



Disaster Recovery Public Assistance (PA) Financial Administration Training

FY 2023 - 2024



**SOUTHWESTERN COMMISSION
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

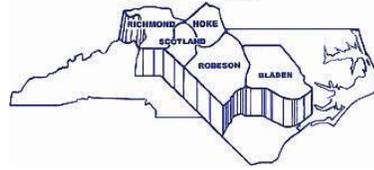


**CENTRALINA
REGIONAL COUNCIL**



**UPPER COASTAL PLAIN
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

Lumber River Council of Governments



**CENTRAL PINES
REGIONAL COUNCIL**



**PIEDMONT TRIAD
REGIONAL COUNCIL**



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Contact your regional Council of Government to schedule training and to access more information about Public Assistance!



**Kerr-Tar
Regional Council
Of Governments**



**MID-CAROLINA
REGIONAL COUNCIL**
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Introductions



- Sponsor introductions
- Instructor introductions
- Supporting staff introductions
- Participant introductions

Administrative Orientation



Emergency Exits



Inclement Weather



Breaks & Lunch



Restrooms



Classroom Etiquette



Phone Etiquette



**Communication Rules /
Rules of Conduct**

- Participation is encouraged.
- Be respectful.
- Disagree without being disagreeable.
- Keep discussion focused on the PA program.

Welcome to the Course

This course builds local government capacity to effectively secure FEMA Public Assistance (PA) disaster recovery funds and ensure those funds address local and regional priorities.

- Provides local government staff with the tools to build and/or maintain the necessary financial systems and staff support needed to administer and report on the utilization of disaster recovery funds efficiently and effectively.
- Allows for the local government staff in a pre-disaster setting to incorporate recovery staffing and business practices into day-to-day financial administration operations.
- Ensures federal, state and local taxpayer dollars invested into public assets are properly protected and managed when a FEMA declared disaster event occurs.



Terminal Learning Objective

By the end of this section, participants will be able to explain how pre-disaster preparedness and planning can prepare a municipality to make the most effective use of Public Assistance after a disaster strikes, and best practices and approaches for engaging with the Public Assistance process.

