

# How FEMA Public Assistance Works

**FEMA's Public Assistance (PA)** reimburses eligible public and nonprofit entities for at least 75% of eligible response and recovery costs when authorized in a presidential emergency or major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288, as amended).\*

## WHAT IS PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA)?



- State governments
- Local governments
- Territorial governments
- Tribal governments
- Eligible nonprofits



Debris Removal



Emergency Protective Measures (emergency personnel, materials, operations)



Reconstruction of disaster-damaged public and eligible nonprofit facilities

## HOW IS PA FUNDED?



### Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) Appropriations

The source of funding for Stafford Act Assistance.



PA accounts for **more than 1/2** of DRF obligations year over year,\*\* 2001-2020.

## HOW IS PA AUTHORIZED?



Governor or tribal chief executive requests joint Preliminary Damage Assessment



Federal, state, local officials assess damage



Governor or tribal chief executive submits declaration request that includes PA

FEMA assesses request and makes recommendation to President to approve or deny request



President issues declaration authorizing PA or denies request

State, tribe, or territory becomes PA Primary Recipient if PA is authorized



Applicants develop PA projects involving response and recovery work

## HOW IS PA STRUCTURED?

### FEMA

*FEMA reviews PA projects and obligates funds for approved projects to Primary Recipient.*

### Primary Recipient

- States
- Territories
- Tribes

With Stafford Act declarations authorizing PA

*Primary Recipients administer PA in jurisdiction and disburse funds to Applicants.*

### PA Applicant

- State governments
- Tribal governments
- Local governments
- Eligible nonprofits
- Territorial governments

In jurisdictions with PA authorizations

*Applicants execute PA projects.*

### PA Project

- Debris removal
- Emergency Protective Measures
- Reconstruction and replacement of disaster-damaged facilities

Required as a result of declared incident and grouped into logical work

## HOW DO APPLICANTS RECEIVE PA FUNDS?

Applicants are reimbursed for **at least 75%** of the costs of approved work.



Applicant submits Project Worksheets (PW) to FEMA and Primary Recipient.



FEMA approves PW. FEMA obligates funds from Disaster Relief Fund to Primary Recipient.



Applicant requests reimbursement and submits supporting documentation to Primary Recipient.



Primary Recipient reviews request for compliance and accuracy and approves request.



Primary Recipient disburses funds to Applicant to reimburse approved costs.



*Applicant executes and pays for approved work (may be concurrent).*

**Sources:** CRS interpretation of 44 CFR §§206.31-206.45; 206.200-206.205, 206.220-226. "Applicant" refers to "Subrecipient" in 2 C.F.R. §200.93. \*Authorized in sections 402, 403, 418, 419, and 502. \*\*Does not include COVID-19 Obligations.

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