board approval of the recommendations, or any ranking changes made by the Board of Directors.

## **9. DUPLICATION OF FUNDING**

While applicants may submit multiple grant applications for the same project to several sources, applicants are expected to immediately notify SPAG upon receipt of any funds received for grant projects submitted through the regional grant allocation process. Should an applicant fail to report the receipt of additional funding for any project submitted through the regional grant allocation process, the applicant may become ineligible to apply for future regional grants.

Violations of this section will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and a recommendation shall be made to the Board of Directors by the committee upon a simple majority vote on the eligibility of the applicant for future regional grants.

## **10. PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICATIONS & MEETING ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

All applicants applying for funds are required to send a representative to attend the ERAC application scoring

meeting to make a presentation. The presentations should not exceed ten (10) minutes, with additional time allotted for ERAC to address questions. SPAG staff will assign a random number to determine the order of presentations.

Presentations are required to contain the following information:

- What need the project is seeking to meet;
- What items, services, or goods the project is seeking to acquire and the cost;
- What disciplines will benefit;
- What jurisdictions will be served;
- What is the ongoing maintenance plan and budget allocated for the project;
- What is the expected life span of these items or services;
- Why the jurisdiction cannot cover this project through normal budgets;
- How does this project enhance regional resiliency; and
- How does this build or sustain current capability of the agency;
- Has additional or alternative funding been applied for elsewhere to fund this project.

If an applicant does not attend to make a presentation and has not provided the above information prior to the prioritization meeting, they will be disqualified for funding; however, ERAC will evaluate extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The applicant will be required to provide additional documentation as required by the committee Chairperson.

After each presentation is made, each ERAC member scores the regional grant application. There are two scoring sheets provided for the applications that are funded in the following categories: Homeland Security(HS) and Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA). Each committee member will rank each regional grant application criteria on a scale of 1-5 with the following scale:

1. Strongly Disagree – 0% of points
2. Disagree – 25% of points
3. Neither Disagree nor Agree – 50% of points
4. Agree – 75% of points
5. Strongly Agree – 100% of points

The regional grant application criteria are a series of questions broken into three categories and are assigned a maximum number of points. These points when totaled equal 100 points. No grant application may be scored less than zero (0) points or more than one hundred (100) points.

Once each scoring member has submitted scores for the regional grant application, all of the scores are totaled and divided by the number of committee members scoring.

No members who declared a conflict of interest on the regional grant application will score that regional grant application and will mark "ABSTAIN" for the regional grant application. This does not count for or against the regional grant application and will not be counted in the number of committee members scoring.

All score calculations shall be conducted in an open and public area, preferably in the presence of the committee.

Upon conclusion of all calculations, SPAG staff will present the committee with the order of ranking. The committee will have an opportunity to recalculate scores to validate the accuracy of the ranking order. Once the ranking has been validated, the committee will consider finalizing a recommendation to the Board of Directors for the prioritization and order of the regional grant applications.

The Chairperson will sign and validate the recommendation prior to the conclusion of the meeting. The recommendation will be presented at the next meeting of the SPAG Board of Directors for their consideration and approval.

If more than one application scores in a tie with another application, the tie will be broken by using the higher score of the following criteria:

1. The number of jurisdictions affected;
2. The number of core capabilities the project seeks to meet;
3. How the project increases regional resiliency.

If a project is not approved at the state level, funding may be awarded to the next program in the order of ranking recommended by the committee. If there are no other applications, the committee may authorize SPAG to prepare a SPAG Managed Grant as indicated above for equipment or the process may be re-opened for new applications.

If the amount requested by an applicant exceeds the amount allocated to SPAG, the committee makes a recommendation to the Board of Directors that the project receive partial funding over more than one funding cycle to complete the project.

The committee may also recommend partially funding a regional grant application in the recommendation to the Board of Directors. Any partial funding for projects shall be documented for the Board of Directors review, using the SPAG Scoring Ranking Sheet (see attached). The scoring sheets are collected and SPAG staff calculates the scores.

