

FEMA Public Assistance Resources for Courts

A Pandemic Resource from NCSC

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FEMA administers a Public Assistance (PA) grant program which provides federal assistance to government organizations and certain private nonprofit organizations following a Presidential disaster declaration. As the COVID-19 Pandemic is now a federally declared national emergency pursuant to Sec. 501(b) of the Stafford Act, there may be reimbursement dollars available for costs incurred as part of the courts' Pandemic response. In order to be eligible for reimbursement, it is essential that courts document and track their expenditures and be proactive in working within published FEMA guidelines.

It is important that courts coordinate PA grant applications with their respective county or state emergency management agency. Emergency management officials may also be able to answer other additional questions that courts may have about the PA process.

Courts should regularly check on FEMA guidance regarding the Public Assistance Programs. Some points to consider include:

- FEMA encourages officials to take appropriate actions that are necessary to protect public health and safety pursuant to public health guidance.
- Eligible emergency protective measures taken at the direction or guidance of public health officials in response to this emergency, and not supported by the authorities of another federal agency, will be reimbursed under the FEMA PA program.
- FEMA has issued a fact sheet that provides guidance on the types of emergency protective measures that may be eligible under the PA Program in accordance with the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration. See fact sheet at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Eligible Emergency Protective Measures](#).
- FEMA is simplifying the Public Assistance application process. FEMA is developing a simplified online form applicants can complete, and on which they may explain work activities, answer basic questions, provide limited supporting documentation, and provide a cost estimate. See fact sheet at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Public Assistance Simplified Application](#).
- Federal disaster assistance grant programs have additional requirements to complete before FEMA allocates and dispenses grant funds. The [FEMA New Recipients of Disaster Grants Guide](#) describes requirements for Recipients in requesting and receiving FEMA disaster assistance grant funding.
- The [Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#) combines FEMA Public Assistance policy into a single volume and provides an overview of the program implementation process with links to other publications and documents that provide additional process details.