

May 21, 2019

Fact Sheet

Nebraska Public Assistance

Governor Pete Ricketts stated on March 21, 2019 that *“Nebraskans have already been stepping up to begin the journey to recovering from the **most widespread natural disaster in our state’s history**. As we rebuild together, federal assistance is a key part of ensuring that we keep Nebraska strong and growing.”*

- In Nebraska, FEMA’s Public Assistance Program has been authorized for 76 counties and five tribal areas that sustained major damage in the March severe winter storm, straight-line winds and flooding. In addition to roads and bridges, critical infrastructure such as water and waste water treatment facilities were also damaged.
- One major task is to prioritize which buildings and equipment receive attention first. FEMA prioritizes infrastructure – the facilities such as utilities which are vital for the public’s health and safety to have operational.

Public Assistance Applications are due by June 20, 2019

FEMA relies on technical experts to conduct site inspections and write damage assessment reports. FEMA has received more than 400 Requests for Public Assistance (RPA). Each request is followed by a Recovery Scoping meeting with state and local officials who help ensure that the application is complete.

"We know this will be a long recovery," Ricketts said. "We will work as quickly as possible to get people back in their homes to provide relief. But when it comes to the major projects like our public infrastructure, roads, bridges, we're going to need the public's patience because it is going to take a while to get all of this recovered."

Public Assistance in Nebraska

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Public Assistance Unit works with FEMA to provide assistance in the wake of disaster. The Public Assistance Program is available to assist with reimbursement of repairs to damaged eligible facilities to include: roads, bridges, water control facilities, buildings, equipment, utilities, parks and recreational facilities. It is also available to assist with reimbursement of emergency functions such as debris removal and emergency protective actions.

This program is made available to eligible applicants in the designed damage area including:

local governments,
state government,
certain non-profit organizations,
schools, and
Native American tribal governments

The federal cost share for this program will not be less than 75 percent of eligible expenses for emergency measures and permanent restoration.

For comprehensive information on the Public Assistance Program, go online to the NEMA Website nema.nebraska.gov/recovery/public-assistance; where you find links to information and forms that describe the “who, what, where, when, why and how” for municipalities, governmental entities and certain nonprofit organizations that are eligible to participate in this program. Included are:

- **Public Assistance Program Forms/Information;**
- **FEMA Grants Portal Information** If you have not received an email for the Grants Portal, please call (402) 429-3389. The deadline to apply is June 20, 2019.
- **Important Documents/Handbooks/Policy;**
- **Useful Links; and**
- **Procurement/Contracting Information.**

PROCESS AND ROLES

The foundation of Public Assistance is a partnership between the FEMA, state and tribal emergency managers, and the applicants requiring disaster recovery assistance. These parties will work together to complete the processes necessary to apply for and receive Public Assistance, as outlined below:

Phase I – Operational Planning

Objective: Identify applicants’ disaster impacts and recovery priorities. The following general activities will occur after *Applicant Briefings* and approvals of applicants’ *Request for Public Assistance*.

- FEMA will assign a *Program Delivery Manager (PDMG)*—a primary point-of-contact assigned to each applicant—who will provide assistance to the applicant throughout the PA grant development process.
- The PDMG will conduct an *Exploratory Call* with assigned applicant representatives to obtain general information about the applicant and its disaster impacts, and to explain next steps.
 - Applicant representatives should be prepared to discuss impacts and provide the names of counterparts who may be involved in PA grant development.

- The applicant and PDMG will conduct a Recovery Scoping Meeting.
 - Additional applicant and FEMA representatives are expected to participate in order to have an in-depth discussion regarding the applicant's disaster damage.
 - The Recovery Scoping Meeting starts the 60-day regulatory timeframe for the applicant to identify incident-related damage.
 - The applicant and the PDMG should agree to weekly, one-on-one status meetings.

Phase II – Damage Intake and Eligibility Analysis

Objective: Capture and document all of the incident-related damages.

- Work that is already completed: PDMG works with the applicant to gather documentation and to ensure information is uploaded into the PA Grants Manager/Grants Portal.
 - The PDMG will forward projects to the *Consolidated Resource Center* for compliance, document, and quality assurance reviews.
 - The PDMG will coordinate with the applicant to resolve issues, gather additional information, and obtain project concurrence and signature.
- Work that is still to be completed: The PDMG will work with the applicant to schedule a site inspection.
 - A site inspection is an in-depth, in-person assessment of facility damage conducted by the applicant (or representative) and PA Site Inspector.
 - The PA Site Inspector captures dimensions and quantities shown by the applicant.
 - Applicants approve damage descriptions before further PA project development.
 - The PDMG will send projects to the CRC for further development.

Phase III – Scoping and Costing

Objective: Further develop PA grant projects for final processing.

- Projects are processed and reviewed by CRC specialists, in coordination with the PDMG.
 - The PDMG will coordinate with the applicant to resolve issues, gather additional information, and obtain project concurrence and signature.
 - Projects go through quality assurance and compliance reviews.

Phase IV – Obligation

Objective: Obligate projects.

- Quality assurance teams ensure the project signed by the applicant matches data in EMMIE, which is the official system of record for obligation.
 - The PDMG, PA field leadership, and recipient review the project
 - The applicant reviews and signs the final project.
 - FEMA awards the project.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS

FEMA's continued focus on strengthening people, processes, procedures and tools will expedite community recovery by bringing greater simplicity, accuracy, efficiency, accessibility, and timeliness to the PA program. The success of the Public Assistance Program depends on the strength of internal and external partnerships. A key aspect of the model is continuous improvement: the agency will monitor progress, receive feedback and make on-going adjustments and improvements to processes and tools.

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