



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Fire and Aviation

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Instruction Memorandum, No. FA IM-2023-015
Expires: 09/30/2025

To: State and Center Directors

From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: Updated Bureau of Land Management Guidance to the U.S. Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Program Policy Memorandum 2021-004, Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

Program Area: Fire Management

Purpose: This instruction memorandum updates eligibility requirements for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) employees adding a missing requirement from the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Wildland Fire Program Policy and payment procedures for the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend.

Administrative or Mission Related: Administrative

Policy/Action: The DOI Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) has authorized an annual boot stipend of \$167.00. Payment of the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend, a taxable benefit, is authorized for permanent full-time, career-seasonal, and temporary employees who:

- Hold a current incident qualification card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous, **and**
- Encumber a position that has been approved for special (firefighter) retirement, **and**
- As a condition of employment, are required to purchase boots that satisfy the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Wildland Fire Boot Standard, **and**

- While primarily employed in one of the following categories:
 - Fire operations supervisor/station manager
 - Fire engine crew (including engine captain, engine operator, and engine crewmember)
 - Fire water tender crew (including fire water tender operator, and fire water tender crewmember)
 - Fire heavy equipment operator (including fire heavy equipment operator, fire bulldozer/tractor plow operator, and firefighters/crewmembers assigned as primary support staff)
 - Helitack crew (including helicopter crew supervisor, assistant, squad leader, and helicopter crewmember)
 - Hand crew (including crew supervisor, assistant, squad leader and crewmembers of type 1 interagency hotshot crews and type 2 crews)
 - Smokejumper
 - Alaska Fire Specialist (Alaska FSS)
 - Fuels technician/specialist responsible for implementing prescribed fires (stipends for these positions will be paid with Hazardous Fuels funds)

Procedures for payment of the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend information are located on BLM Fire and Aviation's budget web page at:

https://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/budget/Reference_docs/links/Boots.html

There is no WBS requirement.

Personnel hired under the Administratively Determined (AD) authority that hold a current incident qualification card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous are also eligible for the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend. AD employees will receive the stipend at time of payment following their first fire assignment in an IQCS position requiring a moderate or arduous fitness rating (as per the PMS310-1 or agency requirements) in each calendar year. The Casual Payment Center will monitor these employees and ensure that when the criteria has been met the AD will receive their boot stipend.

To allow for training attendance and fire assignments as required, employees and supervisors will ensure that wildland fire boots are procured prior to reporting for duty and maintained in a safe and serviceable condition.

Timeframe: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: Continued payment of \$167.00 for every qualified employee each year.

Background: The NWCG Wildland Fire Boot standard has been adopted by the BLM as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. NWCG has also concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature and can be used by employees off the job site. In June 2021, DOI issued [DOI Wildland Fire Program Policy Memorandum 2021-004](#), Wildland Fire Boot Stipend authorizing payment of the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: *BLM Standards for Fire Business Management, Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.*

Coordination: This instruction memorandum has been previously coordinated with the BLM Fire Leadership Team and the BLM Fire Operations Group.

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