Local Elected and Appointed Officials Guide:

Roles and Resources in Emergency Management

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1. Introduction

Elected and appointed leaders — subsequently referred to as "senior officials" — balance many responsibilities and are expected to serve in numerous roles to support and lead their jurisdiction.[1] These responsibilities range from establishing policies and budgets that influence residents' livelihoods to answering questions from members of the community and media. Responsibilities increase during disasters and senior officials cannot conduct their jobs alone. The public often sees senior officials as responsible for the success or failure of disaster response and recovery efforts. Communities can respond more effectively during disasters when their senior officials are familiar with emergency management processes and have established relationships with their emergency managers.

Senior officials make significant policy and resource decisions before, during and after disasters. For example, in the aftermath of a disaster, senior officials may work closely with the private sector and local and state government organizations to allocate scarce resources. By collaborating with emergency managers, senior officials can better understand the needs of the community and be able to make informed decisions. This guide provides an overview of how senior officials can prepare and respond to disasters to save lives, lead disaster recovery operations and build more resilient communities.

What are Local Governments?

For the purposes of this guide, "local government" means:

(A) "a county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government;

(B) an Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or in Alaska a Native village or Alaska Regional Native Corporation; and

(C) a rural community, unincorporated town or village or other public entity."[2]

Other definitions may apply in individual states, local entities, tribes or territories.

[1] While the primary audience for this guide is local elected and appointed officials, many of the listed concepts and considerations may also apply to officials with crisis management responsibilities in public, private or non-profit organizations.

[2] 6 U.S. Code section 101(13), https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title6/chapter1&edition=prelim. The reference in this statute to tribal nations as "local governments" must be understood in light of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013, Pub. Law No. 113-2. "Previously, the Stafford Act defined tribal governments as 'local governments.' The Stafford Act now reflects that tribal governments are sovereign and acknowledges the government-to-government relationship between the United States and tribal governments." Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2017, *Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance*, January, p. 4, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/tribal-declaration-pilot-guidance.pdf.

Fortunately, a 2019 survey found 88% of responding county governments have established emergency management agencies to protect their residents. Over 70% of these agencies' directors report to their elected officials.[3] Consequently, many senior officials have direct access to emergency management expertise and dedicated staff.

Emergency management is a specialized field that builds community resilience through planning, training and exercises. This guide is an executive-level introduction to emergency management concepts, vocabulary and principles for local senior officials and focuses specifically on their responsibilities. The document's main body provides guidance in plain language, avoiding technical detail and is organized as follows:

- Section 1: Provides an overview of the guide;
- Section 2: Provides an overview of threats and hazards and discusses senior officials' tasks before, during and after disasters;
- Section 3: Identifies possible sources of assistance;
- Section 4: Explains the reasoning and procedures for declaring or proclaiming emergencies and disasters by different levels of government;
- Section 5**:** Highlights key stakeholder considerations; and
- Section 6: Provides a summary of conclusions.

The guide also contains links to appendices that offer more detailed information: Appendix A for a senior official's checklist, Appendix B for information on the recovery continuum, Appendix C for an explanation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Appendix D for federal financial resources. These appendices can be viewed or printed individually and used as a checklist of key actions before, during and after disasters. Appendix E lists both online and in-person training opportunities offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Appendix F contains links to additional resources and Appendix G contains a glossary to terms used throughout the document. Readers can link directly or print out sections most relevant to their interests.

It is important for senior officials to prepare themselves before a disaster strikes. They can maximize the benefit of this guide by reviewing and implementing the included concepts and principles *well ahead* of incidents. By coordinating with emergency managers, leveraging local government departments and engaging with diverse sets of community stakeholders, senior officials and the whole community will be better prepared for greater success during and after incidents.[4]

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[3] National Association of Counties, 2019, *Managing Disasters at the County Level: A National Survey*, March, p. 3, https://www.naco.org/sites/default/files/documents/Emergency%20Management%20in%20County%20Government_03.25.19.pdf.

[4] The whole community includes individuals and communities, businesses, private and public sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure, faith-based organizations, nonprofit organizations and all levels of government (regional/

2. Leading Communities to Address Threats and Hazards

Overseeing a jurisdiction's disaster resilience is a significant challenge. Resources are available to help senior officials understand the threats and hazards that present the greatest risks to their communities and how to reduce those risks. This section suggests a process to:

- Become acquainted with threats and hazards that have potential to cause loss of life or property;
- Engage emergency management personnel;
- Encourage active collaboration among all community stakeholders in disaster planning; and
- Identify key actions to take before, during and after disasters.

Appendix A contains a detailed checklist and a suggested go-kit for senior officials.

2.1. What Can Go Wrong?

Local senior officials should be familiar with the potential impacts of threats and hazards such as floods, storms, earthquakes and wildfires, as well as less predictable incidents like active shooters, technological hazards, extended power outages or cyber incidents. Receiving a comprehensive risk assessment when elected or appointed, and then meeting regularly with the emergency manager is a great way to stay informed. Emergency managers can help senior officials learn about the threats and hazards most likely to affect the jurisdiction and the potential incident's impact on people, infrastructure and the economy.

Senior officials have a key role in ensuring emergency management concepts are integrated across community initiatives. As new threats emerge, both natural and human caused, communities must establish well rounded approaches to assess risks in support of building long-term resilience and climate adaptation strategies. Encouraging these initiatives will help their community recover from disasters and reduce risk to save lives, protect property and the environment and support the economy.

The impacts of climate change will make many types of hazards more frequent and extreme, creating new risks for local governments.[5] Each jurisdiction may experience impacts differently, depending on geographic location, land use and development patterns. Many places may see more frequent and intense rains leading to more severe flooding, with rising sea levels contributing to more frequent and intense coastal flooding and storm surge. Other areas may suffer from more severe drought because of higher temperatures and decreased precipitation, creating increased wildfire risks. Furthermore, the impacts of climate change exacerbate disasters on historically underserved communities and socially vulnerable populations.

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metropolitan, state, local, tribal, territorial, insular areas and federal). Source: National Response Framework, available at https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/response.

[5] For more information on FEMA Resources for Climate Resilience, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_resources-climate-resilience.pdf.

Equity Considerations

Understanding potential disaster consequences begins with knowing who in the area might be affected, especially those disproportionately impacted. It is vitally important for senior officials to understand the demographic composition within their communities such as historically underserved populations, individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs since they may require additional assistance during a disaster. Resident income levels, population density, employment rates, types of housing, homeless population and major physical infrastructure are examples of important data that are generally available. Senior officials can use the Social Vulnerability Index, which employs U.S. Census Bureau variables, to identify communities that may need support in preparing for hazards or recovering from disasters.[6]

In addition to analyzing the data, equitable planning includes identifying, involving and understanding the distinct perspectives, concerns and characteristics of underserved communities. Jurisdictional policies and initiatives should be seen through an equity lens and routinely informed by how they will impact underserved communities. For example, positioning and allocating necessary resources before an incident can accelerate support to these underserved populations and reduce disaster impacts. See Section 5 for more information.

Emergency managers can provide important knowledge about the vulnerabilities and consequences presented by the various threats and hazards specific to the area. Disaster consequences deserve special focus because they directly affect those who live, work, shop or play within the jurisdiction. Consequences can include:

- Loss of life;
- Physical injuries;
- Psychological distress;
- Homelessness and other social displacements;
- Greater impacts on vulnerable populations;
- Direct and indirect economic effects;
- Loss of commerce and tax revenue;
- Environmental degradation; and
- Cascading impacts.

[6] For more information on the Social Vulnerability Index, see https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/social-vulnerability or https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html.

FEMA's Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT) is a source of information that can assist local senior officials in formulating questions and help provide insights about their jurisdiction's threat and hazard profile.[7] Other sources of information include the results of Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessments and hazard mitigation plans.[8] These resources describe long-term strategies for protecting people and property from disasters and help to break the cycle of disaster damage and reconstruction.

Resilience Analysis & Planning Tool

FEMA's RAPT is a free geographic information system (GIS) mapping tool that provides a straightforward means for understanding and mapping hazards. RAPT supports both quick snapshots and in-depth analyses using comprehensive data and intuitive user controls.

2.2. Who Steps Up When Disaster Strikes?

Subject to applicable law, constituents or appointing authorities have empowered senior officials to make key policy decisions and to communicate those decisions effectively. Many senior officials benefit from information and support of trained and professional emergency managers. These individuals often report directly to senior officials and serve as coordinators across agencies and with whole community partners. Senior officials should get to know their emergency managers and related response and recovery organization heads (e.g., fire chief, police chief, emergency medical services director, public health and social services officials, planning directors) and their respective capabilities, support needs and roles.[9] Additionally, senior officials should be familiar with key private sector representatives, including critical infrastructure leaders, utility company owners and operators and major healthcare providers. Developing relationships with state elected and emergency management officials prior to events can also help navigate disaster response and recovery efforts.

The emergency manager is a key part of a resilient system, working with relevant agencies and organizations to assess and mitigate risks, respond to emergencies and carry out recovery activities. Senior officials affect policy and procedures within communities and are the primary authority to promote emergency management in local jurisdictions. While senior officials do not need to know all of the details about how this system works, their engaged leadership and support is fundamental to protecting the community. Senior officials should guide all government, business and organization leaders (including faith-based and secular nonprofit groups) to coordinate and collaborate with the emergency manager so they can act decisively before, during and after disasters.[10]

[7] For more information on FEMA's Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT), see https://www.fema.gov/rapt.

[8] For more information on the Threat and Hazard Identification Assessment, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/risk-capability-assessment.

