



# United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Branch of Fire Management

National Interagency Fire Center

3833 South Development Avenue

Boise, Idaho 83705



Refer to: BFM2024023

**March 21, 2024**

## Memorandum

To: Regional Fire Management Coordinators, Regions 1-8

From: Chief, Branch of Fire Management

Subject: Guidance for the Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

This memorandum provides eligibility requirements and payment procedures for the wildland fire boot stipend and supersedes the Branch of Fire Management memorandum BFM2020010 dated January 12, 2023. This memorandum will remain valid until modified or rescinded.

The [DOI Wildland Fire Program Policy Memorandum 2021-004, Department of the Interior Fire Boot Stipend Amendment 7.1.2021](#) authorizes payment of a one-hundred and sixty-seven dollars (\$167) stipend per calendar year for employees holding a valid incident qualification card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous, and who, as a condition of employment, are required to purchase boots. Validity of the incident qualification card is determined by the fitness expiration date on the card. This authorization includes permanent full-time, term, career conditional, pathways, temporary, collateral duty, and casual employees hired using the administratively determined hiring authority. Protective footwear is considered non-specialized personal protective equipment, is personal in nature, and can be used by employees off the job site. Therefore, appropriate boots are a condition of employment for firefighting positions, and boots must be purchased by the employee prior to employment. Government purchase cards are not to be used to purchase boots.

Zone Fire Management Officers are responsible for determining stipend eligibility, offering the stipend to all eligible employees, and tracking who receives the boot stipend each calendar year. The boot stipend payment is considered a taxable fringe benefit and shall be processed in accordance with FWS Boot Stipend Payment Procedures. These procedures, forms and supporting information are located on the [Branch of Fire Management Incident Business SharePoint](#).

For Administratively Determined (AD) hires, the Casual Payment Center (CPC) automatically pays the boot stipend to eligible AD personnel on their first qualifying incident. Hiring units are responsible for tracking payments to ensure there are no duplicate payments made to individuals.

The Wildland Fire Boot Standard is described in the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire and Aviation Operations](#) (Red Book), Chapter 7.

Questions regarding this program should be directed to Brian Gales, Acting National Wildland Fire Safety Program Manager at 503-778-0372 or Robyn Post, Administrative Officer, Branch of Fire Management at 208-387-5736.

cc:

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