



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

2110 Broadway • Sacramento, California 95818 • 916/733-0277 • Fax 916/733-0295

FINANCE

Date: October 25, 2021

To: Pastors, Parochial Administrators, Parish Stewards, Parish Finance Council Members, and Principals

From: Glen Faulkner, Security Coordinator

RE: 2021 California State Non-profit Security Grant Program

As many of you know in March 2021, FEMA announced the funding opportunity for the Federal Non-profit Security Grant Program. This program provided funding for non-profit entities to improve security through target hardening methods such as installing fencing or alarms.

While security improvements achieved through this program would benefit a parish or school, the government placed conditions on organizations accepting these funds that required religious organizations, including the Catholic Church, to waive long-established exemptions and freedoms. These conditions, described in the “standard assurances” presented to successful applicants only upon being awarded the grant, presented barriers preventing our parishes and schools from accepting this grant.

Diocesan legal counsel, in coordination with the California Catholic Conference of Bishops, requested that Cal OES, the state administrative agency for the federal grant, make slight adjustments to the standards assurances that would allow Catholic parishes and schools to participate in this grant. Cal OES received the request but, to date, has not responded to it.

On October 15, 2021, Cal OES announced the request for proposal for the 2021 State Non-profit Security Grant Program. This grant, which has traditionally been offered earlier in the year, offers \$50 million to non-profit organizations. These California grants are up to \$200,000 for target hardening efforts, similar to the Federal program. The period to respond to this grant is very short; applications must be submitted by November 19, 2021.

As with the Federal grant program, that standard assurances for this year’s grant will not be available for review until AFTER the grant has been awarded. Analysis of the standard assurances used in the last State non-profit security grant program showed similar language as that used in the Federal grant that requires recipients to waive religious exemptions and freedoms in order to accept the grant.

Diocesan legal counsel has again contacted Cal OES and requested that their legal affairs officials review and respond to the earlier request concerning changes to the standard assurances. An official with Cal OES’s legal affairs office has only this week communicated with

our counsel and agreed to review the request. We do not have a timeline for when this review will be completed.

As with the Federal Non-profit Security Grant, parishes that choose to apply for the State Non-profit Security Grant so as not to miss the November 19th application deadline, must be aware that if Cal OES does not make the small changes we have requested in the standard assurances, our Catholic parishes and schools would not be able to accept the grant as awarded.

Again, we regret this position that we are faced with. We will advise you of the outcome of our communication with Cal OES. If you have any questions regarding this memo, please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-733-0125 (gfaulkner@scd.org).