[9] For more information on state emergency management contacts in your location, see https://www.fema.gov/locations.

[10] For more information on Engaging Faith-based and Community Organizations, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/engaging-faith-based-and-community-organizations.pdf.

Although senior officials may know local business leaders, the emergency manager likely knows their emergency management counterparts in those organizations. For example, emergency managers may have discussions with private sector organization emergency management coordinators at medical facilities, energy facilities, educational institutions or large employers. Those counterparts often are best equipped to describe how their individual organization can help in response and recovery, or to communicate what they need to be able to reopen and provide critical jobs and services to the community. Thus, senior officials, working closely with their emergency managers, can build a more resilient community while also executing their respective roles and responsibilities.

Exercises

Exercises are crucial in preparing communities for the threats and hazards they face. Senior officials provide direction for exercise and evaluation programs that can enhance familiarity and coordination among the whole community. Exercises provide opportunities for the community to plan, assess and validate capabilities and address areas for improvement. Participation in exercises offers senior officials an opportunity to gain greater familiarity with their local emergency plans, authorities, response and recovery approaches and roles. Exercises will also help officials understand jurisdictional shortfalls and strengths.

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) offers guidance, tools and other information to support exercise activities.[11] Additionally, to request exercise development support, please visit the National Exercise Program (NEP).[12] State emergency management agencies may also have additional exercise resources and training.

2.3. Leading Before, During and After Disasters

The leadership roles and responsibilities of senior officials can be quite different before, during and after disasters. Senior officials have many more opportunities for saving lives and protecting property before disaster strikes. For instance, senior officials may champion robust policies to reduce the consequences of disasters through risk-informed mitigation planning. These actions may include acquiring property, elevating structures, constructing safe rooms, implementing hazard-resistant building codes and mitigation projects, land use planning or reducing insurance costs by participating in the

The Nation Saves Through Hazard Mitigation Programs

In a 23-year cost-benefit analysis, the National Institute of Building Sciences identified a national ***$6 savings for every $1 invested from federal hazard mitigation grants*** provided by the Economic Development Agency, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and FEMA.[13]

[11] For more information on HSEEP, see http://www.fema.gov/hseep.

[12] For more information on NEP, see https://www.fema.gov/nep.

[13] For more information on the Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves report, see https://www.nibs.org/projects/natural-hazard-mitigation-saves-2019-report.

National Flood Insurance Community Rating System.[14] Senior officials should also review and be familiar with jurisdictional plans. By engaging public and private stakeholders in their leadership capacity, senior officials are better equipped to strengthen the content of these plans. Even with detailed plans and knowledge before incidents, senior officials will need to be active during disasters and communicate critical decisions to key leaders, stakeholders and the public. After disasters, senior officials may lead the coordination and distribution of recovery funds to build a stronger and more resilient community. This section summarizes optimal emergency management practices before, during and after these incidents.

2.3.1. BUILD RESILIENCE *BEFORE*

Senior officials can improve the community's preparedness and resilience before a disaster. Steps senior officials can take include:

Work with the emergency manager to establish preparedness priorities and encourage all government agency heads, academic and nonprofit organizations and business leaders to coordinate and collaborate on the jurisdiction's mitigation, response and recovery planning efforts. FEMA's Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, Version 3.0) offers comprehensive information on how to develop effective plans.[15]

Champion community risk reduction by adopting and implementing mitigation and climate adaptation strategies. Examples include implementing hazard-resistant building codes and land use planning.[16]

Encourage individuals, families and businesses to develop emergency plans and be self-sufficient in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

Participate personally in emergency and disaster preparedness exercises to demonstrate support and practice executing legal and leadership responsibilities. Exercises also build familiarity with emergency management plans and staff.

Prepare for possible media interviews by working with the Public Information Officer (PIO) to build relationships with traditional and social media outlets and develop coordinated messaging.

Understand how continuity of essential private sector services and government operations will be maintained during disasters to minimize casualties and impacts, which may continue for long periods and require decentralized employee work locations.

[14] For more information on the National Flood Insurance Community Rating System, see https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system.

[15] For more information on Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, Version 3.0), see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_cpg-101-v3-developing-maintaining-eops.pdf.

[16] For more information on Hazard Mitigation Planning, see https://www.fema.gov/mitigation.

Appendix A provides a Senior Official "Go Kit" list of items that may be needed at the disaster work location during response operations.

Case Study: Wildland Fire Mitigation through Building Codes

During the 2018 Wildland Fire Conference, the entire Ouray County Colorado's Planning Commission learned that updating building codes and regulations is an effective mitigation strategy for wildland fires. They also engaged with industry professionals and other jurisdictions experiencing severe wildland fire risk on the latest wildland fire science information.17

"(We learned lessons that mitigation) can be replicated in any jurisdiction. If an ember can land on your roof, you do not want a combustible roof… The key is about meeting the need. We (the Board of County Commissioners) provided the political will and direction to implement. It took the talent of the planning commission staff to draft (the regulations)." -Commissioner Ben Tisdel, Ouray County Board of County Commissioners

The Ouray County Board of County Commissioners first adopted significant revisions to the County's Wildfire Mitigation Regulations in 2019. The revised regulations have a larger effect on most new building construction projects and larger expansions to existing structures. Regulations include fire-resistant roofing (Class-A) and hardening of structures and sites so embers have no place to rest and potentially ignite surfaces. These codes were further refined in 2021 after being field tested and simplified from lessons learned (e.g., changing from a point system to a pass/fail system). The community and building professionals were supportive of these code revisions. The initiative to reduce wildfire impacts through hazard resilient building codes benefited from a supportive community and having committed elected officials invest political will into this mitigation effort.

Figure 1: Ouray County, Colorado Landscape (Source: Ben Tisdel)

[17] For more information on FEMA's Building Science resources, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/building-science.

2.3.2. RESPOND EFFECTIVELY *DURING*

On average, 24% of U.S. counties experienced disasters annually from 2016 to 2018.[18] In 2020, an emergency declaration was declared in every jurisdiction throughout the United States due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[19] This emphasizes the need for effective emergency management leadership in all communities. When disasters strike, senior officials should implement the plans the emergency management agencies and partners have built. Here are some recommended priority actions to take during response:

Get informed quickly and stay in close touch with the emergency manager. Develop a regular meeting cadence with the lead emergency manager and appropriate individuals.

Trust and empower emergency management officials. This may include obtaining assistance from other agencies, the private sector or neighboring jurisdictions, declaring a state of emergency, issuing emergency orders and assuring compliance with proper fiscal procedures.

Communicate quickly, clearly and effectively to the whole community and work with the PIO and other partners to ensure coordinated and accessible communication. Common public questions are:

- **What happened?** It is okay to say, "We don't know yet" or "We will get back to you as soon as possible with an answer" since initial information about the situation may be scarce, unclear and even contradictory.
- **What are you doing about it?** Describe the big picture such as meeting with command staff or connecting with other officials at different levels of government. However, leave operational details to staff.
- **What does it mean to me?** Acknowledge the public's apprehensions while describing their role in the response and recovery. For example, many communities have found that monetary donations from the public can be enormously helpful, but that donations of goods are usually very hard to handle during disasters.

Please see Appendix A for more information about public messaging and critical decisions that typically are made as incidents unfold.

[18] National Association of Counties, 2019, *Managing Disasters at the County Level: A National Survey*, March, p. 3, https://www.naco.org/sites/default/files/documents/Emergency%20Management%20in%20County%20Government_03.25.19.pdf.

[19] For more information on COVID-19 Disaster Declarations, see https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/disaster-declarations.

Case Study: Chatham County, Georgia's Executive Leadership (Pocket) Guide

To assist with onboarding local elected and appointed officials, Chatham County Georgia developed a small, spiral-bound "Executive Leadership Guide" which outlines senior official responsibilities before, during and after a disaster. The Guide is organized with sectional tabs outlining specific information pertinent to senior officials in Chatham County from preparedness responsibilities through response and into long term recovery. The guide can be quickly referenced during an event to determine roles and responsibilities, as well as legal authorities. "*This Executive Guide really helped me during (Hurricane) Irma. It helped me stay on track and provided the right amount of information for me to convey to others!*" –Chatham County Elected Official. For more information, contact the Chatham Emergency Management Agency at CEMA@chathamcounty.org.

Local jurisdictions can also check with their state emergency management agencies for similar guides, which in turn can serve as potential templates for a local resource.

2.3.3. RECOVER EFFICIENTLY *AFTER*

Recovery efforts will continue for months or even years after a disaster has occurred. Building resilience before an incident occurs may reduce costs and time during the recovery period. Below are recommended priorities for recovering after a disaster:

Identify opportunities to build more resilient communities through improved planning and smart infrastructure investments, including mitigation projects and climate adaptation strategies that reduce risk from future events.

Understand use of the financial and in-kind assistance programs available that will help both community members and the government. For more information, see Appendix D.

Leverage the expertise and resources of various departments and partner organizations. Include personnel with planning, community outreach, housing, public works, education systems, economic development, natural resources and public health expertise. FEMA's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Local Governments provides more potential partners.[20]

Clearly communicate with community members and set realistic expectations to help instill trust and confidence during the recovery process. The recovery process and programs can be complex.

Ensure all codes and regulations are enforced during the recovery process. Develop disaster financial management processes and procedures before an incident.

Appendix B presents a more detailed description of the recovery process.

[20] For more information on the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Local Governments, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/pre-disaster-recovery-planning-guide-local-governments.pdf.

Case Study: Leading Tribal Recovery

This is an excerpt from two case studies prepared on the Santa Clara Pueblo's recovery efforts. To read the full case studies, visit Restoring Native Ecosystems to Build Resilience and A Tribe's Journey to Prepare, Mitigate, and Recover.