The Public Assistance (PA) Program

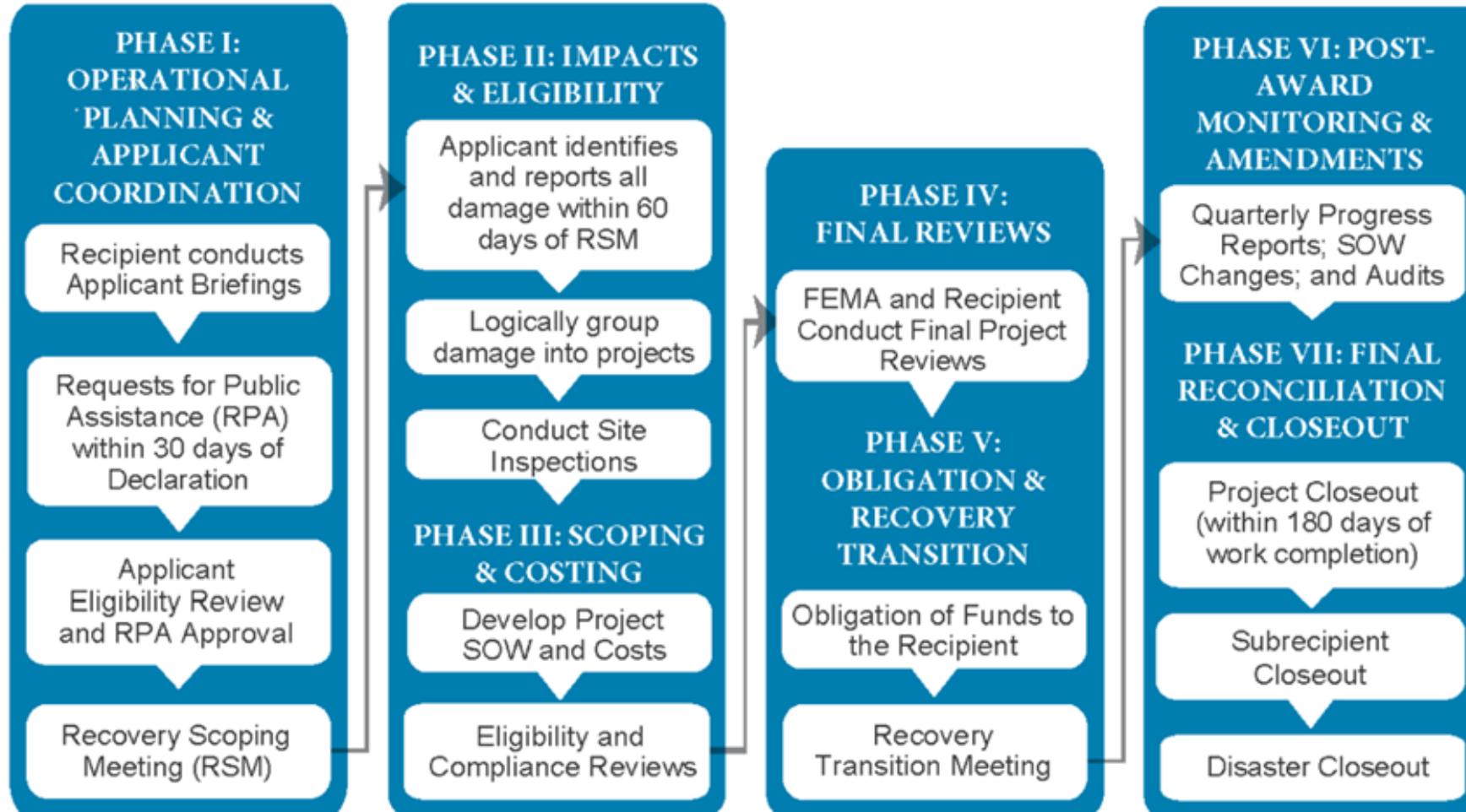


FEMA

- FEMA's largest grant program
- **REIMBURSEMENT** program following a federally declared disaster
- PA Grants are managed by North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM)



Public Assistance Program Delivery Process



Roles and Responsibilities in the PA Process



FEMA



Federal Agency

State/Recipient/Applicant

Subrecipients/Sub-Applicants

Manages and awards PA funding; determines eligibility

Receives the federal award; manages and disburses award to Subrecipients

Receives a subaward from the Recipient

These entities **MUST** work together to ensure efficient delivery of the PA Process.

Government Roles in the Public Assistance Process



Federal Government

- President declares major disasters
- FEMA manages PA Program



State Government

- Serves as the Applicant/Recipient
- Disburses PA award to eligible Subrecipients



