

FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

State of Vermont step-by-step guidance for Applicants:

What to do after a federally declared disaster

1. ATTEND A STATE-ORGANIZED **APPLICANT BRIEFING**

Watch for emails, press releases and news announcements with the dates and times of the State's Applicant Briefing(s), and attend one to hear about details of the Public Assistance process. If you had significant damage from the event but do not hear anything about an applicant briefing within 30 days, contact kim.canarecci@vermont.gov.

2. FILL OUT AND SUBMIT A **REQUEST FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE** ("RPA") FORM

Bring your Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), and your DUNS number to the Applicant Briefing, where you will fill out a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) form. This simple form can be found at http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1606-20490-4263/90_049_2013.pdf. It must be submitted to the State within 30 days of a disaster declaration, with no exceptions. The State verifies that each applicant has a federal tax id number and is registered with SAM.GOV, and submits the RPA forms to FEMA.

3. RECEIVE, REVIEW, AND SIGN A **SUBGRANT AGREEMENT**

The Public Assistance Officer (kim.canarecci@vermont.gov) notifies the Department of Public Safety Financial Office to issue a Subgrant agreement to each eligible applicant. The subgrant agreement, which includes instructions, is emailed to you. Watch for it and respond immediately. **Sign all forms and return to DPS** for execution by the DPS Commissioner. An executed subgrant agreement will be sent to you by email, including the form that you will need to request payment, called a "GMU 502F financial form and Financial Report Workbook". You will need to sign and submit this form to receive payments (described in #7, below).

4. ATTEND A **KICK-OFF MEETING** WITH YOUR FEMA PROJECT SPECIALIST

a. FEMA schedules and conducts a kick off meeting with each Applicant that has submitted an RPA. A person from the State will also attend if possible, although that is not required by FEMA. In preparation for the kick-off meeting, gather documentation of work that has already been completed and the costs incurred, as well as documentation of work which remains to be done. See <http://vem.vermont.gov/publicassistance> for complete checklists and guidance. Kick-off meetings typically include a windshield tour with FEMA to view damaged locations.

b. Project Specialists from FEMA gather documentation from Applicants to write up project worksheets ("PWs") that they submit into the FEMA database, "EMMIE." It is then reviewed in EMMIE by various FEMA subject matter experts (e.g. insurance,

environmental and historic preservation). Applicants have **60 days** from the Kick-off meeting to identify all damaged sites and provide documentation to FEMA.

5. **READ EMAILS!**

The State Public Assistance Officer sends out email updates to Applicants who have submitted RPAs. These emails include information that is valuable to assist you through the PA process, including upcoming deadlines.

6. FEMA WRITES **PROJECT WORKSHEETS -- REVIEW THEM CAREFULLY!**

Ask your FEMA Project Specialist to show and discuss your project worksheets. Discuss any issues or concerns with your Project Specialist, local District Tech and the State Public Assistance Officer at this time. Keep track of your time spent working on each project – it should be eligible for FEMA reimbursement as Direct Administrative Cost (“DAC”)!

7. **SUBMIT YOUR FINANCIAL REPORT WORKBOOK (“GMU502F” form)**

After your first project is completed by FEMA, the DPS Financial Office sends you the executed copy of the subgrant agreement, along with the financial report form (**Financial Report Workbook; GMU 502F**) and a large project quarterly report form (for programmatic progress reporting) if the Applicant has one or more large projects. You need to submit the GMU502F in order to request payment.

8. **FOR SMALL PROJECTS** (under \$121,800)...

- a. **Project Completion and Certification Report (PCCR):** When all of an Applicant’s **small** projects are completed, a **Project Completion and Certification Report** form will be sent from DEMHS to the Agency of Transportation District Technician.
- b. The PCCR is signed by the Applicant to assert that the work is completed, and signed by the VTrans District Technician to assert that they have completed a final inspection on each project and determined that the work was completed in accordance with the written scope of the Project Worksheet.
- c. **The District Technician and Applicant signs** and submits it back to the Public Assistance Officer.
- d. The Public Assistance Officer reviews and signs off on the PCCR form and forwards it to the Financial Office for final payment.

9. **FOR LARGE PROJECTS** (over \$121,800)

- a. Applicants can request payments from the DPS Financial Office for up to 75% of the 75% federal share on large projects by sending in a financial report workbook and GMU 502F form with invoices as work is completed. *Note: for large projects, you need to **request payment by doing this step.***
- b. Applicants must submit quarterly large project reports to the Public Assistance Officer (by January 15, April 15, July 15, October 15 and for final closeout) for all large projects until the project is closed out. The **Quarterly Large Project Progress Report form** is posted on the DEMHS website at <http://vem.vermont.gov/sites/vem/files/Quarterly%20Large%20Project%20Progress%20Report%20%28QLPR%29.pdf>.

- c. When the PAO receives a Large Project Quarterly Report that shows an Applicants' large project is 75% or more completed, the PAO emails a **Large Project Closeout Request** form, **Closeout FEMA Template**, and the **FEMA Project Documentation Closeout Checklist**. When a project is ready for Closeout, the town must submit the **Large Project Closeout Request** form to the PAO. This form asserts that the work was completed in accordance with the scope of work written in the Project Worksheet, and completed within the approved Period of Performance.
- d. Large projects must go through a formal closeout process as detailed in federal regulation (DAP 9570.14 found at http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1847-25045-2993/9570.14_program_management_and_grant_closeout_sop.pdf); closeout documentation must be organized according to the guidance available at vem.vermont.gov/publicassistance in the **FEMA Project Documentation Closeout Checklist**.
- e. When the PAO receives a Large Project Closeout Request form (<http://vem.vermont.gov/sites/vem/files/Large%20Project%20Closeout%20Request%20Form%20%28LPCR%29.pdf>), A DEMHS Public Assistance Coordinator is assigned to assist the Applicant in completing Closeout of the project, which will include a separate **Project Completion and Certification Report (PCCR)** for each large project.

10. RECEIVING STATE SHARE

- a. The State of Vermont pays a percentage of the 25% non-federal share. How much the State contributes varies, based on the Applicant's status regarding the criteria set forth in the rules of Vermont's **Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund ("ERAF")**. All municipal applicants receive 7.5%. Those who meet four criteria qualify for 12.5%, and those who take additional measures to protect against future flood damage can qualify for 17.5%. To see your municipality's current status and learn more about the criteria, go to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Flood Ready website (www.floodready.vermont.gov). ERAF percentages are determined by the Secretary of Administration or their designee, based on conformance with ERAF rule requirements, as of 30 days after a federal declaration.
- b. The Financial Office uses the PCCR small project and/or PCCR large project closeout form along with the GMU 502F to reimburse the ERAF State Share of the Applicant's obligated projects. State Share is dispersed for ALL small projects after they are obligated and closed out in EMMIE and the PCCR, signed by the VTrans District Tech, is received by the PAO. State Share is dispersed for large projects on a project-by-project basis as each project is obligated and closed out in EMMIE.

11. FINAL CLOSEOUT

The DPS Finance office emails out a letter closing out the Applicant's subgrant after all final payments have been made. You made it!