"The Santa Clara Pueblo's Governor, J. Michael Chavarria, reflected on what the community had experienced over the past eight years. The Santa Clara Pueblo, a federally recognized tribe 3,500 strong, had been directly hit by a massive wildfire in August 2011, known as the Las Conchas Fire. Due to the Las Conchas Fire and several other major fires in previous years, 80% of the pueblo's forested areas had been razed. The Las Conchas Fire alone burned 28% of all the land that supports the Pueblo….

After facing devastating flash flooding events in both July and September of 2013, Governor Chavarria applied and received the first-ever disaster declarations in the region for which a tribal nation was the direct recipient. The Governor had previously served as Forestry Director, switching into an emergency management role after the Las Conchas Fire at a time when the Tribe did not have an emergency management department. He led the response efforts during the wildfire and subsequent flooding events and was equipped to lead the 2013 recovery effort as Governor with the lessons he had learned from the previous two disasters. Restoring the integrity of the Santa Clara Watershed and protecting his community from future harm were his top priorities."[21]

[21] For more information on the Santa Clara Pueblo case studies, see https://www.fema.gov/case-study/restoring-native-ecosystems-build-resilience and https://www.fema.gov/case-study/tribes-journey-prepare-mitigate-and-recover.

2.3.4. LEARN FROM HISTORY

Senior officials can use their unique vantage point as local leaders to review lessons from prior experiences and incidents from neighboring or other jurisdictions. Peer to peer sharing among senior officials is a beneficial way to learn from past experiences. It is equally important for today's senior officials to document these incidents for future generations of leaders.

Lessons Observed

Lessons from incidents and exercises are part of a continuous improvement process. Some of the lessons observed related to the needs of senior officials include:

- Focusing on mitigation to minimize or totally avoid disaster impacts. The story of the massive 1997 Grand Forks, ND, flood and its aftermath is both inspirational and cautionary;[22]
- Understanding emergency roles and responsibilities before an incident;
- Scheduling regular briefings with emergency managers before, during and after disasters to increase visibility of challenges and identify opportunities to increase community resilience;
- Coordinating response actions and public communications, such as evacuation announcements, between jurisdictional officials to provide accurate and timely public information and to promote unified messaging; and
- Building relationships with new partners, such as private-sector resource providers and nonprofit organizations.

[22] For more information on the Grand Forks, ND Case Study, see https://www.fema.gov/case-study/new-grand-forks-committed-reducing-future-losses.

Case Study: Hawai'i County's Resilience Hubs

When COVID-19 shut Hawai'i down in March of 2020, the community was well prepared to respond from a prior event. After the Kīlauea volcanic eruption on the island of Hawai'i in 2018, the Puna community banded together and created Pu'uhonua o Puna Information & Supply Hub to give evacuees the support they needed during and after the eruption. In the years to follow, "The Hub" inspired grassroots initiatives across the State, and served as a model for activation of the Vibrant Hawai'i Resilience Hub network, where nearly 30 communities around Hawai'i Island served as hubs during the pandemic.

"As an elected official, people listen to you…yet this (initiative) has always been community-driven and government-supported," said Ashley Kierkiewicz, Council Member for District 4, County of Hawai'i, and co-chair of the Vibrant Hawai'i Resilience Hub and Economy Streams.

Resilience Hubs 1.0 (Sept. - Dec. 2020) leveraged CARES Act funding to power on a network of community-driven spaces that delivered emergency resources and support including children's virtual learning, digital connectivity, food bags, restaurant prepared meals and wellness programming. More than 41,700 households and 108,200 individuals were served via sites that residents had a strong connection to including local churches, farmers markets, County gyms and a train museum.

Phase II of the Resilience Hubs expanded the network, with the goal of increasing hub independence and financial sustainability by leveraging community assets to pilot economic initiatives. Hubs 2.0 provided community partners with a suite of tools, resources and mentorship to assist residents, revitalize the economy and build capacity and organizational infrastructure so communities are better prepared for future events. Just one example is how Vibrant Hawai'i was able to leverage Hubs 2.0 to execute Kaukau 4 Keiki, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Program, which provided 4,000 children with 10 pounds of locally-sourced produce and shelf stable protein, bread and milk for six weeks. Vibrant Hawai'i continues to expand its Resilience Hub network, holding space for increasing community self-determination and empowering residents to be ready for anything: challenges beyond COVID, economic downturns and the impacts of climate change. For more information about Vibrant Hawai'i Resilience Hub phases and additional projects, https://www.vibranthawaii.org/hubs.

Figure 2: Kupuna (seniors) providing food through Kaukau 4 Keiki. These Kupuna have supported Puna residents throughout numerous disasters including Hurricane Iselle, two lava flows and the pandemic. (Source: Ashley Kierkiewicz)

3. Community Resource Assistance

State, local, tribal and territorial governments are responsible for supporting their communities and may need additional resources to assist disaster efforts.[25] Local resources are the first option in responding to and recovering from a disaster. However, when the scope of a disaster expands beyond the capabilities and resources of the local government, there are mechanisms for acquiring and distributing more resources to support the community. Section 3.1 outlines pre-disaster considerations. Section 3.2 describes a common type of assistance, mutual aid, that governmental units may provide or receive. Section 3.3 highlights state, territorial and tribal resources. Finally, Section 3.4 provides federal capacity building grants, as well as administrative responsibilities that accompany federal funding.

Tribal Resource Assistance

The Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (SRIA) amended the Stafford Act to provide federally recognized Indian tribal governments the option to request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. FEMA's Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance further clarifies United States policy related to tribal Stafford Act declarations and the options tribal governments have to seek assistance.[23] FEMA's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Tribal Governments provides guidance to both federally recognized and state recognized tribes and is appropriate for all incidents with or without a Presidential declared disaster.[24]

3.1. Enabling Disaster Assistance

Most disasters begin and end locally. Local disaster assistance also occurs outside of government entities. Private sector entities, both commercial and nonprofit, can often help quickly and effectively because they are members of the community as well as stakeholders.

Mutual aid is defined as "the timely and efficient sharing of capabilities in the form of resources and services upon request."[26] Mutual aid opportunities may be available from neighboring governments or even through the nationwide Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).[27] From a local or tribal government perspective, state, territory and federal assistance (usually obtained through states, tribes and territories) may be sought when additional or specialized resources or capabilities

[23] For more information on FEMA's Tribal Declaration Pilot Guidance, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/tribal-declaration-pilot-guidance.pdf.

[24] For more information on FEMA's Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Tribal Governments, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/pre-disaster-recovery-planning-guide-for-tribal-government.pdf.

[25] "Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution vests Congress, and by extension the Executive and Judicial branches of our government, with the authority to engage in relations with the tribes, thereby firmly placing tribes within the constitutional fabric of our nation." U.S. Department of the Interior, undated, *Indian Affairs: Frequently Asked Questions*, https://www.bia.gov/frequently-asked-questions.

[26] FEMA, 2017, "National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid," November, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_mutual_aid_guideline_20171105.pdf.

[27] For more information about the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, see https://emacweb.org/.

are needed. The assistance and related procurement requirements from these levels of government may have different procedures.

Local governments are responsible for developing procedures to document costs for potential subsequent reimbursement. Establishing strong procurement policies and processes before a disaster occurs can help jurisdictions save time and money, and more effectively manage outside assistance when available.

Senior officials can help make these support mechanisms function effectively before, during and after disasters occur. By knowing community hazards and developing relationships with emergency managers and other key stakeholders in the geographic area, senior officials can help lead efforts to ensure funding and in-kind resources are sufficient, used prudently and administered by the emergency manager(s) as required. Section 4 provides an overview of the emergency and disaster declarations that enable access to additional resources.

3.2. Mutual Aid

The purpose of mutual aid agreements is to facilitate rapid, short-term deployment of emergency support from public or private sector partners before, during or after incidents, especially if local resources are inadequate or overwhelmed. Senior officials can build support in cooperation with emergency managers for cost-effective sharing arrangements.

Mutual aid agreements establish the terms under which one party provides resources—personnel, teams, facilities, equipment and supplies—to another party. Because most jurisdictions do not maintain resource levels to handle extreme incidents on their own, mutual aid agreements provide a means for jurisdictions to augment their resources when needed for high-demand incidents.[28] Mutual aid agreements help jurisdictions to:

- Specify how mutual aid agreements are to be activated when needed;
- Coordinate response and recovery planning;
- Expand available response resources;
- Define relationships among partner jurisdictions;
- Arrange for specialized resource deployments;
- Designate responsibilities for workers' compensation;
- Reduce uncertainty regarding liability claims;
- Temporarily expand the number of available licensed professionals; and
- Recover costs of response and recovery.

Mutual aid agreements can be scaled to the sizes of participating jurisdictions, the extent of covered risks, or both. Hence, they can be local, regional, statewide or interstate in scope. Like any contract, mutual aid agreements should be documented in writing, updated routinely, reviewed by counsel

[28] FEMA, 2017, "National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid," November, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_mutual_aid_guideline_20171105.pdf.

and executed by senior officials representing all parties. Additional information about mutual aid can be found in FEMA's National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid.[29]

Hypothetical Mutual Aid Agreement

To put mutual aid into context, consider this example: Town A, a small imaginary jurisdiction, has a volunteer fire department with no hazardous material (HAZMAT) response capabilities. The mayor of Town A negotiates a mutual aid agreement with the mayor of nearby imaginary Town B, which has a robust fire department with two fully certified HAZMAT units, which are needed because of Town B's industrial base. Town B agrees to provide HAZMAT support to Town A when HAZMAT incidents occur, provided that the units are not needed to respond to incidents in Town B. In return, Town A agrees to either pay for reimbursement or reciprocate in-kind resources such as allowing its new high school to be used as an evacuation center in case Town B needs to relocate residents in response to HAZMAT incidents there.

