

# COVID-19 Process Overview



## Public Assistance Recipient Quick Guide

The Public Assistance (PA) Program provides federal grant assistance to help communities quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies declared by the President. An Applicant is a non-Federal entity (state, territorial, tribal, and local government or private non-profit) submitting an application for assistance under a Federal award given to a Recipient (the state, territorial, or tribal entity managing the Federal award under the declaration). Once FEMA approves funding for an Applicant, the Applicant becomes a Subrecipient. This Quick Guide provides an **overview for a Recipient to manage and process PA program applications for COVID-19** declarations.

FEMA provides reimbursement for management costs that a Recipient incurs in administering and managing PA awards. For details on management costs, see the [Public Assistance Management Costs Interim Policy](#).

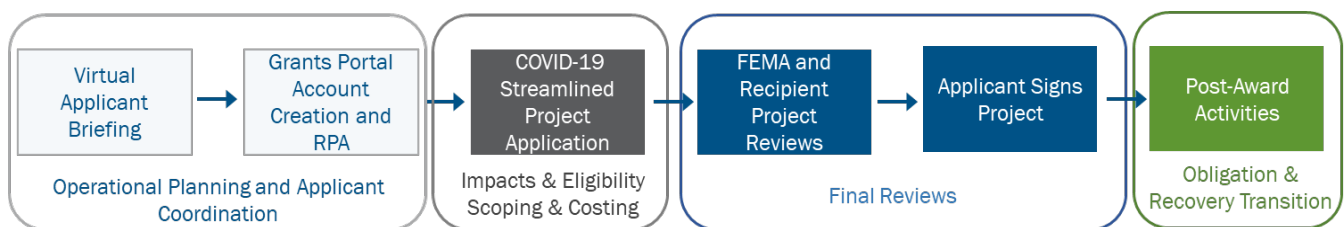
### Summary of COVID-19 Process Changes

For COVID-19 declarations, FEMA has streamlined the PA application process, including:

- Enabling the Applicant to apply directly to FEMA without relying on FEMA or Recipient staff.
- Providing a COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application in Grants Portal.
- Reducing documentation requirements for projects under \$131,100.

For more information, refer to FEMA’s [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Public Assistance Simplified Application Fact Sheet](#).

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#### Virtual Applicant Briefing

The Recipient conducts virtual meetings to provide information about PA process and requirements to potential Applicants. FEMA provides presentation templates and other resources to support these briefings.

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### Grants Portal Account Creation and Requests for Public Assistance

For Applicants who do not have a Grants Portal account, the Recipient may either create the Applicant's account or invite the Applicant to create its account directly. For Applicants who do not submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) directly, the Recipient may submit an RPA on the Applicants' behalf. The Recipient reviews RPAs in Grants Portal and provides recommendations to FEMA on Applicant eligibility. For a step-by-step process, please refer to the [Public Assistance Recipient Quick Guide: Approval Grants Portal Accounts and Requests for Public Assistance](#).

**Grants Portal** is the system used by Recipients and Applicants to manage PA applications

### Customer Service

By default, Applicants will apply directly to FEMA for assistance in Grants Portal. As part of the RPA review process, the Recipient recommends whether an Applicant requires a Program Delivery Manager to provide one-on-one customer service. The Recipient may provide a customer service representative to Applicants with its own staff per FEMA's [State-Led Public Assistance Guide](#). For the Recipient to assign its own staff to an Applicant in Grants Portal, it must first opt-in to State-Led PA and have a signed Operational Agreement with the FEMA Regional Administrator. The Recipient may also recommend that FEMA provide certain Applicants with FEMA Program Delivery Managers (PDMGs). The Infrastructure Branch Director will review the recommendation and may assign a FEMA PDMG. Applicants with FEMA-assigned PDMGs will participate in the traditional process steps including Exploratory Calls and Recovery Scoping Meetings.

### COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application

Applicants must submit project applications reporting all activities incurred by either 60 days from the end of the Public Health Emergency or 60-days from the approval of their RPA, whichever is later. The Applicant completes and submits project application(s) in Grants Portal. The Recipient may track submitted project applications in Grants Portal. Recipient staff or FEMA PDMGs may assist the Applicant in completing and submitting the application(s).

### FEMA and Recipient Project Reviews

- (Optional) Recipient Initial Review
- For Streamlined Applications, the Recipient has the option to review project applications prior to submission to FEMA's Consolidated Resource Center (CRC). Within Grants Portal the Recipient will choose from the following options to review:
- No project applications (default),
  - Project applications requesting expedited funding, or
  - All project applications.

If the Recipient chooses to complete and initial review, changes can be made to the project application and additional documentation can be uploaded. The Recipient certifies the application before submitting to the CRC. The Recipient is responsible for notifying the Applicant about the changes made.

The *Recipient Quick Guide* series is a set of documents that explain the roles and responsibilities of Recipients in key steps in FEMA's Public Assistance Program delivery process. Read more about Public Assistance Program delivery in the [Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#), and other resources available on [Grants Portal](#).

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### □ FEMA Reviews

Once the Applicant submits a project application, FEMA staff review and validate application information to ensure completeness, eligibility, and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders on items such as contracting and environmental and historic preservation. FEMA may request additional information from the Applicant. FEMA adds terms and conditions in the project application during this review.

### □ Recipient Final Review

Once FEMA has completed its reviews, the Recipient reviews the application in Grants Portal and sends it to the Applicant for signature. The Recipient reviews the scope of work and final costs of the project ensuring the project is fair and equitable.

### **Applicant Signs Project**

The Applicant reviews all terms and conditions that FEMA or the Recipient include in the project application and signs in agreement to the funding terms, including requirements for reporting on the project work progress and completion. The Applicant understands by signing that non-compliance with the terms and conditions may jeopardize FEMA funding.

### **Post-Award Activities**

The Recipient is responsible for administering PA subawards to Subrecipients and should ensure Subrecipients understand drawdown procedures, documentation requirements, and monitoring requirements. The Recipient must submit Quarterly Progress Reports on the status of all Subrecipients' projects above the [Large Project Threshold](#). As Subrecipients complete activities, the Recipient works with Subrecipients to collect all documentation required to support claimed costs and compliance with EHP laws, regulations, and executive orders and submits the project completion certification with support documentation to FEMA.

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