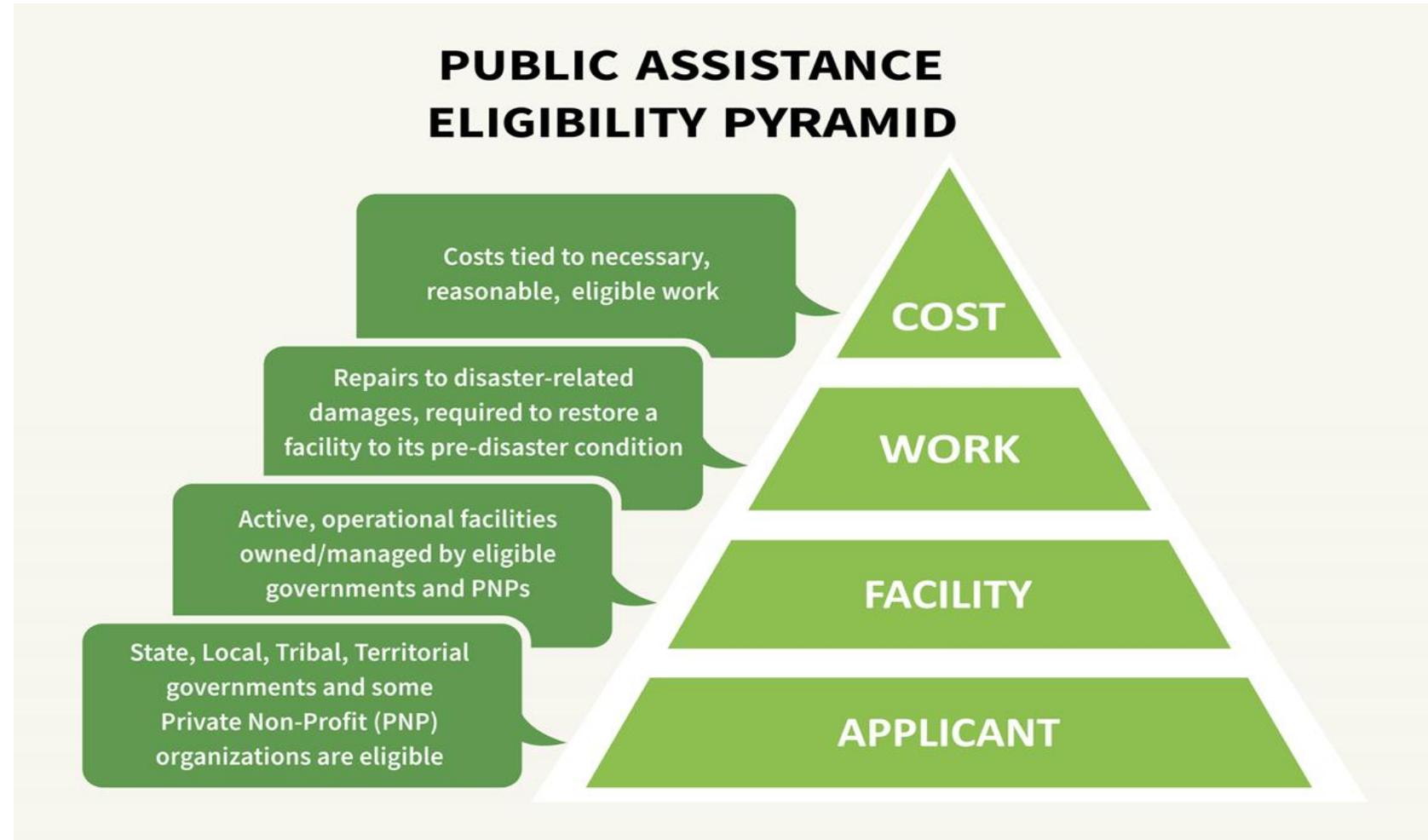
Local Government

- Serves as the Subrecipients
- Requests assistance, performs disaster repairs

Public Assistance (PA) Eligibility

FEMA determines PA eligibility.

Applicant eligibility is determined first, eligibility is assessed at each level moving up the pyramid.



Public Assistance Applicant Eligibility

Public Assistance funding is ONLY available to eligible Applicants:



Public Assistance Facility Eligibility

Facilities are deemed eligible for Public Assistance when:

**They have been
damaged by the
declared disaster**

**Physically located
in the declared
disaster area**

**Are the legal
responsibility of
the Subrecipient**

Summary of the PA Program Overview

- **The roles of each level of government in the Public Assistance process.**
- **Responsibilities of the state as the Recipient in the Public Assistance process.**
- **The elements of Public Assistance eligibility.**
- **The criteria for Applicant, Facility, Work, and Cost eligibility in the Public Assistance process.**

Introduction of Public Assistance Scenario

Local Governments and the Public Assistance Process

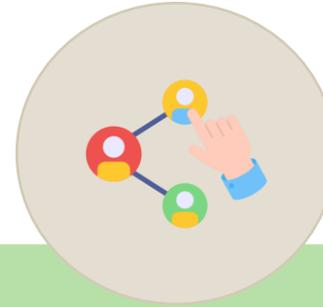
The role of local government in the PA Process is to:



Complete
disaster-related
repairs



Provide necessary
documentation for
reimbursement



Allocate aspects
of the PA Process
to individuals with
necessary
capabilities



Ensure accurate
management of
expenses and
documents

Roles and Responsibilities in Local Disaster Recovery



Leadership and Administration

Specific Roles: Disaster Recovery Manager, Mayors, Administrative Staff, Records Manager

Economic Recovery

Specific Roles: Economic Recovery Coordinator, Payroll Staff, Business Case Manager



Community Outreach

Specific Roles: Volunteer Coordinator, School District Emergency Management Coordinators



Funding and Financial Management

Specific Roles: Public Assistance Coordinator, Contracts Manager, Payroll Staff, Finance Director

Infrastructure Recovery

Specific Roles: Debris Manager, Public Works Department Staff, Roads and Bridges Department Staff