3.3. State, Territorial and Tribal Resources

States and territories typically monitor local emergencies and disasters and provide assistance if asked. This includes responding to local requests for assistance and providing state resources, such as National Guard personnel and equipment, technical expertise or temporary regulatory relief. State governments are frequently the conduit to interstate assistance and for requesting additional resources from the federal government. The role in this process of state disaster declarations or proclamations is explained in Section 4.

More Information about EMAC

EMAC is a nationwide, state-to-state (or territory) all-hazards mutual aid system. Using EMAC, states can share personnel, equipment and commodities and be reimbursed for mission-related costs. On a national basis, EMAC is used to provide form and structure to interstate mutual aid and assistance. Through EMAC, states can request and receive assistance from other member states quickly and efficiently.[30]

Tribal government resourcing processes vary among tribal nations and organizations. FEMA works with tribal nations to "build, sustain, and improve their capacity to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from all hazards."[31] Access to specific tribal resources is provided on FEMA's Tribal Affairs website.[32]

[29] FEMA, 2017, "National Incident Management System Guideline for Mutual Aid," November, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_mutual_aid_guideline_20171105.pdf.

[30] For more information on EMAC, see https://emacweb.org/

[31] FEMA Tribal Policy (Rev. 2), 2020, FEMA Policy No. 305-111-1, December 18, p. 1, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_tribal-policy.pdf.

[32] For more information on FEMA's Tribal Affairs, see https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribes.

3.4. Federal Capacity-Building Grant Opportunities

Emergency response and recovery efforts can be very expensive. A variety of emergency-related cost-sharing federal grant programs exist to improve local capacity and reduce local vulnerabilities. These are highlighted briefly in this section and itemized in greater depth in Appendix D.

In addition, various private and nonprofit organizations may offer assistance in different forms, including grants. These specific opportunities are outside the scope of this guide. Senior officials may want to initiate relationships with appropriate organizations.

3.4.1. EXAMPLES OF GRANT PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING RESILIENCE

The federal government has numerous grant programs available that can support community resilience improvements. FEMA grant funds are available for pre- and post- emergency or disaster related projects.[33] Additional FEMA resources are highlighted below:

- Emergency Management Performance Grants give jurisdictional emergency management agencies the resources required to build and deliver capabilities.[34]
- FEMA Preparedness Grants are intended to ensure that the nation works together to build, sustain and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate terrorism and other high-consequence disasters and emergencies.[35]
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants provide funding for eligible mitigation measures that reduce disaster losses. These grants include:
  - Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grants support jurisdictions as they undertake mitigation projects, to reduce the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards;[37]
  - The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) assists in implementing long-term hazard mitigation planning and projects following a Presidential major disaster declaration;[38] and
  - The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program provides funds for planning and projects to reduce

Equity Considerations

As part of FEMA's commitment to the Justice40 initiative to instill equity as a foundation of emergency management, FEMA's BRIC program prioritizes applications from tribes, Economically Disadvantaged Rural Communities and other underserved communities.[36]

[33] For more information on FEMA grants, see https://www.fema.gov/grants.

[34] For more information on Emergency Management Performance Grants, see https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/emergency-management-performance.

[35] For more information on FEMA Preparedness Grants, see https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness.

[36] For more information on the Justice40 initiative, see https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/.

[37] For more information on BRIC Grants, see https://www.fema.gov/bric.

[38] For more information on HMGP, see https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/hazard-mitigation.

or eliminate the risk of flood damage to buildings that are insured annually under the National Flood Insurance Program.[39]

Appendix D provides information on additional federal programs and resources. Furthermore, the Recovery and Resilience Resource Library allows users to navigate the numerous programs available to the United States and its territories to help recover from a disaster.[40]

3.4.2. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

Jurisdictions applying for federal grants must meet standards for documenting the management of preparedness, resilience, response and recovery assets. Cost reimbursements are often delayed or disapproved when local jurisdictions do not meet administrative responsibilities, such as eligibility criteria or required expense documentation. On occasion, audits may identify compliance issues, and grant funds the jurisdiction has already spent may need to be repaid to the federal government. For these reasons, jurisdictions receiving disaster financial assistance must understand all requirements before receiving funding and must comply with all terms. Each grant has different eligibility requirements and application processes.

One of the most effective ways senior officials can lead is to insist on compliant and effective expense and asset-use documentation during response and recovery. These steps should be implemented well before a disaster occurs to ensure the jurisdiction is protected from the costs of avoidable audit disputes and paybacks. FEMA's Disaster Financial Management Guide is a potential resource for learning more about this topic.[41]

[39] For more information on the FMA Program, see https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/floods.

[40] For more information on the Recovery and Resilience Resource Library, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/recovery-resilience-resource-library.

[41] For more information on FEMA's Disaster Financial Management Guide, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/disaster-financial-management-guide.pdf.

4. Emergency and Disaster Declarations and Proclamations

Senior officials may invoke emergency powers and authorities to save lives and protect property during disasters and emergencies. Most jurisdictions have specific legal mechanisms to access these emergency powers and authorities while maintaining appropriate checks and balances, such as time limitations. These emergency powers and authorities typically become available when an emergency or disaster "declaration," "proclamation," or "state of emergency" is made. Throughout this document, the phrase "disaster declaration(s)" is used to refer to these terms.

Senior officials are often responsible for issuing and rescinding disaster declarations. However, executive processes may differ based on jurisdictional authorities. This section presents a general discussion of jurisdictional and federal disaster declarations. Figure 3 (for states) and Figure 4 (for tribal governments), provide conceptual pictures of how these processes fit together into a sequenced declaration request process. These often occur in different variations or may be altered to meet specific needs. For example, if a hurricane is imminent, a governor or tribal chief executive may request an emergency declaration in advance to initiate a more effective response and initial recovery. Local senior officials can collaborate with state and federal partners throughout the declaration process since disasters are locally executed, state managed and federally supported.

4.1. Local Disaster Declarations

Considerable variation exists in how jurisdictions activate emergency powers and authorities. It is essential that senior officials ensure adequate policies, laws, ordinances and agreements are in place that clearly define governing body authorities and responsibilities. Officials should understand when and how these can be used to provide a seamless, unified and effective response and recovery. While it is common for damage assessments following an incident to prompt local disaster declarations, impending threats (e.g., forecasted hurricane) may also compel senior officials to exercise emergency powers and authorities.

Key Concept: Damage Assessment Terminology

Initial Damage Assessment – The effort by local authorities to collect data related to the extent of damage within a jurisdiction.

Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) – A mechanism used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage and the resulting unmet needs of individuals, businesses, the public sector and communities as a whole.

Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment – The coordinated effort by local, state and federal authorities to validate damage data previously identified by state and local authorities to inform Presidential disaster declaration requests and federal disaster grant determinations.[42]

[42] For more information on PDAs, see https://www.fema.gov/pda.

Recognizing the important variations in this area, here are some emergency powers and authorities that local declarations or proclamations may make available:

- Expand available government resources, re-direct personnel and alter functions of local government offices or contractors to perform response and recovery activities;
- Obtain essential goods and services, such as food or temporary housing;
- Initiate sheltering-in-place, evacuations, curfews, quarantines or isolation; and
- Suspend provisions of local laws that might hinder protection of lives or property.

Senior officials should work closely with their emergency manager and counsel to ensure the legal and appropriate use of these emergency powers and authorities. Not all disasters will require or qualify for a state or federal declaration.

Once initiated, senior officials should consider how emergency powers and authorities are implemented. Use of damage assessments to document impacts in real time and to justify extraordinary use of public funds and assets is strongly encouraged; jurisdiction emergency managers and counsel should be able to carry out these procedures. Doing so will make it easier to seek assistance from the state or federal government, deter corruption and build public confidence. Ultimately, senior official effectiveness and credibility may depend on how prudently, transparently and fairly they use various authorities during emergencies.

4.2. State and Territorial Declaration Process

Governors may add to the force of local senior officials' disaster declarations by declaring a state-level or territorial-level emergency (normally in support of one or more local government requests). Although each state or territory has its own procedures, the following generic steps may include:

- Receiving a notification of an emergency from a local jurisdiction;
- Conducting an assessment to evaluate actual or potential damage, which is foundational to receiving additional state or federal resources; and
- Authorizing a state declaration, usually through a written directive, which specifies the type of emergency, where it occurred and the authority under which the declaration and associated actions are made. A declaration may cover specific geographic areas or the entire state.

Governors may have authority to:

- Suspend provisions of orders or rules of state agencies if the governor determines and declares that strict compliance would hinder response efforts;
- Direct state government agencies to use state personnel, equipment or facilities to perform activities designed to prevent or alleviate actual or threatened damage;

- Direct agencies to provide supplemental services and equipment to local governments in order to provide for the health and safety of affected-area residents; and
- Activate state emergency response plans and mutual aid agreements.

Additionally, governors may:

- Regulate use, sale or distribution of food, fuel, clothing or other commodities, materials, goods and services;
- Prescribe and direct activities in connection with use, conservation, salvage and prevention of waste of materials, services and facilities;
- Assume control of state law enforcement activities; and
- Close or restrict state roads or highways as necessary or expedient.

The emergency powers and authorities of governors vary among states and territories.

