

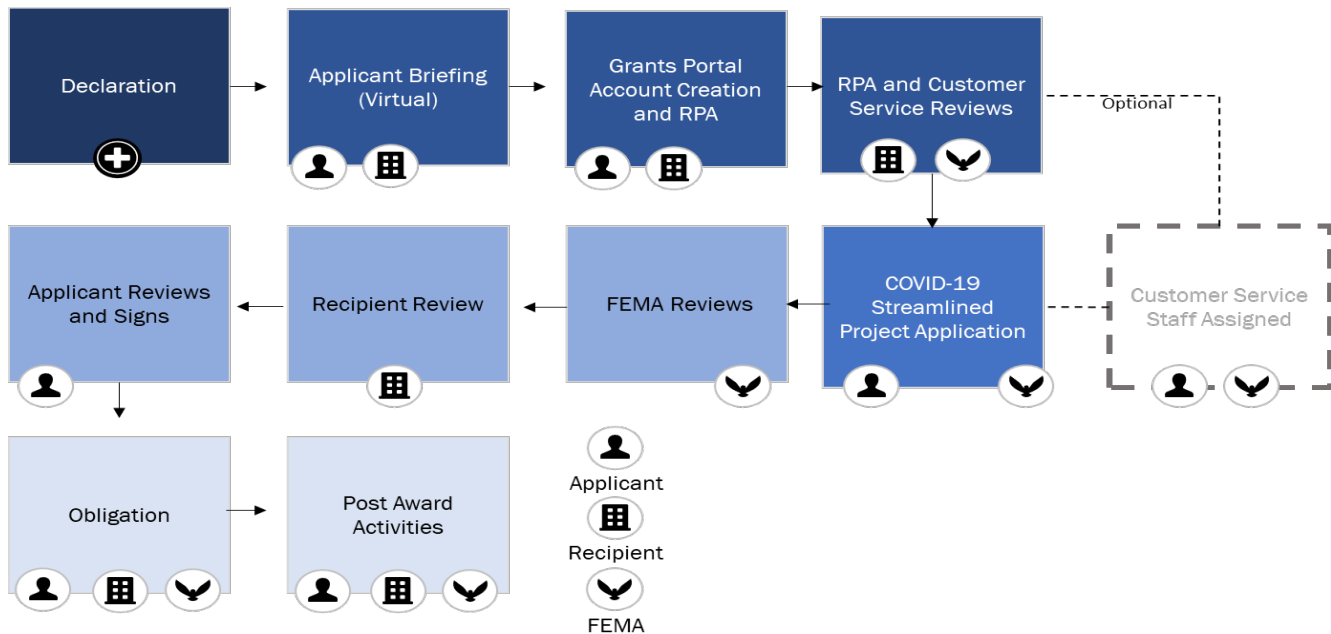
COVID-19 Process Overview

Public Assistance FEMA Job Aid



FEMA

As described in FEMA's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Public Assistance Simplified Application Fact Sheet](#), FEMA is streamlining the Public Assistance (PA) application process for COVID-19 declarations. This Job Aid provides an **overview for all FEMA staff on delivering assistance** using the COVID-19 streamlined process.



Summary of Changes

For COVID-19 declarations, FEMA is streamlining the PA application process, including:

- *Enabling the Applicant to apply directly to FEMA without relying on FEMA or Recipient staff.* In most cases, FEMA will not assign PDMGs to Applicants and will not conduct the traditional Exploratory Calls, Recovery Scoping Meetings, or Recovery Transition Meetings.
- *Offering an COVID-19 streamlined project application* in Grants Portal that the Applicant will complete in lieu of a PDMG assisting them in creating a damage inventory and answering Essential Elements of Information. The Applicant uses the online project application for Category B work (i.e., small and large projects, completed and uncompleted work, and expedited funding).
- *Reduced documentation for small projects.* FEMA will process all projects under the [Large Project Threshold](#) with limited documentation and Applicant certifications.
- *Streamlining the Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) process.* EHP will conduct a streamlined review. For activities that require in-depth review, EHP will use Applicant responses to the simplified EHP questions in the streamlined project application to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders.



