
STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE



INDIANA GOVERNMENT CENTER NORTH
100 NORTH SENATE AVENUE N1058(B)
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204
PHONE (317) 232-3777
FAX (317) 974-1629

TO: All Fire Protection Territories

FROM: Courtney L. Schaafsma, Commissioner

RE: Data Gathering for Fire Protection Territories

DATE: October 11, 2016

On May 6, 2015, Governor Pence signed into law Senate Enrolled Act 436-2015 (“SEA 436”), which introduces a requirement for the Department of Local Government Finance (“Department”) to gather information about fire protection territories established prior to July 2, 2012.

Specifically, section 34 introduces IC 36-8-19-16, which requires the Department to review, in consultation with the applicable participating units, the tax rates and levies for each fire protection territory whose establishment was effective not later than July 1, 2012. The Department must complete its review before October 1, 2017.

The Department must make recommendations to the participating units concerning their existing tax rates and tax levies. In conducting its review, the Department must consider the following factors and discuss the factors with each participating unit in the territory:

- (1) The population and change in population of each unit in the territory.
- (2) The assessed valuation and change of assessed valuation of real property in each unit in the territory.
- (3) The cost of providing fire service to each unit in the territory.
- (4) Comparisons to other jurisdictions providing similar fire service.
- (5) Previous tax rates and levies for fire protection.
- (6) Future needs and planned or expected expenses for fire service.
- (7) Other factors as determined by the Department.

Participating units must provide the Department with any information or documentation requested by the Department. The Department emphasizes that it will **not** be making any adjustments to budgets, rates, or levies as a part of this process.

The Department may conduct public hearings to complete this data gathering. The Department must then report its findings and recommendations to the legislative council before October 1, 2017.

The Department is asking that each fire protection territory complete the survey at the weblink below by December 31, 2016. The questions on the first page are mandatory, but the questions on the second page are optional for fire territories established after July 1, 2012. Please note that you cannot save entries and then return to the survey later. Thus, copied below are the questions that appear in the survey so that you can prepare your responses before accessing the survey, if you prefer. Please submit your responses only through the survey, however.

The fiscal officer for the provider unit is encouraged to be the person who completes the survey. The Department understands that the survey will require time to complete, hence the December 31 date (to be clear, there is no penalty for missing this date). The Department appreciates your help. This information will be valuable to the Department and the Indiana General Assembly.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdLJSjq_HhYoexByPuh1KDI4wstwi - z7DIKo47ESBPLcvnOQ/viewform

Contact Information

Questions may be directed to General Counsel Mike Duffy at (317) 233-9219 or mduffy@dlgf.in.gov.

Survey Questions

- What is the name of your fire territory?
- In which county or counties does your fire territory lie?
- Identify the provider unit.
- Identify the first participating unit. Please list only one unit.
- Identify the second participating unit, if any.
- Identify the third participating unit, if any.
- What was the effective year of the establishment of your fire territory? Each establishment is effective July 1 of a given year.
- State the population of the provider unit for the last five years, beginning in 2012. An example response might be 2012: 10,000. 2013: 10,100. 2014: 10,150. 2015: 10,250. 2016: 10,300.
- State the population of the first participating unit for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- State the population of the second participating unit, if any, for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- State the population of the third participating unit, if any, for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- State the cost of providing fire services to the provider unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012. Be sure to include costs associated with the operating fund, equipment replacement fund, and any debt. An example response might be 2012: \$50,000. 2013: \$60,000. 2014: \$45,000. 2015: \$50,000. 2016: \$55,000.
- State the cost of providing fire services to the first participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012. Be sure to include costs associated with the operating fund, equipment replacement fund, and any debt.

- State the cost of providing fire services to the second participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012. Be sure to include costs associated with the operating fund, equipment replacement fund, and any debt.
- State the cost of providing fire services to the third participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012. Be sure to include costs associated with the operating fund, equipment replacement fund, and any debt.
- Are there other territories to which you would compare yours in terms of size, population, cost, and tax rate? If so, please identify them here.
- If there was a percentage increase in a unit's fire budget, rate, or levy of more than 5% followings its entry into the territory, please state the reason for the increase.
- Describe future needs and planned or expected expenses for fire service.
- List the number of service runs to the provider unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012. An example response might be 2012: 100. 2013: 120. 2014: 100. 2015: 90. 2016: 110.
- List the number of service runs to the first participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- List the number of service runs to the second participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- List the number of service runs to the third participating unit in the territory for the last five years, beginning in 2012.
- Is your territory primarily urban or rural?
- What is the size of your territory in terms of square miles? What percentage of the square mileage is rural or unincorporated?
- Does either the rural/unincorporated or urban area of your territory bear a heavier share of the tax liability for your territory? If yes, please describe how.
- Describe the size and composition of the fire department(s) serving your territory. For instance, are they volunteer or full-time? Does your territory contract with any service providers? Please provide any other relevant information.
- Describe the extent to which fire or emergency services or features have grown, expanded, or improved since the inception of your territory.
- If you were unable to answer any questions above, please use this space to provide information that you think would be useful.