4.3. Tribal Declaration Process

As explained on the FEMA Tribal Affairs website, federally recognized tribal governments may request declarations directly to the President or through states.[43] Federally recognized tribal governments facing disasters can take advantage of the information provided in FEMA's Tribal Declarations Guidance Pilot.[44] See Figure 4 for an illustrated tribal declaration request process.

4.4. Federal Declaration Process

Disaster declarations can form the basis for requesting assistance from the next higher level of government; therefore, a governor's declaration could provide the basis for seeking a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration under the Stafford Act. Presidential declarations initiate actions necessary for local governments and individuals to receive federal disaster assistance.

State requests must include copies of the requesting governor's disaster declaration and a PDA outlining the physical and financial impacts and losses. That is one important reason for senior officials to make sure that local damage assessments, which may form the core of the governor's request, are accurate and thorough.

[43] For more information on FEMA's Tribal Affairs, see https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribes.

[44] For more information on FEMA's Tribal Declarations Guidance Pilot, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/tribal-declaration-pilot-guidance.pdf.

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

When a state is overwhelmed by an emergency or major disaster, the governor may request assistance from the federal government. "The Stafford Act authorizes three types of declarations: (1) Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FMAG) declarations, (2) emergency declarations and (3) major disaster declarations. While emergency and major disaster declarations must be issued by the President, the FEMA Regional Director, in consultation with FEMA leadership, has the authority to issue FMAG declarations.

The Stafford Act stipulates several procedural actions a governor must take prior to requesting federal disaster assistance. The governor cannot request a declaration unless he or she determines the event has overwhelmed the state's resources to such an extent that federal resources are needed. The gubernatorial request is vital to the declaration process because the President cannot issue either an emergency or a major disaster declaration, nor can the Regional Director issue a FMAG, without the request." The President also may declare emergencies without these requests when primary responsibility rests with the federal government.[45]

At this time, Tribal governments are not eligible for a direct FMAG and must work with a state to receive assistance.

More information about these declarations can be found at FEMA's *How a Disaster Gets Declared* website.[46]

FEMA officials review state Stafford Act declaration requests in order to recommend approval or denial to the President. When determining their recommendations, they consider such factors as:

- Number of homes destroyed or with major damage;
- Extent to which damage is dispersed or concentrated;
- Impact on infrastructure or critical facilities;
- Imminent threats to public health and safety;
- Impacts on essential government services and functions;
- Level of insurance coverage in place for homeowners and public facilities;
- Assistance available from other sources;
- State and local resource commitments from previously declared and undeclared incidents; and
- Frequency of disaster incidents over recent time periods.

The President and certain federal-agency officials are authorized by statute to declare emergencies or disasters. Other federal departments or agencies, such as the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S.

[45] Lindsay, Bruce R., 2017, *Stafford Act Declarations 1953-2016: Trends, Analyses and Implications for Congress* (Congressional Research Service), August 28, pp. 1, 2-3 (footnotes omitted), https://sgp.fas.org/crs/homesec/R42702.pdf.

[46] For more information on FEMA's How a Disaster Gets Declared, see https://www.fema.gov/disaster/how-declared.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Small Business Administration (SBA), may also declare emergencies or disasters and activate specific assistance programs based on their own authorities.

Federal government assistance can take several forms, such as federal personnel, in-kind resources like emergency backup generators, technical assistance and a wide range of federal financial assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for both emergency and permanent work. A Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) is appointed to work with state and local personnel, including senior officials, to execute Stafford Act authorities. More information about these federal resources can be found in Appendix D.

The request process has various administrative steps and initiated requests may not ultimately receive the declaration being sought. Figure 3 provides an overview of the State Declaration Request process from beginning to end. Steps include activating the emergency operations center (EOC) in response to an incident, declaring an emergency at the local and state level, completing the necessary damage assessments and routing the State Declaration Request for federal-level review. The Tribal Declaration Request process is presented in Figure 4. Tribal governments can decide whether to submit a request for Presidential declaration on their own or to be considered part of a state declaration if applicable. [47]

Championing mitigation by using local or state resources or federal grants reduces the need for these types of disaster declarations by minimizing local threats and hazards and may limit harm to community members and their property.

Equity Considerations

FEMA's Guides to Expanding Mitigation are a series of booklets designed to highlight innovative and emerging partnerships for mitigation. These booklets show how communities can better support hazard mitigation projects and planning by engaging other sectors.

The "Making the Connection to Equity" booklet explores how mitigation can be more equitable by including insights from at-risk communities disproportionately impacted by disasters. [48]

[47] "Tribes that are not federally recognized work through their state to request emergency or major disaster declarations as a subrecipient but may not apply directly." FEMA, 2019, Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Tribal Governments (FP 104-008-02), September, p. 2, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/pre-disaster-recovery-planning-guide-for-tribal-government.pdf.

[48] For more information on Guides to Expanding Mitigation and Making the Connection to Equity, see https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/region-2/guides-expanding-mitigation and https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/fema_region-2_guide-connecting-mitigation-equity_09-10-2020.pdf.

