

Hello

Over the weekend new streamlining functionality in Grants Portal for account creation and RPA submission went live.

All local governments throughout the entire country may now go to:

grantee.fema.gov

and begin the FEMA Public Assistance application process.

State, local, and territorial applicants can now create their own accounts and submit RPAs directly in Grants Portal without working through the State.

- *This functionality is not yet available for PNPs and tribes (that will come in future releases).*
- *This functionality is only available for COVID-19 (broader roll out will come in future releases).*

Attached is a Quick Guide to guide Applicants through account creation and RPA submission. This outlines all of the ways in which accounts can be created and RPAs can be submitted including existing and newly released functionality in Grants Portal. Please find attached:

- *Applicant Quick Guide: Grants Portal Account and Request for Public Assistance.* A step-by-step guide for potential Applicants on how to create an account and submit an RPA in Grants Portal.

FEMA has produced a YouTube video showing how Applicants can directly apply and submit an RPA in Grants Portal - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gTx-q52aSY>.

For help with Grants Portal, Applicants can call the FEMA Support Hotline at (866) 337-8448 or send an email to FEMA-Recovery-PA-Grants@fema.dhs.gov.

As a reminder, Grants Portal is a FEMA system and the functionality and reliability of the system are all dependent on FEMA.

There have been questions on who is eligible to apply for assistance under the FEMA Public Assistance program and Emergency Declaration EM-3454.

FEMA provides assistance to eligible Applicants, which include the following:

- State government – departments, agencies, boards, commissions, authorities, universities
- Federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments
- Local governments:
 - Counties
 - Municipalities, cities, villages, and townships
 - Local public authorities
 - School districts
 - Intrastate districts

- Councils of governments (regardless of whether incorporated as nonprofit corporations under State law)
- Regional and interstate government entities
- Agencies or instrumentalities of local governments
- State-recognized Tribes
- Special districts established under State law
 - Community Development Districts are special districts that finance, plan, establish, acquire, construct or reconstruct, operate, and maintain systems, facilities, and basic infrastructure within their respective jurisdictions. To be eligible, a Community Development District must be legally responsible for ownership, maintenance, and operation of an eligible facility that is accessible to the general public.
- A political subdivision of the State may submit applications on behalf of rural communities, unincorporated towns or villages, and other public entities not listed above.
- Private non-profit organizations – utility cooperatives, hospitals, schools, houses of worship
 - Only certain PNPs are eligible Applicants. To be an eligible PNP Applicant, the PNP must show that it has:
 - A current ruling letter from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service granting tax exemption under sections 501(c), (d), or (e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954; or
 - Documentation from the State substantiating it is a non-revenue producing, nonprofit entity organized or doing business under State law.
 - Facilities established or primarily used for political, athletic, recreational, vocational, or academic training, conferences, or similar activities are not eligible (see Table 3 in attachment).
 - In cases where the facility provides multiple services, such as a community center, FEMA reviews additional items to determine the primary service that facility provides and makes a determination.
 - See attached Private Non Profit Eligibility excerpt.

Attached is a list of all subrecipients that currently have an active account in the FEMA Grants Portal system. I apologize for not sending the link out earlier, but this is the link to the Grants Portal system: <https://grantee.fema.gov/>.

Applicants that already have an active account should have received an autogenerated email from the Grants Portal system. The email would have went to the jurisdictions primary point of contact and most likely came from support.pagrants@fema.gov. It may very well have went to their junk box.

For those not in the system, the following is a list of WEM Public Assistance staff that covers all counties and tribes in the state. Please reach out to them for assistance on registering in Grants Portal.

Adams, Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Juneau, Marquette, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Portage, Sauk, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago Counties:

Kobby Antwi
608-242-3227
Kwabena.antwi@wisconsin.gov

Questions can also be directed towards:
Eric Learn, State Public Assistance Officer
Phone: 608-242-3200
dmawempubliassistance@wisconsin.gov

FEMA has a Grants Portal training course for those that want a refresher or have never used the system before: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-1002>.

