

S.349

An act relating to emergency funding for local government

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. COVID-19 EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT; LOCAL

GOVERNMENT

(a) In fiscal year 2020, \$16,000,000.00 shall be appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Agency of Administration for the purpose of issuing grants to units of local government to reimburse eligible COVID-19 expenses incurred on or before December 30, 2020, including hazard pay, supplies and equipment, sanitation, facility alterations, overtime compensation, redirection of staff for first-response needs, and any other eligible COVID-19 expenses not covered by other funding sources, including funding provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, COVID-19 expenses shall be consistent with the uses authorized in section 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Pub. L. No.116–136 (the CARES Act), as may be amended, and any guidance or regulations issued pursuant to that section.

(b) The Secretary of Administration or designee shall develop grant guidelines for determining eligibility of COVID-19 expenses and requirements for reimbursement for units of local government.

(c) From the amount appropriated to the Agency of Administration under this section, the Secretary or designee shall allocate:

(1) \$14,850,000.00 to Vermont cities and towns in grants for reimbursement of eligible COVID-19 expenses, including those incurred by incorporated villages, fire districts, consolidated water districts created under 24 V.S.A. chapter 91, and consolidated sewer districts created under 24 V.S.A. chapter 105 therein. Grants allocated under this subdivision shall not exceed \$25.00 per person as determined from the 2019 town census data published by the U.S. Census Bureau, provided that any recipient under this subdivision with expenses that exceed \$25.00 per person and \$25,000.00 in total shall receive a minimum payment of \$25,000.00.

(2) \$1,000,000.00 to counties, unorganized towns or gores, and any of the unified towns and gores of Essex County in grants for reimbursement of eligible COVID-19 expenses. The Secretary or designee may determine any limitations to the amount of the grants allocated under this subdivision.

(3) An amount not to exceed \$150,000.00 may be used to contract with one or more regional planning commissions for technical assistance to be provided to units of local government in identifying and documenting eligible COVID-19 expenses. Notwithstanding any other contrary provision of law, the contract may be a sole source contract.

(4) In the event that applications for reimbursements exceed the amounts allocated, grants may be prorated.

(d) On or before September 15, 2020, the Secretary of Administration shall report to the Joint Fiscal Committee on program development and eligible COVID-19 expenses reimbursed pursuant to this section. The Secretary shall provide recommendations for any legislative action, including reallocation of funds for reimbursement of eligible local government COVID-19 expenses.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.