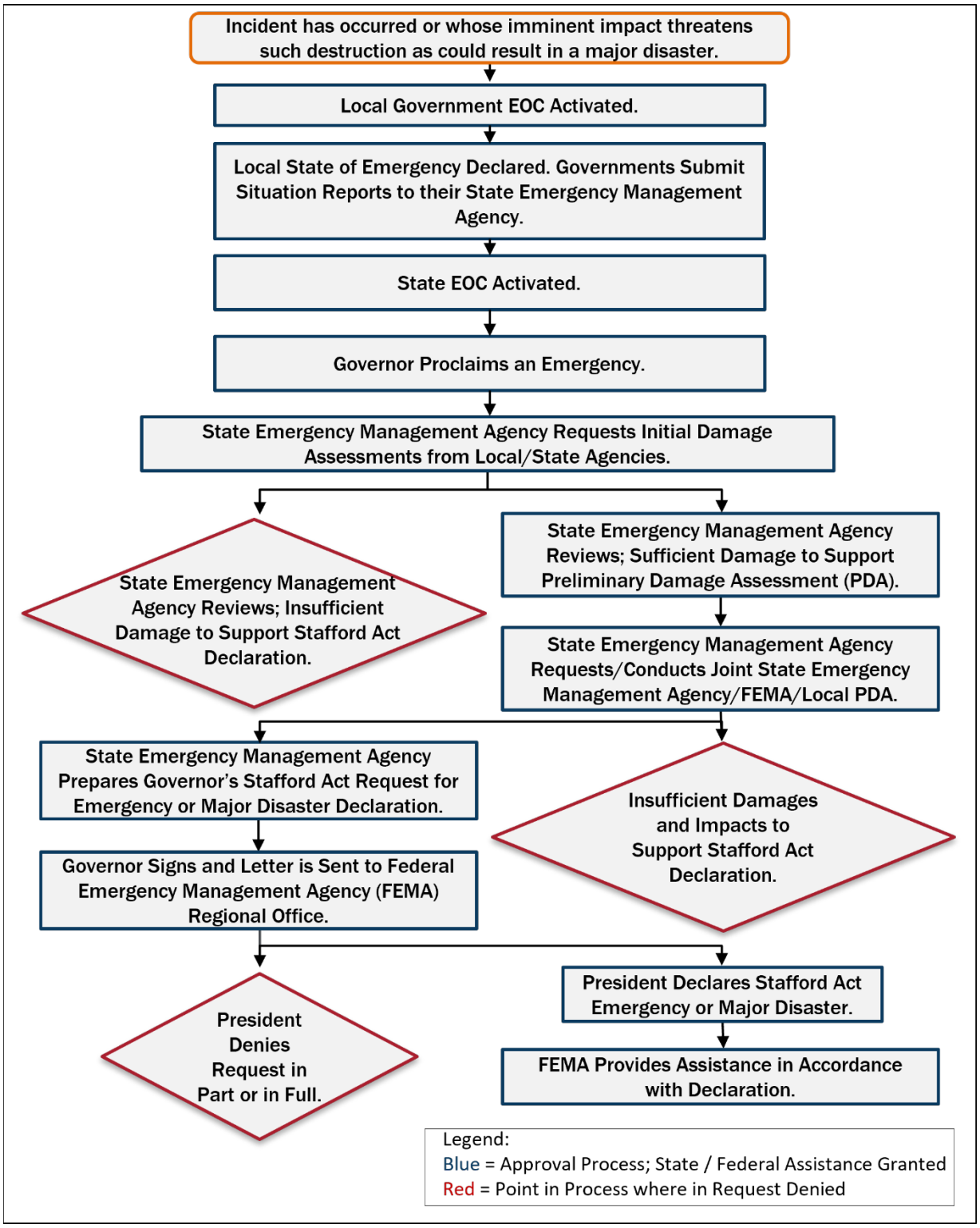

Figure 3: State Declaration Request Process

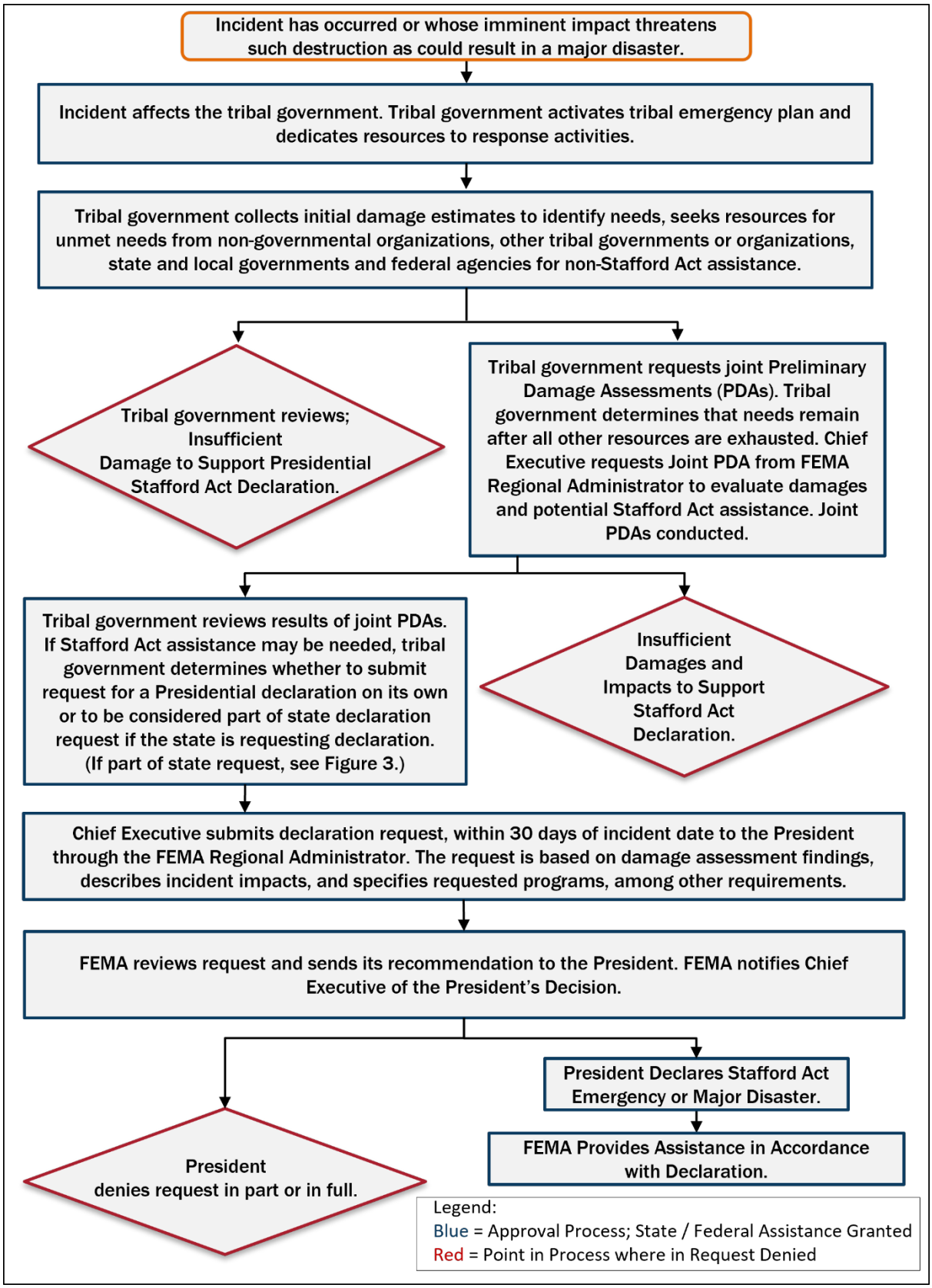

Figure 4: Tribal Declaration Request Process

5. Key Stakeholder Considerations

The preceding sections discussed the functional aspects of emergency and disaster leadership. This section focuses directly on the people in communities who could be impacted when these incidents occur. This section introduces equity factors and then applies these concepts to specific considerations associated with:

- Underserved populations;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Individuals with access and functional needs;
- Private sector organizations;
- Voluntary and non-governmental organizations; and
- Individual preparedness.

Engaging these stakeholders before, during and after disasters will yield more effective community outcomes.

5.1. Equity

Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, defines equity as "the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality."[49] Equity is achieved not only when everyone is provided full access to information and assistance—but when interventions are taken to ensure that all are provided with the resources necessary to meaningfully participate.

The most at-risk members of communities often experience the greatest losses from disasters. These community members may have little access to information about what to do or lack the ability to take emergency action and are oftentimes left out of planning and preparedness activities. This can spawn mistrust of government officials that hinders effective mitigation and future disaster response. "Planners and senior officials should address equity in all phases of the planning process. Racial inequity, financial inequity, unequal access to information and assistance, and transportation inequity directly and profoundly affect emergency preparedness, response and recovery."[50]

[49] For more information about Executive Order 13985, On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, see https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/.

[50] FEMA, 2021, *Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans: Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, Version 3.0*, September, p. 6, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_cpg-101-v3-developing-maintaining-eops.pdf.

Equity Considerations

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) developed "In the Eye of the Storm" to advance equity across the phases of emergency management. The guidance, rooted in human and civil rights, serves as a toolkit providing modules from big picture concepts on equity-based emergency management to advocating for equality in emergency management policies.[51]

From planning before disasters, to responding and recovering from incidents, senior officials have the responsibility to develop and maintain partnerships with those most affected by disasters. Understanding community needs and knowing where to target assistance in advance of an incident will help senior officials to:

- Identify potential areas for strengthening existing engagement strategies and begin to create new relationships, particularly those in racially, ethnically, economically and religiously diverse communities;[52]
- Act on this information with integrity;
- Support communities in becoming more self-sufficient to reduce loss of life and property;
- Include the most at-risk members in communication outreach, emergency alerting, scenario planning and exercises;
- Expand green and resilient infrastructure to protect communities from the impacts of climate change and extreme weather incidents, ensuring that projects promote equitable resilience and benefit the entire community; and
- Direct scarce recovery funding to areas of greatest need.

One way to measure equity is through establishing and realizing better outcomes, such as when disasters no longer disproportionately impact the most vulnerable residents and when their long-term recovery is attained more quickly.

5.2. Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) against being denied participation in or receiving benefits from emergency plans.[53] Specifically, emergency and disaster programs, services and activities provided by state and local governments, as well as those

[51] For more information on NAACP's "In the Eye of the Storm" guide, see https://naacp.org/resources/eye-storm-peoples-guide-transforming-crisis-advancing-equity-disaster-continuum.

[52] For more information on Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_rnpn_building-alliances-for-equitable-resilience.pdf.

[53] Brooklyn Ctr. for Independence of the Disabled v. Bloomberg, 980 F. Supp. 2d 588, 640 (S.D.N.Y. 2013).

provided through third parties such as private nonprofit organizations, must be accessible to people with disabilities.[54], [55]

What is a Disability?

The ADA states that: "[t]he term 'disability' means, with respect to an individual:

(A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual;

(B) a record of such an impairment; or

(C) being regarded as having such an impairment…"[56]

A jurisdiction's laws may contain additional requirements. Although elements of emergency preparedness plans are the responsibilities of the emergency manager and counsel, senior officials can use their authority, contacts and influence to promote inclusion of people with disabilities living in the community in the planning process so that their needs are met effectively during disasters.

5.3. Individuals with Access and Functional Needs

People with access and functional needs are part of every community. Individuals with access and functional needs may include, but are not limited to, individuals with disabilities, elderly and populations having limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. A "One-Size-Fits-All" approach to emergency management planning, resourcing and information dissemination does not work for individuals with access and functional needs.

Senior officials and civic leaders play important roles in developing plans and solutions that address the entire community and ensure equitable access and services for all disaster survivors. Actions senior officials can take before potential incidents to ensure participation include:

- Working with emergency managers to understand any potential existing systems or frameworks currently being used to account for those with access and functional needs;
- Conducting continuous population assessments of the community's individuals with access and functional needs;
- Establishing a core planning team with community representatives from among people with access and functional needs;

[54] General Prohibitions Against Discrimination, 28 C.F.R. § 35.130.

[55] Discrimination Prohibited 28 C.F.R. § 35.149.

[56] Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S. Code section 12102(1), https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm#12102.

- Ensuring that resources and planning efforts (e.g., points of distribution, sheltering) account for the care of individuals requiring additional assistance (e.g., transportation services, durable medical equipment), including vulnerable populations and others with access and functional needs, individuals with limited English proficiency and diverse racial and ethnic populations;[57]
- Integrating people with access and functional needs through public outreach in local and regional plans, trainings and exercises;[58]
- Ensuring that all communications are provided in ways that are accessible to people with access and functional needs;[59] and
- Evaluating training and exercise outcomes to identify areas for improvement and make indicated changes to plans.

5.4. Private Sector Organizations

The private sector owns and operates most of the nation's critical infrastructure and supply chains that enable life safety and economic security. Including private sector partners in planning activities can improve and accelerate preparedness, response and recovery efforts. The sooner private sector organizations can re-establish operations, the sooner they can move resources into the community. Senior officials may be helpful in connecting private sector businesses and emergency managers to meet the needs of the community.[60]

5.5. Voluntary and Non-Governmental Organizations

Voluntary or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are often chartered as tax-exempt charities or public support organizations.[61] They may respond to a disaster with available resources in accordance with the requirements of their internal policies and in cooperation with emergency management or senior officials. Examples of volunteer and NGO support range from mass care and emergency assistance response activities to longer-term assistance including, but not limited to, mental health services, housing repair and reconstruction and long-term recovery planning. As with private sector organizations, senior officials may be uniquely situated to connect voluntary and NGO leaders with their jurisdiction's emergency manager.[62]

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[57] For more information on Durable Medical Equipment in Disasters, see https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/technical-resources/resource/5932/durable-medical-equipment-in-disasters.

[58] For more information on making a plan for individuals with disabilities, see https://www.ready.gov/disability.

[59] For more information on Integrating a Community Partner Network to Inform Risk Communication Strategies, see https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/afntoolkit.htm.

[60] For more information on FEMA's Building Private-Public Partnerships guide, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_building-private-public-partnerships.pdf.

