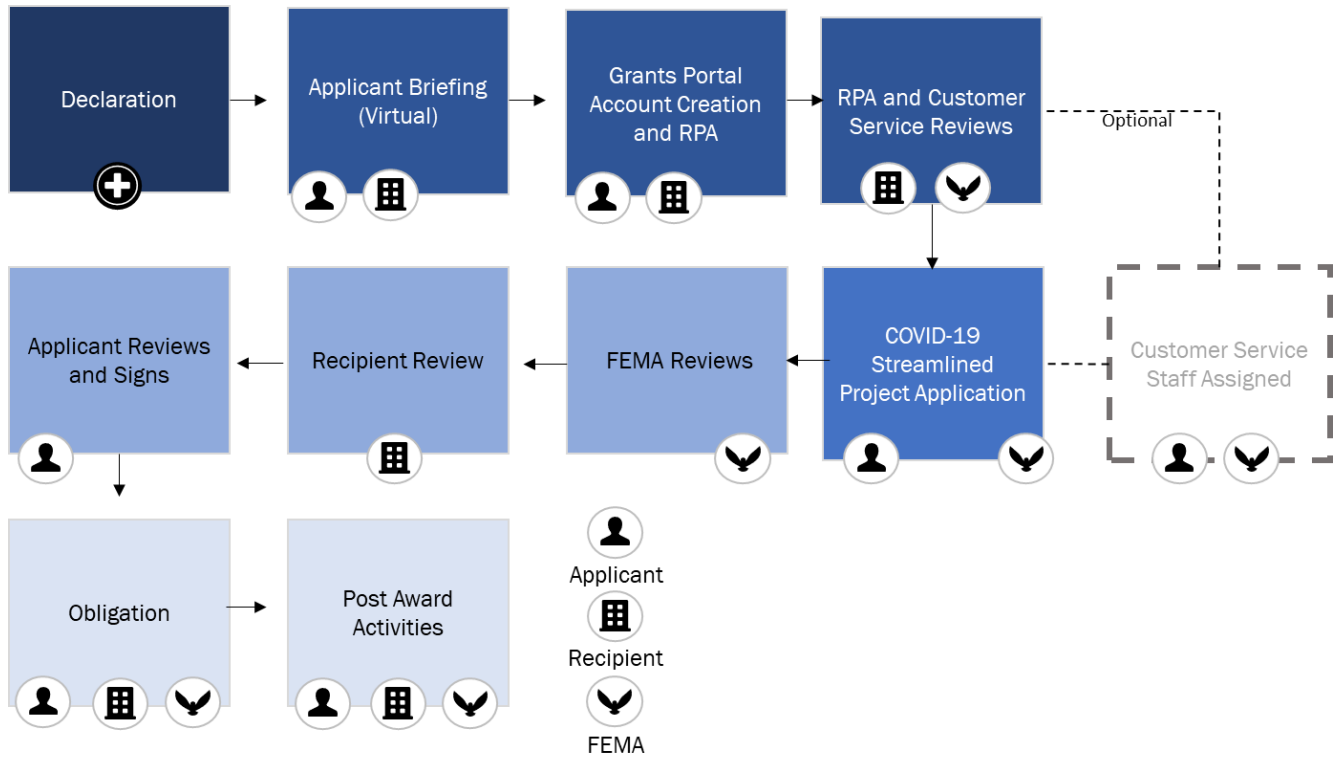


COVID-19 Process Overview

Public Assistance FEMA Job Aid



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 the process for **delivering assistance** using the **COVID-19 streamlined project application**.



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.
- ❑ *Providing a COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application* that the Applicant will complete in lieu of creating a damage inventory and answering Essential Elements of Information. The Applicant uses the same project application for all 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 using Applicant responses to simplified EHP questions in the streamlined



project application to ensure the project's compliance with related 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 COVID-19 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 to use. 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 upon request.

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 IBD/PAGS Position Assist Addendum
 - COVID-19 PDMG Position Assist Addendum
 - Forthcoming: Guidance for Recipients and Applicants for PNP RPAs

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 its project application(s).
 - Assigned PDMGs assist Applicants with completing and submitting the Application.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - COVID-19 PDMG Position Assist Addendum
 - COVID-19 PD TFL Position Assist Addendum

COVID-19 Streamlined Project Applications

- *Description:* All Applicants apply for assistance using the COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application, which includes all information necessary to conduct project reviews. The project application includes specific instructions and schedules based on project-specific circumstances, including an “EZ” schedule for projects under the Large Project Threshold, a simplified schedule for Expedited funding requests, eligibility and cost schedules for projects over the Large Project Threshold, and an Environmental and Historic Preservation schedule for certain types of activities.
- *What's Different:*
 - Applicants complete and submit a project application document via Grants Portal with limited assistance from FEMA or the Recipient.
 - 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).
 - Assigned PDMGs assist Applicants with completing and submitting the Application.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application
 - Forthcoming: Guidance for Applicants 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 on the project application document instead of reviewing information usually entered in Damage Inventories and Essential Elements of Information.
 - CRC Environmental and Historic Preservation Specialists conduct preliminary reviews to determine whether additional Regional EHP review is required. In many cases, additional EHP review will not be required.
- *Roles and Responsibilities:*
 - CRC Document Validation Specialists, Costing Specialists, Insurance Specialists, and Quality Assurance Specialists conduct relevant project reviews.
 - CRC EHP Specialists review project applications to determine if a Regional EHP Specialist needs to conduct a compliance review in EMIS. If required, Regional EHP Specialists perform EHP compliance reviews and complete and upload a Record of Environmental Considerations and add EHP terms and conditions to the project.
 - 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 of the project in Grants Portal.
- *Supplemental COVID-Specific Resources:*
 - COVID-19 IBD/PAGS Position Assist Addendum
 - COVID-19 PDMG Position Assist Addendum
 - Forthcoming: Guidance on 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 a COVID-19 Streamlined Project Application

Project Obligation

- *Description:* FEMA obligates project funding to the Recipient.
- *What's Different:*
 - There are no changes to obligation steps for COVID-19.



- For projects over \$1,000,000, the Large Project Notification (LPN) requirement is currently waived for COVID-19 declarations. FEMA still routes 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:* None.

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.

Closeout

- *Description:* Once the Applicant completes all work associated with a project, FEMA closes the project. Once FEMA has closed all of the Applicant's projects, FEMA closes the Applicant. Once FEMA closes all of 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.

The *Job Aid* series is a set of documents that explain key processes in FEMA's Public Assistance Program delivery process for multiple organizations and roles, focused on providing detailed guidance for FEMA staff. Read more about Public Assistance Program delivery in other Job Aids, the [Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#), and resources available on [Grants Manger](#) and the [Coronavirus PA Toolbox](#).