State of Vermont
Agency of Administration
Office of the Secretary
Pavilion Office Building
109 State Street, 5th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05609-0201
www.aoa.vermont.gov

[phone] 802-828-3322
[fax]   802-828-3320

Susanne R. Young, Secretary

TO:	**The Joint Fiscal Committee**
FROM:	**Susan Zeller, Agency of Administration, Chief Performance Officer**
CC:	**Susanne Young, John Quinn, Joe Flynn, Mike Smith, Kristin L. Clouser**
DATE:	**August 18, 2020**
RE:	**CRF Request**

Total Amount Requested: $185,000. The Agency of Administration (AOA) is seeking Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) grant money to purchase Virtual Classroom Software to be used by State of Vermont instructors to conduct remote training. The State does not currently have a tool that meets its virtual training needs. The primary training attendees are State employees, however, future expansion could be made available to partners, including Municipalities, Contractors and Vendors, Human Services Providers and Emergency Management Personnel. The total cost includes one-year software licenses, costs to connect the software to the State's existing learning management software and project management costs.

Response to the Pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic and the State's response has limited the State's ability to deliver in-person training. Since the beginning of the pandemic, instructors have been working to transition in-person training to online training where possible, and the implementation of a Statewide Virtual Classroom would provide additional functionality needed to engage the participant, boost learning outcomes, and create more virtual accountability while employees continue to work remotely through at least December 31st. The State also expects increased efficiencies since online learning takes 40% - 60% less time to complete compared to traditional learning while increasing information retention by 25% - 60% (Chernev, 2020) and decreasing travel expenses. Necessary software features include whiteboards for virtual classroom brainstorming, break out rooms to boost collaboration in smaller groups, polling to gather immediate feedback and create participation accountability, built in quizzes, and use of other learning materials such as videos.

Urgency of Request: The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many important trainings for state employees and partners to be cancelled and/or postponed. Software that enables more robust instructor-led remote learning will permit more training to be delivered virtually. The earlier the software can be purchased, the sooner instructors will be able to transition more instructor-led training to online instruction, decreasing the need for in-person contact thus reducing the risk of employees and partners contracting COVID-19 while allowing training to occur.