[61] For more information on National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, see https://www.nvoad.org/.

[62] For more information on Engaging Faith-based and Community Organizations, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/engaging-faith-based-and-community-organizations.pdf.

5.6. Individual Preparedness

Individuals, families and households are at the core of our nation's preparedness. A community's ability to respond to or recover from disasters depends on the level of preparedness of every member. Basic individual preparedness requires enough resources to survive without outside help for several days. To make a plan, individuals should consider the following questions:

- How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- What is my shelter plan?
- Do I have enough food, water and supplies (including medical supplies) to survive on my own for several days?[63]
- What is my family/household evacuation route and plan?
- What is my family/household communication plan? [64]
- What are my transportation options?
- Do my plans include household pet or service animal considerations?

Senior officials should work with emergency managers to identify groups in the community that can help educate individuals, families and households about how to develop emergency plans and prepare for the immediate aftermath of disasters. Examples of groups that can help educate and promote personal preparedness are:

- Non-governmental partners from all sectors;
- Neighborhood-based community groups;
- Healthcare and social service organizations;
- Public and nonpublic schools;
- Faith-based organizations; and
- Youth, children and daycare centers.

[63] For more information on making a disaster supply kit, see https://www.ready.gov/kit.

[64] For more information on making individual preparedness plans, see https://www.ready.gov/plan.

6. Conclusion

Local senior officials play an essential role in strengthening community resilience to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

Major elements of senior official leadership include:

- Leveraging community resources against known threats and hazards;
- Defining how senior officials will lead in coordination with emergency managers before, during and after disasters;
- Providing leadership and executive intent for disaster mitigation and resilience-building efforts;
- Learning how to leverage community assistance, such as mutual aid and preparedness grants;
- Preparing to exercise legal authority to initiate the emergency and disaster declaration process;
- Understanding and planning to meet the needs of people with disabilities, people with access and functional needs, private sector partners, voluntary and non-governmental organizations, and individuals and households in every community; and
- Supporting equitable and comprehensive disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

This guide provides both overview information and access to additional tools to support senior officials as they prepare for and lead their communities through disasters. Appendix E provides an overview of available training opportunities. Appendix F offers access to additional resources that may further improve senior officials' effectiveness.

Local elected and appointed officials are paramount to helping their communities mitigate, plan for, respond to and recover from disasters. By understanding their disaster responsibilities and supporting a comprehensive emergency management program, senior officials can reduce risk, save lives, protect property and build community resilience before, during and after disasters.

Appendix A: Senior Officials Checklist

This checklist was developed to assist senior officials to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and emergencies. The checklist is not necessarily sequential and not every item will apply to every jurisdiction or community. Essentially, this is a list of reminders for:

- Questions to ask;
- Immediate steps to take; and
- Points to keep in mind leading the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster. These items should be regularly reviewed and updated as needed.

Before Disaster

Senior officials are responsible for protecting the lives and property of their community. Executing the following tasks can prepare the local government to respond to and recover from disasters:

☐ Make planning for disasters a priority throughout the entire community.

☐ Provide resources and necessary authority to support a comprehensive emergency management program.

☐ Meet with the emergency management team and policy group, which provides guidance, resource prioritization and other executive functions, to learn about the hazards and unique vulnerabilities that threaten the jurisdiction. Update contact lists annually.

☐ Work with emergency managers to learn planning processes, timelines and planning update cycles for emergency operations plans, continuity of operations (COOP) plans and continuity of government (COG) plans; provide any support to help keep plans up to date.

☐ Create a strategy to support mitigation, continuity and recovery planning.

☐ Coordinate with senior officials and the emergency management agencies in neighboring jurisdictions, to review relevant emergency management plans, hazard mitigation plans or any other planning documents related to preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation in the community.

☐ Become familiar with the jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and 911 center.

☐ Review applicable legal authorities and responsibilities relevant to disasters and emergencies.

☐ Provide policy direction for prevention, protection, response, recovery and mitigation-related activities based in part on information provided by the emergency management agency.

☐ Encourage all government agency, business and organization leaders to coordinate and collaborate with the emergency management agency.

- ☐ Include private sector partners, who can provide key resources or services, in the planning process to improve and accelerate preparedness, response and recovery efforts.
- ☐ Encourage individuals, families and businesses to develop emergency plans and be able to protect themselves during the first 72 hours after a disaster.
- ☐ Develop a communications strategy, including sign and foreign language interpretation, in coordination with emergency management officials and Public Information Officers (PIOs).
- ☐ Learn about state, tribal, territorial and federal disaster assistance programs.
- ☐ Learn about the damage assessment process and how it impacts obtaining federal assistance.
- ☐ Participate in emergency and disaster drills, training and exercises. Encourage local government agencies and community partners to also participate.
- ☐ Personally develop and maintain an individual/family emergency plan.[65] Senior officials are encouraged to create a more specific "Go-Kit" to address their unique needs when supporting EOCs during responses.

"Go-Kit": What to Bring to Your Disaster Work Location

The following list is intended to help senior officials prepare personal go-kits of essential items to bring to their anticipated work locations for extended disaster operations. It is recommended that they have enough personal items available to be self-sustaining for several days. They should evaluate the contents of their kits based on individual needs.[66]

- Backpack, bag or case (to put all items in);
- Work items: cell phone and charger, laptop, radio and charger, emergency job aids (e.g., checklists, guides, contact information) and identification;
- Clothes and shoes fit for the weather and a change of clothing (e.g., for press conferences);
- Food and snacks based on any special dietary needs (confirm whether the disaster work location has arrangements for providing food and hydration);
- Glasses and an extra pair of prescription glasses;
- Personal medications, supplements and hygiene items (e.g., toothbrush, toothpaste);
- Personal money (e.g., credit cards, cash in small bills);
- Pencil, pen and notebook;
- Contact list of family, friends and professional contacts; and
- Favorite personal and/or comfort items.

[65] For more information, see "Build A Kit" at https://www.ready.gov/kit.

[66] For more information on personal preparedness, see https://www.ready.gov/.

During Disaster

When disasters strike a community, senior officials are immediately looked to for leadership. The public expects to receive lifesaving information and instructions, timely and accurate assessments of the magnitude and impacts of the disaster and information regarding local disaster services. Members of the public are often not fully prepared for emergencies. Nevertheless, community members will expect effective and transparent leadership during crises. Senior officials can ensure the best response possible by supporting emergency managers and responders as they execute their responsibilities. Senior officials will have the greatest impact during planning and training before disasters and by leading recovery activities later. As disasters unfold, leaders should focus on executing the following tasks:

INITIAL ACTIONS

- ☐ Establish contact with the emergency management agency as the situation permits, if this has not already been done:
  - Contact Name and Phone Number(s) _____
  - Contact Email _____
- ☐ Obtain assessment information and priority objectives (evaluate the situation).
- ☐ Determine situation status (obtain from the EOC/emergency manager):
  - What is the nature of the incident—what happened?
  - What hazards are present?
  - What area is impacted? How large an area is affected?
  - Is the situation getting better, stabilizing or getting worse?
  - What are the impacts on individuals, households and families?
  - What is the status of local hospitals? Assisted living facilities and nursing homes?
  - What are the impacts on first responders?
  - What are the impacts on businesses and the supply chain?
  - What are the impacts on people with disabilities, people with access and functional needs and traditionally underserved populations?
  - What is the number of casualties?
  - What are the impacts on critical infrastructure?
  - What is the status of local government agencies?

- ☐ What are the response actions currently?
    - What public protection actions are currently in progress and what actions need to occur?
    - Have the notifications, alerts and warnings been completed? Are additional notifications or warnings needed?
    - What is being done to assist individuals, families and businesses?
    - What is being done to assist people with disabilities, people with access and functional needs and traditionally underserved populations?
    - Are there resource shortfalls or gaps (e.g., personnel, equipment, commodities, services)?
    - What is being done to bring in outside assistance or offer help to other communities?
- ☐ Begin and maintain a personal log of all incident actions (e.g., contacts, directives, decisions).
- ☐ Contact PIO to coordinate strategic public messaging, including American Sign Language (ASL), captioning and foreign language interpretation as needed.

FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)

When emergencies strike, public safety officials use timely and reliable systems to alert their communities. IPAWS is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using the Wireless Emergency Alerts, to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio. IPAWS is accessible through a range of platforms and is a direct line between local emergency managers and their communities.

EMERGENCY TASKS

Senior officials may consider the following list and complete it as appropriate to the situation. Senior officials' most important responsibilities are policymaking, exercising authority as coordinated with the emergency manager, and communicating with the whole community. During the activation and operational phases of the EOC, senior officials should consider the following tasks and actions and consult with the emergency manager to support as needed.

- ☐ Maintain situational awareness regarding the disaster by staying informed.
- ☐ Trust and empower your emergency management officials to make the right decisions.
- ☐ Address/support response and recovery priorities.
    - Collaborate with emergency managers to collectively develop guidance regarding priorities and strategies for dealing with incident response and recovery (e.g., emergency declarations, large-scale evacuations, access to extraordinary emergency funding, waivers of ordinances and regulations, adjudication of scarce resources).

- Initiate requests for extraordinary resources or outside assistance, such as mutual aid, state or federal assistance.
- Provide for the well-being, safety and health of the members of the community and visitors.
- Ensure continuity or rapid resumption of essential local government services.

☐ Review the legal responsibilities and authorities of senior officials.

☐ Confirm implementation of appropriate administrative procedures and financial safeguards.

☐ Issue or arrange for issuance of a local, tribal or territorial disaster declaration if warranted.

