



FEMA

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Fact Sheet

NATIONAL DISASTER HOUSING STRATEGY

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) called for a *National Disaster Housing Strategy* and provided FEMA with the opportunity to describe how the Nation provides housing to those affected by disasters. More importantly, it charts a new direction to better meet the needs of disaster victims and communities. The *Strategy* reflects the combined efforts of FEMA and many partner agencies, and incorporates feedback from organizations and the public that have a role in disaster housing, whether it's at the tribal, state or local level, or with our private sector partners or with individuals.

OVERVIEW

The *Strategy* provides the overarching vision, goals, and principles for a national disaster housing effort. It complements the 2008 Disaster Housing Plan, which describes the specific actions that FEMA will take this year to support State and local officials in meeting the housing needs for disaster victims. The *Strategy* is intended to bring together all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to meet the urgent housing needs of disaster victims and enable individuals, households and communities to rebuild following a disaster.

DISASTER HOUSING PRACTICES

The *Strategy* draws on best practices and lessons learned to identify actions that must be taken to improve disaster housing assistance, an effort that involves renewing our focus on planning, building baseline capabilities, and providing a broader range of disaster housing options. It describes key principles, responsibilities and roles, current practices in sheltering, interim housing, and permanent housing. The *Strategy* is based on a fundamental understanding that disaster housing is more than simply providing a structure and must address the complex needs of disaster victims. Disaster housing efforts must address human needs and connect to a broad range of community-based services.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The *Strategy* also discusses future directions for how the nation can work together to achieve national disaster housing goals. This includes reviewing best practices and innovations to establish baseline capabilities and core competencies, validate roles and responsibilities, and improve the range, quality, and timeliness of disaster housing services provided by communities, states, and the

federal government. For example, the *Strategy* calls for innovative approaches to meet diverse needs of disaster victims and reduce shelter demands by improving resilience and accelerating repairs. It also calls for a broader range of interim housing options to meet diverse needs.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The *Strategy* calls for a National Disaster Housing Joint Task Force, which will be led by FEMA and engage stakeholders through FEMA's National Advisory Committee. The Task Force will focus full time attention on disaster housing, developing operational plans, building disaster housing capabilities, and achieving the vision and goals of the Strategy.

STAKEHOLDER REVIEW AND COMMENT

FEMA received nearly 500 comments from individuals, industry representatives, associations, and state and local government representatives during the public comment period. The final *Strategy* incorporates most of these comments, as well as the input of numerous agencies and organizations at the federal, state, local levels. It includes seven annexes that summarize current disaster housing efforts and programs and provide the foundation to review, analyze, and improve disaster housing.

ANNEXES

The Strategy also includes the following annexes that address specific requirements in PKEMRA:

- 1. *Overview of Disaster Housing Programs for Federal, State, Tribal, and Local Government and Nongovernmental Organizations.*** Outlines the most efficient and cost effective programs that will best meet the short-term and long-term housing needs of individuals and households affected by a major disaster.
- 2. *Methods to House Disaster Victims Where Employment and the Resources They Need for Living Are Available.*** Describes an operating framework and methods to provide an appropriate level of assistance to disaster victims, incorporating governmental, non-governmental, and private sectors.
- 3. *Summary of Programs for Special Needs and Low-Income Populations, Including Provision of Housing Units for Individuals with Disabilities and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program.*** Formally addresses programs and topics that are particularly important for the well-being of and facilitate the identification of housing programs directed to meet the needs of individuals with special needs, disabilities, and/or low incomes following a presidentially declared disaster.
- 4. *Disaster Housing Group Site Operations.*** Summarizes the framework for federal, state, territory, tribal, and local governments to plan for community site operations, including determining the need for community sites and identifying potential sites, as well as constructing, populating, maintaining, depopulating, and deactivating these sites.
- 5. *Programs to Promote the Repair or Rehabilitation of Existing Rental Housing.*** Provides planners with information regarding programs that have been or will be established to promote the repair or rehabilitation of existing rental housing in the wake of a disaster.
- 6. *Additional Authorities Necessary to Carry Out the Strategy.*** Explains the process by which FEMA and HUD will request new authorities they will need to achieve the Strategy's goals.

7. ***Summary of Guidance on Disaster Housing Assistance Available under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, including Eligibility Criteria and Application Procedures.*** Provides planners at all levels (local, state, tribal, and federal) with a clear overview of housing programs under the Stafford Act.

SUMMARY

While the National Disaster Housing Strategy represents the culmination of several years of effort, it also represents an important first step in managing disaster housing in the Post-Hurricane Katrina era. The document describes a baseline of where we are now in housing those forced from their homes by disasters, and, more importantly, it sets expectations for where we need to go in disaster housing and maps the pathway to get there.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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