Webinar: Public Assistance Guidance for COVID-19

FEMA Public Assistance | May 1, 2020
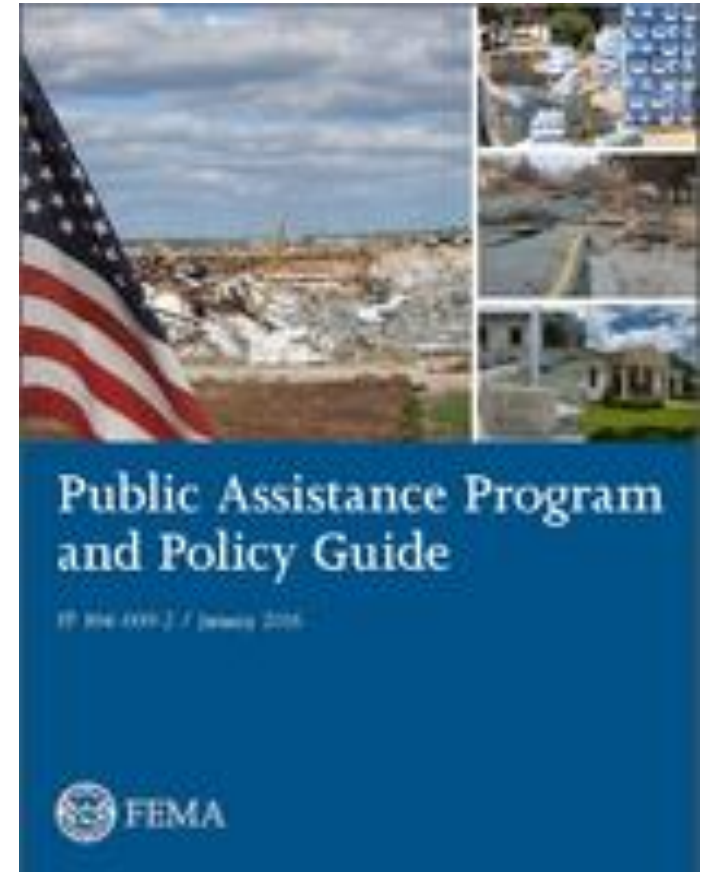
FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19

- FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides funding to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profits for the costs necessary to respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies declared by the President.

- All states, tribes, territories, and the District of Columbia were included in the emergency declaration on March 13, 2020 for the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

- All states, tribes, territories and the District of Columbia now also have or are covered by major disaster declarations for COVID-19.

Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide

FP 104-009-2 / January 2016

FEMA

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19

The declarations for the COVID-19 authorize FEMA to provide assistance for emergency measures necessary as a result of the pandemic

- Public Assistance Program "Category B" for emergency protective measures.

- This authorizes funding for actions to address immediate threats resulting directly from the disaster that are necessary in order to protect public health and safety.

- For COVID-19, these actions should be taken at the direction or guidance of public health officials.

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19

The types of emergency protective measures that FEMA may provide funding for include the following (if not funded by HHS or another Federal agency):

- Emergency Operations Centers
- PPE
- Emergency medical care
  - Treatment of COVID-19 patients
  - Temporary facilities
  - Testing
- Sheltering when necessary to address public health and safety needs
- Purchase and distribution of commodities such as food when necessary to address public health and safety
- Security and law enforcement
- Communication of health and safety information to the public.

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19

Grant requirements for Public Assistance:

- <u>Legal responsibility</u>: Applicants must have the legal responsibility for the work

- <u>Documentation</u>: Applicants need to provide documentation necessary to support the costs they are claiming

- <u>Federal Acquisition Regulations</u>: Federal procurement regulations are mandatory for Federal grant programs (e.g. Public Assistance).

- <u>Duplication of benefits</u>: FEMA Public Assistance prohibits duplication of benefits for other sources, such as other Federal grant programs and insurance

- <u>Environmental and Historic Preservation Requirements</u>

- <u>Equal access and delivery of services to people with disabilities</u>

- <u>Cost Share</u>: FEMA Public Assistance funding is cost-shared (currently 75% Federal/25% non-Federal)

FEMA Public Assistance: Application Process

- The FEMA Public Assistance Program is administered through State, Tribal and Territorial governments

  - State, Territorial and Tribal governments serve as the Recipient of FEMA grant funding

  - The Recipient then disburses funding to local governments as sub-recipients

  - Applicants such as County Governments apply for and receive PA funding through the respective Recipient

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19 Streamlined Application Process

For COVID-19, FEMA has streamlined the process for applying for Public Assistance

- FEMA uses an online information technology tool called the PA Grants Portal (https://grantee.fema.gov/)

- County Governments can set up accounts directly in Grants Portal

- The first step in the process is submitting a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) to the State and FEMA through Grants Portal

- FEMA has also set up a Direct Application process in Grants Portal for COVID-19 project funding

- FEMA's Quick Guides and How-To Videos provide step-by-step instructions and can be found in the Grants Portal

  - For technical assistance with Grants Portal, Applicants can call the Grants Portal Hotline at 1-866-337-8448 (questions on PA eligibility should be directed to State and Regional contacts).

FEMA Public Assistance: For More Information

- Questions?
  - Recipients should contact their FEMA [Regional Office](#) at fema.gov/fema-regional-contacts
  - Applicants should contact their [State Emergency Management Agency](#) also located at fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies
  - https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19 Specific Issues

- FEMA has issued Public Assistance guidance specifically for the COVID-19 incident. All guidance can be found here:

  - https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/fact-sheets

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19 Specific Issues

- NACo questions regarding COVID-19 specific issues include:

  - PPE – purchase of PPE may be eligible when necessary to protect the public and employees from the health and safety threats from COVID-19

  - Emergency feeding – may be eligible when necessary to meet the immediate needs of those who do not have access to food as a result of COVID-19 and to protect the public from the spread of the virus, including high-risk populations subject to stay at home orders

  - Sheltering/Homeless – immediate, short-term non-congregate sheltering in COVID-19 may be eligible in certain circumstances for high-risk individuals when necessary to protect public and safety, and may include homeless individuals

  - Expanding facilities for social distancing – generally not eligible for PA, except for addition of hospital capacity to treat COVID-19 patients; other funding may be available

  - Elections – the cost of administering elections is generally not eligible, although some costs such as PPE may be eligible.

FEMA Public Assistance: COVID-19 Specific Issues

- Duplication of Benefits -- FEMA cannot duplicate funding provided by another Federal agency

- Significant funding has been provided through supplemental funding, including the CARES Act

- Some of the forms of this funding and the cost shares are different.

- Examples of other supplemental and CARES Act funding includes:

  - Coronavirus Relief Fund (Department of Treasury) - $150B to State, local and tribal governments for COVID-19 costs
  - Medical Care – HHS through ASPR, CDC and CMS - over $100B for medical care funding
  - Block Grants – HUD funding for CDBG
  - Food – USDA funding for nutrition support

- FEMA is coordinating with the other Federal agencies to coordinate benefits and provide information for State and local governments to make decisions on the best use of funding to meet their needs.

FEMA Public Assistance

Questions