Federal Public Assistance Is Made through its Authorities

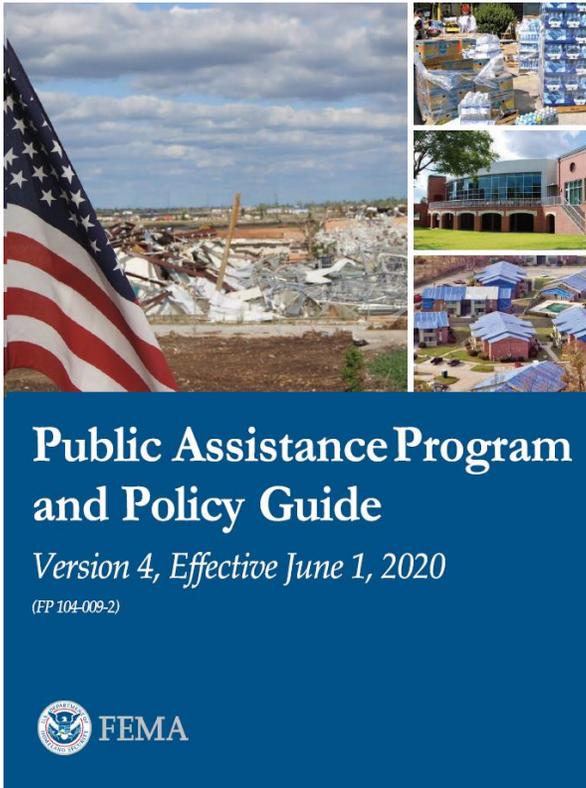
Robert T. Stafford
Disaster Relief and
Emergency
Assistance Act (The
Stafford Act)

The Code of Federal
Regulations (CFR)

The Davis Bacon Act

The Public
Assistance Program
and Policy Guide
(PAPPG)

The Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide



The federal guide to the Public Assistance Program is updated regularly and applies to specific timeframes and disasters. The Guide references the Code of Federal Regulations and Stafford Act to assist with guidance and regulations on the Public Assistance Program. (Source: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_pappg-v4-updated-links_policy_6-1-2020.pdf)

Essential Policies and Procedures for Public Assistance

It is important local governments have policies and procedures in place that address:



Mutual-Aid



Procurement
and contract
requirements



Payroll and
fringe
benefits



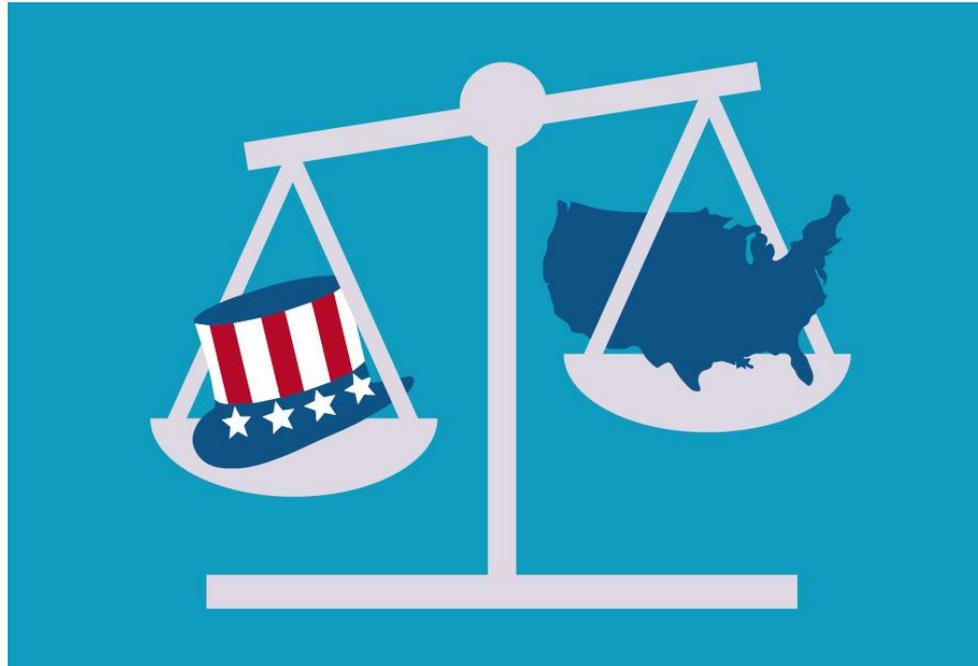
Insurance



Disaster-
specific
emergency
procurement

Taking these steps now can help ensure your town is ready for a disaster!

