



FEMA

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Fact Sheet

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Public Assistance, oriented to public entities, can fund the repair, restoration, reconstruction, or replacement of a public facility or infrastructure, which is damaged or destroyed by a disaster.

Eligible Applicants: Eligible applicants include State governments, local governments and any other political subdivision of the State, Native American tribes and Alaska Native Villages. Certain private nonprofit (PNP) organizations may also receive assistance. Eligible PNPs include educational, utility, irrigation, emergency, medical, rehabilitation, and temporary or permanent custodial care facilities (including those for the aged and disabled), and other PNP facilities that provide essential services of a governmental nature to the general public. PNPs that provide “critical services” (power, water – including water provided by an irrigation organization or facility, sewer, wastewater treatment, communications and emergency medical care) may apply directly to FEMA for a disaster grant. All other PNPs must first apply to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for a disaster loan. If the PNP is declined for a SBA loan or the loan does not cover all eligible damages, the applicant may reapply for FEMA assistance.

Public Assistance Process: As soon as practicable after the declaration, the State, assisted by FEMA, conducts the Applicant Briefings for State, local and PNP officials to inform them of the assistance available and how to apply for it. A Request for Public Assistance must be filed with the State within 30 days after the area is designated eligible for assistance. Following the Applicant’s Briefing, a Kickoff Meeting is conducted where damages will be discussed, needs assessed, and a plan of action put in place. A combined Federal/State/local team proceeds with Project Formulation, which is the process of documenting the eligible facility, the eligible work, and the eligible cost for fixing the damages to every public or PNP facility identified by State or local representatives. The team prepares a Project Worksheet (PW) for each project.

Projects fall into the following categories:

- Category A: Debris removal
- Category B: Emergency protective measures
- Category C: Road systems and bridges
- Category D: Water control facilities
- Category E: Public buildings and contents
- Category F: Public utilities
- Category G: Parks, recreational, and other

(more)

Small Projects: Projects falling below a certain threshold are considered “small.” The threshold is adjusted annually for inflation. For fiscal year 2006, that threshold is \$57,500. For small projects, payment of the Federal share of the estimate is made upon approval of the project and notification is required upon completion of the project.

Large Projects: For large projects, payment is made on the basis of actual costs determined after the project is completed; although interim payments may be made as necessary. Once FEMA obligates funds to the State, further management of the assistance, including disbursement to subgrantees is the responsibility of the State. FEMA will continue to monitor the recovery progress to ensure the timely delivery of eligible assistance and compliance with the law and regulations.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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