Please pass along this information to all possible applicants that would have eligible costs associated with the response to COVID-19.

See the attached Category B fact sheet that FEMA released this afternoon for the Public Assistance program. Existing program policy and procedures for Category B already in place should be the starting point and general way forward. The fact sheet is supplemental guidance from FEMA HQ when the existing authorities cannot address unique COVID-19 scenarios. The Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide V3.1 can be found here: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781>.

Under the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration, FEMA may provide assistance for emergency protective measures including, but not limited to, what is outlined in the fact sheet, if not funded by the HHS/CDC or other federal agency. ***While some activities listed may be eligible for funding through HHS/CDC, final reimbursement determinations will be coordinated by HHS and FEMA. FEMA will not duplicate any assistance provided by HHS/CDC.***

Just like any other Public Assistance declaration, potential applicants will need to document eligible costs associated with Category B for this emergency declaration.

The next step would be for tribal, county, local government entities, and certain private non-profit organizations to submit an RPA in to the FEMA Grants Portal system. If they have an active account already, they should be able to choose **EM-3454** and submit an RPA. **The normal 30 day RPA deadline submission has been extended until further notice.**

For those that do not have an active account in the system currently, a separate email will be sent with instructions and PA staff points of contact for assisting.

Due to the unprecedented scope and scale of this emergency, there will most likely be limited remote customer service from FEMA. Meaning, FEMA will implement a streamlined approach that is likely to include applicant self-application through Grants Portal and state PA staff provided assistance to the applicants.

Lastly, we will do the best that we can with the information we have. Look for more guidance to come out from FEMA in the coming days/weeks.

Please pass along this information to all possible applicants that would have eligible costs associated with the response to COVID-19.

All,

On March 13, 2020, the President declared the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant an emergency declaration for all states, tribes, territories, and the District of Columbia pursuant to section 501 (b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act").

Each state received an emergency declaration for COVID-19. **Wisconsin is EM-3454** declared on March 13th, with an incident period beginning on January 20th and continuing: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/3454>. The incident start date of January 20th was chosen by FEMA and provided to all states.

State, territorial, tribal, and local government entities and certain private non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for Public Assistance. In accordance with section 502 of the Stafford Act, eligible emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency at the direction or guidance of public health officials' may be reimbursed under Category B of the agency's Public Assistance program. FEMA will not duplicate assistance provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or other federal agencies. Reimbursable activities typically include emergency protective measures such as the activation of State Emergency Operations Centers, National Guard costs, law enforcement and other measures necessary to protect public health and safety. FEMA assistance will be provided at a 75 percent Federal cost share. This declaration increases federal support to HHS in its role as the lead federal agency for the federal government's response to COVID-19. The emergency declaration does not impact measures authorized under other Federal statutes.

States, tribal and territorial governments do not need to request separate emergency declarations to receive FEMA assistance under this nationwide declaration.

Per the attached Fact Sheet, FEMA HQ is developing more specifics to address various Category B and what is eligible type questions. FEMA HQ will be issuing further guidance about what this means for each state and how to implement over the next 24 and 48 hours. When the guidance is released, WEM PA staff will follow up with all counties and tribes.

At this time, I would recommend all eligible applicants begin to document all activities to related to COVID-19 going back to January 20, 2020. This would include:

- Labor to include
 - Person name
 - Date worked
 - Hourly wage
 - Fringe benefits
 - Regular time AND overtime (normally only OVERTIME is eligible under Category B. However, document everything in the event that all time is eligible)

- Materials
- Equipment
- Contracts

Depending on further guidance from FEMA HQ, this may all change. I would rather everyone begin to document now and have items be made ineligible versus documenting to little and missing out on reimbursement.

Please pass this information on to ALL eligible applicants in your counties. This includes local government entities and certain private non-profit organizations. Once again, this may change, but I would rather have everyone be informed.

If you have questions, please send them to me and I will do my best to answer, but understand that my answer may be "I don't know".