

5/13/21 Municipal & First Responder Call Notes

I. Welcome and Introduction: VEM Director Erica Bornemann

- Welcome participants on the call.
- This is the biweekly call for first responders, EMDs, RPCs, and municipal officials.
- We are hosting this call every other week. The next call will be on Thursday, May 27th at 2pm. The invitation will go out on Monday, May 24th. Please note, as we continue to move forward we may look to move these to occur on a more ad-hoc basis.
- The meeting invitations include a link to a survey we use to guide our talking points. The survey will only capture one question per response. To ask multiple questions, fill out the survey multiple times. The survey link will not change week to week.
- On today's call we will be joined by DEPRIP Director Dan Batsie and Recovery and Mitigation Section Chief, Ben Rose. In addition, we have Vermont State Police Lieutenant Tara Thomas, Fire Academy Chief Pete Lynch, and EMS Chief Will Moran available to answer questions. We will be providing you all an overview of the State's response to COVID-19 and we will have time for additional questions at the end of the call.
- Call notes from these meetings will still be posted at vem.vermont.gov/covid19firstresponders.

AGENDA:

- I. Intro/call format
- II. COVID-19/VDH overview
- III. SEOC overview/VEM comments
- IV. FEMA Cost Recovery Funds
- V. Q&A with participants

II. COVID-19 Overview/VDH Comments: HOC Incident Commander and DEPRIP Director Dan Batsie

- **Overall update on COVID-19 in Vermont**
 - There have been 72 new cases of COVID-19 in the last 24 hours. 12 out of 14 Vermont counties saw a decrease in cases.
 - There have been a total of 252 deaths from COVID-19 including 3 in the last week and 19 in the last 30 days.
 - Hospitalizations due to COVID-19 are tracking downwards. 3 Vermonter's are currently in the ICU.
 - More COVID-19 statistics are available on the [Department of Health's website](#).
- **Testing/tracing updates**
 - Vermont is currently leading the country in per capita testing. Several opportunities to be tested are still available and can be found on the [Department of Health's website](#).
- **Vaccination updates**
 - 382,261 Vermonters have started vaccination with 278,800 being fully vaccinated. This accounts for 69.9% of Vermonters with at least one dose of vaccine, and 51% of eligible Vermonters having completed vaccination.
 - There will be several barnstorming events, with the goal of bringing the vaccines directly to Vermonters. This weekend, barnstorming events will be held along the Route 100 corridor.
 - From May 16-23rd, EMS week will occur. This week is usually time to say thank you to EMS professionals. The best way to thank an EMS responder this year is to get vaccinated, and several sites for vaccination will be available statewide. EMS responders have worked hard during the pandemic with everything from transportation, to vaccines, to testing, to so much more.
 - Vaccination registration opened to Vermonters ages 12 to 15 this morning, following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's action late Wednesday authorizing use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for this age group. All Vermonters 12 and up can make vaccine appointments by visiting the [Vermont Department of Health website](#) or by calling (855) 722-7878.

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- Vaccine registration is also open to college students who are residents of another state and do not intend to stay in Vermont for the summer, boarding students, people who work in Vermont, and people who live part of the year in Vermont. Appointments can be made on the [Vermont Department of Health website](#) or by calling (855) 722-7878.
 - More COVID-19 vaccination statistics are available on the [Department of Health's website](#).
 - We received a question in regard to a booster vaccine shot and if/when one will be needed and how it will be administered.
 - We don't currently know if a booster vaccine will be needed or when it may have to be administered. There are active trials going on, but we don't currently know how long current vaccines are good for or what the need for a booster will be. We are paying attention to the science, but at this point there is no plan for boosters.
 - Last call we received a question in regard to the progress being made in vaccinating the homeless population.
 - There are a number of initiatives going on around vaccinating the homeless population. This includes working with local stakeholders and focusing on government assistive housing. We have had several clinics in Burlington, Bennington, and some in Rutland on their way. We continue to work with the population to gather their ideas and if you have any ideas please reach out.
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III. SEOC Overview/DEM Comments: DEM Director Erica Bornemann