The following sections describe the process steps, including changes to normal processes, roles and responsibilities, and resources available to FEMA staff. In each case, the COVID-specific resources are posted on the [Public Assistance Coronavirus SharePoint Site](#), and are supplemental to existing guidance including the [Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#) and the [Program Delivery Toolbox](#). Unless otherwise specified, FEMA staff should continue to follow normal processes and use existing process guidance.

Virtual Applicant Briefings

- *Description:* Recipients conduct Applicant Briefings to provide information on the PA Program delivery process and requirements.
- *What's Different:*
 - FEMA developed a COVID-19 specific Applicant Briefing template for Recipients. The content reflects disaster-specific processes and policies.
 - The Recipient should conduct all briefings virtually.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Recipient includes its content and schedules and conducts the briefings.
 - FEMA Regional staff provide process and policy information.
- *Resources:*
 - The [Applicant Briefing Template](#) for COVID-19 is available for FEMA Regional staff to share with Recipients.

Requests for Public Assistance and Customer Service Reviews

- *Description:* Applicants submit Requests for Public Assistance (RPAs), and FEMA and the Recipient review the RPAs to determine Applicant eligibility. By default, all Applicants will apply directly, but during the RPA review process the Recipient and FEMA may determine that Applicants require additional support. The Recipient may provide customer service via State-Led PA or recommend that FEMA assign a Program Delivery Manager (PDMG). FEMA may assign a PDMG to provide customer service if needed.
- *What's Different:*
 - Applicants may submit RPAs directly without working through Recipients.
 - By default, Applicants will apply directly to FEMA without having a FEMA-assigned PDMG.
 - As part of the RPA review process, Recipient and FEMA staff review each Applicant to determine whether Recipient- or FEMA-provided customer service is needed.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Recipient:
 - Reviews RPAs and makes eligibility recommendations to the FEMA Infrastructure Branch Directors (IBD).
 - Considers the needs of each Applicant as it reviews the RPA and recommends whether FEMA should assign a PDMG.
 - May assign its own staff to provide customer service in accordance with the [State-Led PA Guide](#).
 - The IBD:
 - Makes eligibility determinations for each Applicant and issues written eligibility determinations to any ineligible Applicants. The IBD engages FEMA OCC to review eligibility for Private Non-Profit (PNP) Applicants.



- Determines whether to assign a PDMG to certain Applicants.

- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [COVID-19 Infrastructure Branch Director and PA Group Supervisor Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)
 - [COVID-19 Program Delivery Manager Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)
 - [Public Assistance Applicant Quick Guide: Request for Public Assistance Requirements for Private Non-Profits in COVID-19 Disasters](#)

Customer Service

- *Description:* In most cases, Applicants apply directly for assistance without a FEMA-assigned PDMG or Recipient-assigned staff.
- *What's Different:*
 - Most Applicants will complete all application steps directly in Grants Portal without engaging with a PDMG or Recipient-assigned staff. For these Applicants, no Exploratory Calls, Recovery Scoping Meetings, or Recovery Transition Meetings will be conducted.
 - If a PDMG is assigned, the PDMG conducts the EC and RSM with the Applicant.
 - PDMGs may be assigned at any point in the process. PDMGs may also be unassigned if the Applicant no longer requires assistance.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Applicant completes and submits the project application.
 - Assigned PDMGs assist Applicants with completing and submitting the application.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [COVID-19 Program Delivery Manager Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)
 - [COVID-19 Program Delivery Task Force Leader Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)

COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application

- *Description:* Applicants apply for assistance by completing a streamlined project application in Grants Portal. The project application is designed to collect all the information required to request Public Assistance funding for emergency protective measures conducted in response to COVID-19. The [COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application](#) is a document that may be referenced when completing the online application.
- *What's Different:*
 - Applicants submit project applications directly through Grants Portal without the assistance of a PDMG.
 - Applicants do not conduct site inspections, create Damage Inventories, or answer Essential Elements of Information.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Applicant completes and submits its project application(s).
 - If PDMGs are assigned, PDMGs assist Applicants with completing and submitting the application.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [Applicant Quick Guide: Completing and Submitting the COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application](#)

