



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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MEMO

Date: March 15, 2021
To: Pastors, Parochial Administrators, Parish Stewards, and Parish Finance Council Members
From: Thomas J. McNamara, Chief Financial Officer
RE: **2021 Non-Profit Security Grant Program (NPSG)**

The purpose of this memo is to update you with regard to issues that are preventing our Catholic parishes and schools from accessing Federal Non-Profit Security Grant funding.

As many of you may know, FEMA recently released the notice of funding opportunity for the 2021 Federal Non-Profit Security Grant Program (NPSG). This year's total funding has doubled to \$180 million and allows for individual grants up to \$150,000 each.

These grants are made available to non-profit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack, including specifically churches and religious schools. The grants are intended to provide funding for "target hardening" and other physical security enhancements and activities. Grant applicants must first have prepared a formal Vulnerability Assessment for their site. Glen Faulkner, Parish Security Resource Person, has been approved to prepare these reports and is working through a list of parishes and schools that have requested the on-site inspection and formal report.

Clearly this is an important funding opportunity for our parishes and schools to enhance safety and security at our parishes. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of the grant program, conditions placed upon grant recipients by both the Federal government and the California Office of Emergency Services, requires religious organizations to waive certain well established religious exemptions and freedoms long enjoyed by the Church. Unfortunately, this has been and continues to be a barrier preventing our parishes and schools from accessing these grants.

Diocesan legal counsel, in coordination with the California Catholic Conference of Bishops, have requested that Cal OES make slight modifications to the grant language that would allow Catholic parishes and schools to participate in this year's NPSG. We are awaiting a response from CAL OES.

At the current time, parishes and schools may choose to apply for a grant under the NSGP. However, applicants must be aware that if CAL OES refuses to make the small changes in the grant conditions language that we have requested, our Catholic parishes and schools would not be able to accept the grant if awarded.

We regret that this is the position that has been thrust upon us. We will keep you informed as the discussions with CAL OES continue. If you have any questions regarding the above information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Glen Faulkner, Parish Security Resource Person, gfaulkner@scd.org.