- **SEOC status:** The SEOC remains activated every weekday from 0800 until 1600. On weekends the SEOC is in monitoring status, meaning the watch officer is the point of contact for any resource needs that arise. The SEOC is entirely virtual.
- **Recent policy changes:**
 - Since our last call, Step 2 of the Vermont Forward plan went into effect. This made the following changes:
 - [Business Operations](#): Longer duration or close contact businesses will move from sector-specific guidance to universal guidance.
 - [Gatherings and Events](#): For indoor events, 1 unvaccinated person per 100 sq ft up to 150, plus any number of vaccinated people may attend. For outdoor events, the limit is 300 people, plus any number of vaccinated people.
 - Since our last call, an update to the [mask mandate](#) has become effective. Now, Vermonters are no longer required to wear face coverings over nose and mouth when they are in outdoor public spaces, provided sustained or prolonged close contact with individuals from outside their households can be avoided.
 - The Agency of Commerce and Community Development released [updated specialized guidance](#) for Sports/Organized Sports including Youth Leagues, Adult Leagues, Practices, Games, and Tournaments to align with Step 2 in the Vermont Forward Plan.
 - The Agency of Education released a [Frequently Asked Questions for End of School Year Gatherings and Graduations](#) and Guidance for [Food Services for Day and Overnight Summer Camps Summer 2021](#).
- Please be on the lookout for outreach through the Fire Academy, the VIC and EMS related to access to hand sanitizer and KN95 masks. We have a large supply and are trying to see who is interested in having a stock so we can incorporate that into our routine procedures from the Medical Countermeasures warehouse. For any agency looking to have a supply we are happy to help to try and support.

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- The SEOC continues to support Vermont's vaccination campaign, especially as the state's vaccine allocation increases. The SEOC is helping the Department of Health locate vaccination sites and coordinate other logistics. The SEOC is also working on disaster cost recovery and medical logistics.

IV. FEMA Cost Recovery: VEM Recovery and Mitigation Section Chief, Ben Rose

- Full details about this presentation can be found in the below slides.
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FEMA Public Assistance Overview

May 2021

FEMA Public Assistance Eligibility Overview

Costs Incurred
Between...

January 20, 2020

September 15, 2020

January 21, 2021

September 30, 2021



Policy in Effect:

Various FEMA COVID-19 Factsheets

Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide v.3.1

FEMA Interim Policy #104-009-19

FEMA Interim Policy #104-21-0003

NEW!

Eligible Applicants:

- State and local agencies and non-profits performing direct emergency work to save lives
- Hospitals and emergency services

- State and local agencies not performing direct emergency work
- Schools, colleges, non-profit camps
- Long-term care and childcare facilities
- Public transit, DMVs, courthouses
- State office buildings
- Any other public or non-profit facilities that are under the legal responsibility of entities who receive approval for FEMA assistance (see Next Steps page)

FEMA Cost Share:

100% FEMA Cost Share on Eligible Costs

Based on interpretation of FEMA policy as of 4/21/2021

On April 5, 2021 FEMA issued [interim policy #104-21-0003](#) “Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: Safe Opening and Operation Work Eligible for Public Assistance (Interim)”

According to the new FEMA policy, the following costs are eligible for FEMA PA reimbursement if incurred between January 21, 2021 and September 30, 2021

PPE

Additional cleaning and disinfection

COVID-19 diagnostic testing

Screening and temperature scanning

Temporary physical barriers

Storage of supplies listed in this section

Eligibility deep-dive on next page

Other Key Notes:

- Work that was eligible under interim policy #104-009-19 remains eligible, except where specifically stated otherwise in this new policy
- Applicants must prioritize the use of FEMA funding on the highest-risk communities and underserved populations
- Applicants have the flexibility to determine which source of funding is the most appropriate to use for their costs
- Applicant need to submit a withdrawal or project modification to FEMA within 30 days if applicant discovers duplication of benefits

FEMA Public Assistance eligible costs for January 21, 2021 to September 30, 2021

	Eligible Costs	Examples	Eligibility
For costs incurred 1/21/21-9/30/21	Purchase and distribution of PPE	Face masks, face shields, gloves, gowns, etc.	Eligible for use in any facility that your agency/entity is responsible for, and can be used by the agency/entity staff as well as by the general public who visits your facilities
	Cleaning and disinfection (both supplies and labor) that exceed pre-pandemic routine costs	Disinfectants, wipes, hand sanitizers, etc. <u>Note:</u> only the amount that exceeds routine costs is eligible	Eligible for use in any facility that your agency/entity is responsible for
	COVID-19 diagnostic testing within your agency/entity	All costs associated with testing - setup, administration, PPE for the administrators, etc.	Eligible for all agency/entity staff in any facility that your agency/entity is responsible for (this is to help agencies/entities reopen safely, not to be confused with community-based testing)
	Purchase and distribution of screening and temperature scanning devices	Hand-held temperature devices, kiosks, etc.	Eligible for use in any facility that your agency/entity is responsible for, and can be used by the agency/entity staff as well as by the general public who visits your facilities
	Purchase and installation of temporary physical barriers	Plexiglass dividers, etc. <u>Note:</u> permanent installations of new physical barriers, such as walls, are not eligible	Eligible for use in any facility that your agency/entity is responsible for
	Storage of supplies based on projected need	All eligible costs listed in this chart	Materials purchased before 1/21/2021 but used between 1/21/2021 - 9/30/2021 are eligible