Aligning Federal and State Criteria for Funding



When dealing with multiple sources of funding, local governments should align their policies to whichever has the most stringent requirements between the federal and state.

Summary

- **The roles of each level of government in the Public Assistance process.**
- **Responsibilities of the state as the Recipient in the Public Assistance process.**
- **Local government duties that related to Disaster Recovery and Public Assistance.**
- **Federal Public Assistance is made through its authorities.**
- **Financial administration responsibilities that increase employee capacity to fulfill Public Assistance-related tasks.**
- **Specific examples of behaviors that risk or delay funding.**
- **Best practices to minimize the chance of risk during financial recovery.**

Discussion of Scenario

Key Concepts for Effective Financial Administration (1 of 2)

Successful disaster financial management requires multiple areas of knowledge and capability. Critical members of the team often include:



Emergency Managers

Coordinate disaster operations



Recovery Managers

Organize recovery preparations and operations



Finance Managers

Oversee cash flow and financial accounting



Grants Managers

Navigate legal requirements of funding programs

Best Practice: Fund a Recovery Manager using FEMA Management Costs

Key Concepts for Effective Financial Administration (2 of 2)



A Recovery Manager can help handle financial paperwork pre- and post-disaster.

Project/Portfolio Management

- Define and execute the steps necessary to meet recovery goals
- Accurately manage the disaster budget to ensure all bills are paid
- Outline and complete activities before, during, and after the disaster

Local Subject Matter Experts and Best Practices Pre-Disaster (1 of 2)



Work with FEMA and NCEM to create a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Plan for the involvement of volunteers in the pre-disaster period

Involve local emergency management officials, as well as state partners, when creating a disaster plan

Local Subject Matter Experts and Best Practices Pre-Disaster (2 of 2)

Best practices for pre-disaster activities:

Document all processes and create backups

Review state and federal policies

Create a Disaster Recovery Plan

Ensure there are emergency management authorities in the jurisdiction

Ensure jurisdictional policies are flexible enough for a disaster

Discuss finance policies with finance staff



Necessary/Required Processes from Inception through Closeout

Have an internal plan for document sharing

Consider a system that determines access management

Any field documentation should be uploaded to shared organizational drives

Think about how different departments report relevant information

Files should be organized in a clear file system in the drive

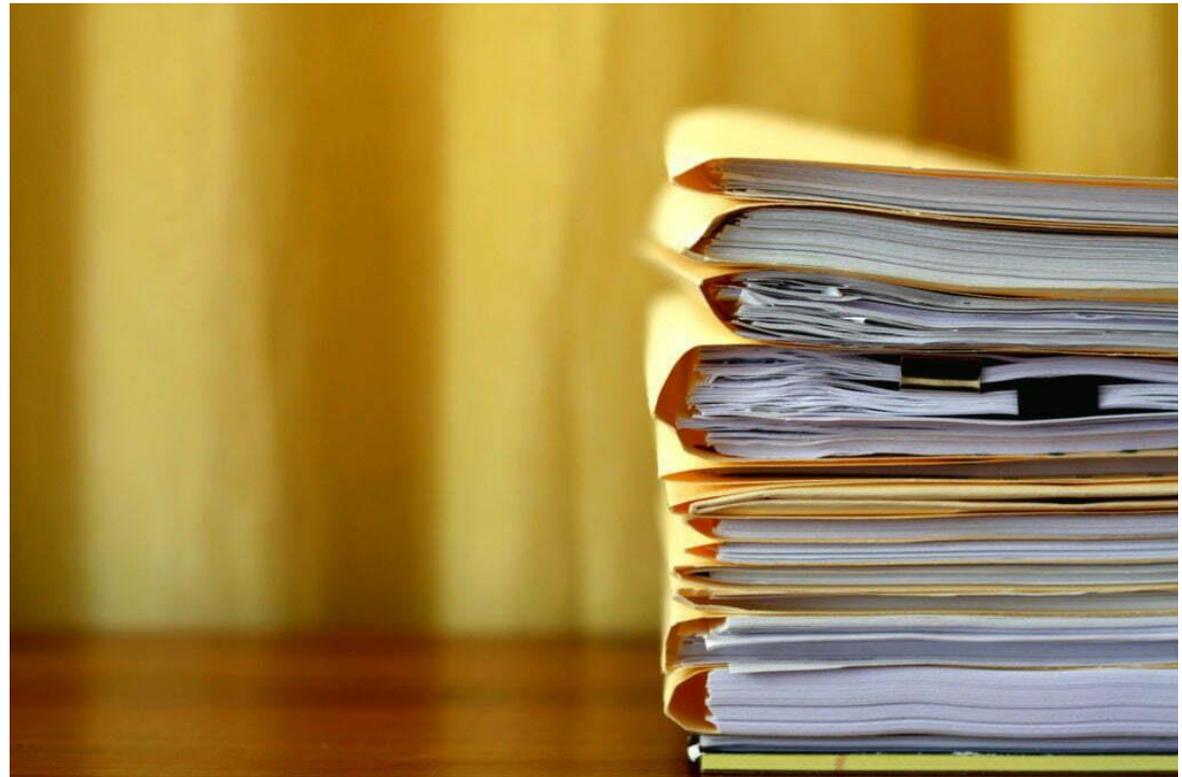
Identify the disaster team and appoint back ups points of contact