- Forthcoming: Applicant Quick Guides for donated resources and management costs



Project Application Reviews

- *Description:* FEMA and the Recipient review projects for completeness, accuracy, eligibility, cost reasonableness, and compliance with laws, regulations, and executive orders. FEMA or the Recipient may identify additional information needed to complete the review step. FEMA or the Recipient send the Applicant Requests for Information (RFIs), if necessary.
- *What's Different:*
 - The Documentation Validation Specialists and Costing Specialists review the scope and cost information in the project application instead of reviewing information usually entered in Damage Inventories and Essential Elements of Information.
 - CRC EHP Specialists review the project application to determine whether a more in-depth EHP review is needed and if so, the CRC EHP specialist routes the project to the Regional EHP Specialist.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - CRC Document Validation Specialists, Costing Specialists, Insurance Specialists, and Quality Assurance Specialists conduct relevant project application reviews.
 - CRC EHP Specialists review project applications and determine if additional in-depth EHP review is needed.
 - Applications that do not require additional in-depth review will be documented by CRC EHP with a Memorandum for Record.
 - Applications that require in-depth review will be documented by Regional EHP in both the EHP Management Information System (EMIS) and Grants Manager.
 - Regional EHP will upload a Record of Environmental Considerations and add EHP conditions to the application in Grants Manager.
 - If assigned, a PDMG conducts a review prior to submitting to the IBD for final review.
 - The IBD conducts the FEMA Final Review.
 - The Recipient conducts its review in Grants Portal.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [COVID-19 Infrastructure Branch Director and PA Group Supervisor Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)
 - [COVID-19 Program Delivery Manager Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)
 - Forthcoming: FEMA Job Aids for Requests for Information (RFIs), sampling, and issuing Determination Memos

Applicant Reviews and Signs Project

- *Description:* The Applicant reviews and signs the project, including accepting grant conditions.
- *What's Different:*
 - There are no changes to this process step for COVID-19.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Applicant reviews the project terms and conditions. If the Applicant agrees with the terms and conditions of the project, it signs the project digitally.



- ☐ *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [Applicant Quick Guide: Completing and Submitting the COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application](#)

Project Obligation

- ☐ *Description:* FEMA obligates funding to the Recipient.
- ☐ *What's Different:*
 - There are no changes to obligation steps for COVID-19.
 - For Category B projects over \$1,000,000, the 3-day Large Project Notification (LPN) requirement is currently waived for COVID-19 declarations. FEMA still routes these projects through the LPN workflow.
- ☐ *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The IBD completes obligation steps in EMMIE and NEMIS.
 - If assigned, once FEMA has obligated all of an Applicant's projects, the PDMG conducts a Recovery Transition Meeting.
- ☐ *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - [COVID-19 Infrastructure Branch Director and PA Group Supervisor Public Assistance Position Assist Addendum](#)

Project Amendments

- ☐ *Description:* FEMA adjusts scopes of work and costs associated with projects via amendments.
- ☐ *What's Different:*
 - Applicants submit project amendments directly rather than requesting amendments from the Recipient or FEMA.
- ☐ *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - Applicant submits its amendment(s) in Grants Portal.
 - FEMA and the Recipient review the amendments.
- ☐ *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - Forthcoming: Applicant/Recipient Quick Guide for Amendments

Closeout

- ☐ *Description:* Once the Applicant completes all work associated with a project, FEMA closes the project. Once FEMA has closed all the Applicant's projects, FEMA closes the Applicant. Once FEMA closes all the Applicants in the declaration, FEMA closes the overall PA award for the Recipient.
- ☐ *What's Different:*
 - No changes to the closeout process for COVID-19.
- ☐ *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - The Applicant reconciles its final actual costs, certifies project completion and contacts the Recipient for closeout.
 - The Recipient reviews the final cost claim, certifies project completion and contacts FEMA for closeout.
 - FEMA Regional staff review the final claim, process any amendments and complete closeout actions.
- ☐ *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:* None.