Based on interpretation of FEMA policy as of 4/21/2021

COVID-19 Public Assistance Eligible Work – Comparison Table

		Initial Eligibility Jan. 20, 2020 – Sept. 14, 2020	Ongoing Eligibility Sept. 15, 2020 – Jan. 20, 2021	Eligibility Under Updated Policies Jan. 21, 2021 – Sep. 30, 2021
Medical Care	Clinical Care for COVID patients	✓	✓	✓
	Vaccination	⚠	✓	✓
	Alternate Care Sites & Community Testing Sites	✓	✓	✓
	Contact Tracing Disease & Research	⊘	⊘	⊘
Opening & Operating	Personal Protective Equipment	✓	⚠	✓
	Cleaning & Disinfecting	📄	⚠	✓
	Screening incl. Testing & Temp. Checks	📄	⚠	✓
	Temp. Physical Barriers	📄	⚠	✓
	Virtual Operations	⊘	⊘	⊘
Mass Care	Non. Cong. Sheltering	✓	✓	✓
	Emergency Feeding	✓	✓	✓

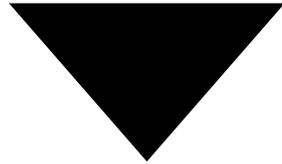
Legend ✓ Eligible Work 📄 Limited Eligibility with Specific Documentation ⚠ Very Limited Eligibility with Specific Criteria ⊘ Ineligible Work

-  Eligibility limited to first responders and healthcare workers; documentation also needs to show no duplication of benefits as some costs were eligible for both FEMA and HHS funding
-  Eligibility limited to costs that were related to performing life-saving work in emergency settings, but not eligible in non-emergency settings such as state office buildings or schools

Based on interpretation of FEMA policy as of 4/21/2021

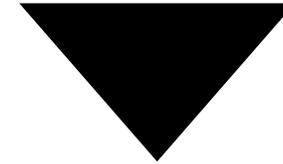
Applicant Next Steps

If you have already submitted a FEMA project for COVID-19 costs before



1. You may submit a new project using the same online FEMA portal, [here](#). For questions during the submission process, please contact Kim.Canarecci@Vermont.gov

If you have not yet applied for a FEMA Request for Public Assistance (“RPA”)



1. Visit [here](#) to apply for a FEMA RPA for your organization. For questions during the RPA submission process, please contact Kim.Canarecci@Vermont.gov
2. Once your RPA is approved by FEMA, you may start filling out the FEMA cost application (instructions will be in the approved RPA notification from FEMA)

APPENDIX

April 5, 2021 FEMA interim policy #104-21-0003 in greater detail

Other Key Notes for the New FEMA Policy:

1. **Work that was eligible under interim policy #104-009-19 remains eligible**, except where specifically stated otherwise in this new policy
2. To ensure an equitable pandemic response, **applicants must prioritize the use of FEMA funding on the highest-risk communities and underserved populations** by doing activities such as providing translations and sign language interpreting for COVID-related communications, special transportation to vaccine sites, etc.
3. The new policy clarifies duplication of benefits and **confirms FEMA applicants have the flexibility to determine which source of funding is the most appropriate to use for their costs**. For example, contact tracing is specifically not FEMA eligible since there are other funding sources more appropriate
4. If an applicant decides to **re-allocate expenses – that have already been submitted to FEMA or reimbursed by FEMA – to another funding source**, or discovers duplication of benefits, the applicant should **submit a withdrawal or project modification with FEMA no later than 30 days from the decision or discovery**

April 5, 2021 FEMA interim policy #104-21-0003 in greater detail

FEMA Eligibility Considerations:

1. **Must have at least \$3,300 in costs to submit a FEMA project** (\$3,300 = per project minimum threshold)
2. All **safe opening and operation work must be required** as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and be a measure to save lives and protect public health and safety
3. All costs must be justified as **necessary and reasonable** based on circumstances at the time of decision-making
4. Costs were acquired through **established policies and procedures**, and must conform to relevant federal requirements
5. **Costs and procurement processes must be documented in sufficient detail** for FEMA to evaluate compliance with federal laws, internal policies, and Public Assistance Program requirements.

April 5, 2021 FEMA interim policy #104-21-0003 in greater detail

Eligible Work (Excerpt from FEMA Guidance):

1. Purchase and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), defined as items including surgical masks, filtering respirators, gloves, protective eyewear, face shields, and protective clothing.
 - a. Cloth face coverings, though not considered PPE, are also eligible.
 - b. Any costs related to training for proper use of PPE are eligible.
2. Cleaning and disinfection, in accordance with CDC guidance or that of an appropriate Public Health official available at the time the work was completed, including the purchase and provision of necessary supplies and equipment in excess of regularly budgeted costs.
3. COVID-19 diagnostic testing.
4. Screening and temperature scanning, including, but not limited to, the purchase and distribution of hand-held temperature measuring devices or temperature screening equipment.
5. Acquisition and installation of temporary physical barriers, such as plexiglass barriers and screens/dividers, and signage to support social distancing, such as floor decals.
6. Purchase and storage of PPE and other supplies based on projected needs.