Put these plans and processes in place **before** the next disaster!

Identifying Pre-Disaster Procedures for Information and Documentation Collection

Documentation required for financial recovery:

- Activity logs
- Equipment logs
- Maintenance logs
- Photographs and blueprints
- Timesheets
- Disaster response plan
- Evacuation plan



Put these plans and processes in place before the next disaster!

How Risks Impede the Public Assistance Process

Actions that can impact obligation of PA funding:



Improper Documentation

Not meeting deadlines, or inappropriate document submission



Disaster Validation Issues

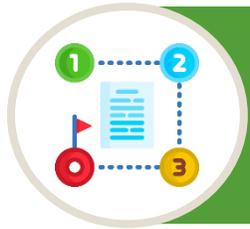
Cannot validate that damages were a result of the disaster



Improper Business Continuity

Not having documented policies and procedures

Risks To Public Assistance Funding



Lack of established policies and procedures →
Can result in the delay of grant awards

Lack of procurement policies →
Can result in ineligible costs or de-obligation
of funding



Lack of documentation →
Can result in grant penalties or legal action

Failure to conduct reviews during PA process →
Can result in the delay of grant awards



When in doubt about a policy, procedure, or best practice during an unusual circumstance, contact NCEM or another SME for guidance before proceeding. Try to get all guidance and determinations in writing and document your decision-making rationale and process.

Summary

- **The essential Public Assistance processes to create policies to ensure compliance.**
- **Federal procurement and contracting policies and State procurement policies. How to align local policies to federal and/or state policies.**
- **Best practices for effective disaster financial management, include necessary/required processes for documentation, reviews for compliance, and the importance of utilizing Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for pre-disaster planning.**
- **Documentation that can validate damage following a disaster.**
- **Common errors that can impact PA funding.**
- **Specific examples of behaviors that risk or delay funding.**
- **Best practices to minimize the chance of risk during financial recovery.**

Discussion of Scenario (continued)

Key Takeaways

- **Participants will be able to define the terms and concepts of the Public Assistance (PA) Program and define their roles and responsibilities within the PA process.**
- **Participants will be able to discuss the roles that different levels of government play in disaster recovery and distribution of Public Assistance.**
- **Participants will be able to develop language to embed disaster recovery financial administration responsibilities into finance department job descriptions.**
- **Participants will be able to identify the internal policies and procedures, such as procurement, contracting, and payroll, to ensure compliance for eligible cost reimbursement and subsequent audit reviews.**
- **Participants will be able to demonstrate effective pre-disaster planning coordination and financial administration of federal, state, and local disaster recovery funding.**
- **Participants will be able to identify risks within their operations that could affect their ability to lessen timing and to optimize reimbursements.**
- **Participants will be able to outline pre-disaster preparedness activities they will make actionable in their community.**