## 11. SPAG PLANNING GRANT

The SPAG Planning Grant provides essential functions to the SPAG region and is reviewed and scored by the SPAG Board of Directors. SPAG staff presents the SPAG Planning Grant to the committee during the scoring and prioritization meeting annually and will present the grant with the above information.

This regional grant application has historically been documented and proposed to serve and provide critical homeland security and emergency management support to rural jurisdictions throughout the region with limited emergency management personnel. SPAG staff are responsible for ensuring that rural jurisdictions are provided with adequate support as described in the grant application. Any deficiencies, capability gaps, and unmet needs that are not provided as described in the SPAG Planning Grant application may be reported by any committee member to SPAG leadership.

A committee member may request that the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson add an agenda item to discuss capability gaps or unmet needs not provided as described in the SPAG Planning Grant application on the next committee meeting.

## 12. ONGOING OVERSIGHT & REPORTING FOR FUNDED PROJECTS

All grantees must agree to the following SPAG terms and conditions prior to accepting any grant award from the Office of the Governor. This ensures that regional priorities and regional resources are maintained. Failure to abide by any of these terms and conditions may result in ineligibility for future regional grant applications.

- Required Application Resolutions
- SPAG Annual Report
- Disposition of Assets Agreement
- Redistribution of Assets Agreement
- Required Application Resolutions: Each application must submit the required OOG resolution (sample included at SPAG Application Workshop and available on eGrants website) as well as a Resolution from the sponsoring entity (City or County) pledging the ongoing maintenance and support of the funded project, use outside of the jurisdiction (as a regional asset), and an agreement to redistribute the asset in the SPAG region if the entity no longer wishes to support ongoing maintenance and operations.
- SPAG Annual Report: On an Annual Basis, SPAG will require all grantees to complete and submit an Annual Report regarding the use, maintenance, and operation of the grant-funded project. This report will be provided to the grantee by SPAG and include a deadline for submission. On an annual basis, the ERAC will review the reports of all funded projects in the SPAG region. Failure to submit timely reports to SPAG may result in the redistribution of assets in the region.
- Disposition of Assets Agreement: The lifespan for each project will be determined at the time of funding and the grantee must agree to report on the disposition or reassignment of those assets during the lifespan to SPAG.
- Redistribution of Assets Agreement: The grantee must agree to redistribute the project assets within the SPAG region if the original sponsoring entity no longer wishes to maintain or keep the original project assets. This project will be handled by notifying SPAG who will bring the matter to the ERAC to make

recommendations to the SPAG Board of Directors for redistribution.

### 13. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

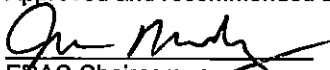
Committee members should maintain objectivity and professionalism when carrying out business of the ERAC. Committee members are expected to place the regional homeland security and emergency needs and priorities above jurisdictional benefits when carrying out business of the ERAC. No committee member shall act in a manner to promote or elevate their jurisdiction or agency above the region or at the expense of another jurisdiction or agency.

In the event a ERAC member acts in a manner which brings the work of the ERAC into question or controversy, it shall be the responsibility of the SPAG Executive Director to address the incident with the President of the SPAG Board of Directors.

If an ERAC member reports a violation of this section or the committee policies and procedures to the Committee Chairperson or Vice Chairperson in writing; the Committee Chairperson or Vice Chairperson shall immediately notify the SPAG Executive Director.

If a committee member is removed from the committee as a result of a violation under this section or a violation of the committee policies and procedures; the committee member shall be ineligible for re-appointment to the committee.

Approved and recommended by the ERAC to the SPAG Board of Directors for consideration and adoption on 11-5-2025

  
ERAC Chairperson

Approved and adopted by the SPAG Board of Directors on \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed by:  
  
SPAG Board President

  
SPAG Executive Director