- Focus on protecting, saving and sustaining lives; protecting property and the environment; stabilizing the incident and maintaining essential services.
- Consult with emergency management staff regarding strategic courses of action, while leaving tactical decision making to emergency response officials.
- Consult with jurisdictional counsel regarding potential legal issues and courses of action.
- Determine when to issue protective measures (e.g., curfew, shelter-in-place, evacuation, access control, quarantine, isolation, emergency orders) based on information provided by the emergency management agency.
- Share situation information and actions and coordinate with neighboring senior officials, the governor and other key partners.
- Use emergency powers and authorities of government as appropriate.
- Suspend and waive rules, regulations and statutes as needed and allowed.
- Monitor the situation to determine the need to update or modify emergency orders/protective measures.
- Review and determine appropriate emergency response expenditure limits.

☐ The following information, derived at the local level, may help inform the governor or tribal chief executive to request a Stafford Act declaration:[67]

- Description of the situation and conditions.
- Geographic boundaries of the incident.
- Outline of the resources being used.
- Initial damage assessment outlining the physical and financial impacts and losses.

[67] Federally recognized tribal governments are empowered to make declaration requests directly to the President as explained at https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribes.

- Details of the emergency powers and authorities enacted (including their effective time periods and copies of the requesting governor's or tribal chief executive's disaster declaration).

☐ Determine the need for and establish new policies to support response and recovery.

- Ensure the EOC has clear policy direction. Issue direction and policy in support of response and recovery actions through the emergency manager.
- Consider use of the EOC policy group (multiagency coordination [MAC] group) for making policy decisions.
- Chair and/or participate in EOC policy/MAC group meetings at the EOC or designated site.

☐ Monitor the progress of emergency/disaster actions from messages, reports and information charts received by and issued from the EOC.

☐ When safe and when it will not interfere with response efforts, visit impacted areas, shelters and other temporary facilities to demonstrate leadership's commitment and to identify issues with service delivery.

☐ Ensure that a continuous stream of timely and accurate information is being provided by the EOC, PIO and the Joint Information Center (JIC).

- Approve emergency public information news releases and other messages as appropriate.
- Serve as a community spokesperson as planned in coordination with emergency managers.

Delivering Effective Messages[68]

- *Lead the interview.* Present the main points; avoid speculative "what-if" questions.
- *Use simple sentences*. During times of high stress, people are more likely to remember short, concise bits of information.
- *Speak naturally*. Avoid using terminology unfamiliar to those working outside of emergency management or government.
- *Be honest and direct*. Exaggerated facts and misleading information can threaten lives in disaster situations.
- *Be genuine, personable and conversational*. Avoid using "no comment" and similar evasive phrases. Credibility is vital to effective disaster communication.

[68] For more information on CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication program, see https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/training/index.asp.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP)/CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT (COG)

- ☐ Ensure continuity of essential services—which may be provided or supported by private sector organizations—and local government operations.
- ☐ Support local government departments and personnel in obtaining resources necessary to continue essential services, as needed.

After Disaster

After a disaster, members of the community expect their local government and their senior officials to maintain an active role in the delivery of recovery resources and services, and to provide innovative, efficient and inclusive leadership. Each senior official's recovery tasks should include:

- ☐ Convene key stakeholders to establish a vision, strategy and plan for the recovery process and for the future of the community.
- ☐ Work with the emergency management agency to convene and maintain a recovery task force and a recovery organization structure.
- ☐ Work collaboratively with all groups of people affected by the disaster to promote inclusive and accessible outreach to their communities and address issues relevant to them.
- ☐ Lead the recovery process and appoint a recovery manager if needed.
- ☐ Establish a recovery office to effectively manage long-term regulatory, fiscal, infrastructure, community development and human services recovery functions.
- ☐ Continue to assess unmet needs through close coordination with jurisdictional agencies and non-governmental (NGO) partners with significant long-term recovery support roles.
- ☐ Optimize the benefits of state/federal programs along with private sector and NGO contributions.
- ☐ Understand the federal disaster declaration and assistance processes and what funding may be available to assist during recovery.
- ☐ Identify opportunities to rebuild the community better and mitigate impacts of future incidents.
- ☐ Ensure codes, regulations and finances are properly managed during the recovery process.
- ☐ Communicate coordinated information to the public and media (both traditional and social media) to generate confidence in the process, secure buy-in for recovery priorities and establish accountability. Include ASL, captioning and foreign language interpretation as needed.
- ☐ Work with emergency management, other jurisdictional agencies and NGO partners as appropriate to conduct public meetings to determine unmet needs and identify current or future actions related to the disaster.
- ☐ Ask questions; the recovery process and programs can be complex.
- ☐ Support the community through the recovery. The process may take multiple years.

Appendix B: The Recovery Continuum

Recovery may often be overlooked compared to immediate response activities. However, recovery begins before disaster strikes with preparedness activities such as mitigation planning, economic development planning, capability building, relationship building, exercising and establishing metrics to evaluate progress. All of these activities greatly contribute to community resilience.

Prior to and during an event, collaboration across the whole community provides an opportunity to integrate mitigation, resilience and sustainability into the community's short- and long-term recovery goals. State and federal officials will look to the local jurisdiction to clearly articulate its recovery priorities and develop recovery plans to include the transition into long-range community redevelopment processes as applicable. Recovery and mitigation activities begin in the early stages of the response operations and may last for years.

According to the National Disaster Recovery Framework, the recovery continuum is best described as a sequence of interdependent and often concurrent activities that progressively advance a community toward its planned recovery outcomes.[69] The government's response to disaster impacts follows a "phased approach" that includes three general phases: short-term, intermediate and long-term. These phases may have overlapping periods as they transition from one phase to another. The recovery continuum is presented in Figure 5 below, followed by further explanation of each phase.

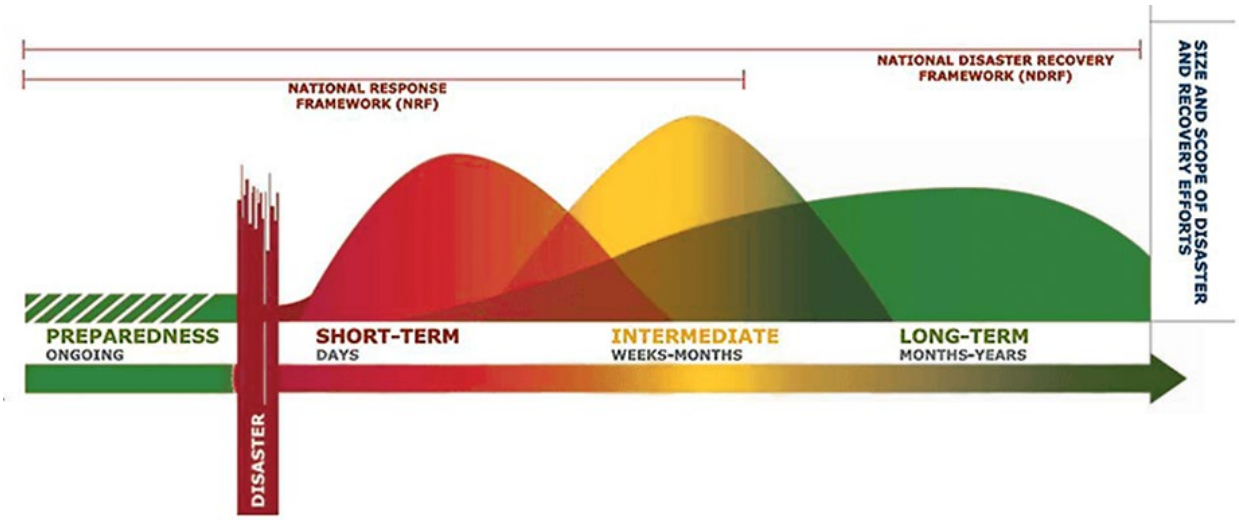

Figure 5: The Recovery Continuum

- **Stabilization and short-term (days-weeks) recovery actions**. As response actions wind down, short-term stabilization activities are primary. Stabilization is the process in which the immediate impacts of an incident on community systems are managed and contained, thereby creating an environment where recovery activities can begin. The various elements of a community system

[69] For more information on the National Disaster Recovery Framework, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/recovery.

will stabilize on different time frames, leading to a situation in which response, stabilization and restoration activities can occur concurrently.

- **Intermediate (weeks-months) recovery activities.** Intermediate recovery activities involve returning individuals, families, critical infrastructure and essential government or commercial services back to a functional, if not a pre-disaster state. Such activities are often characterized by temporary actions that provide a bridge to permanent measures.

- **Long-term (months-years) recovery.** The long-term recovery phase follows intermediate recovery and may continue for months to years. Examples include the complete redevelopment and revitalization of the damaged area. It is the process of rebuilding or relocating damaged or destroyed social, economic, natural and built environments in a community to conditions set in a long-term post disaster recovery plan. The goal underlying long-term redevelopment is the impacted community moving toward self-sufficiency, sustainability and resilience. Activities may continue for years depending on the severity and extent of the disaster damage, as well as the availability of resources.

Local jurisdictions should develop a pre-disaster recovery plan to address all three phases of the recovery timeline. The purpose of pre-event recovery planning is to anticipate what will be needed to restore the community to full functionality as rapidly as possible through pre-event planning and cooperation between members of the community, businesses and government. It is also an opportunity to improve infrastructure and build resilience.

Effective and equitable recovery will only occur if community members understand the process and their respective roles. Individuals, agencies, organizations and businesses must understand their responsibilities and coordinate efforts with the local recovery leadership. The Community Recovery Management Toolkit provides a three-step process of organizing, planning and managing recovery.[70] The Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Local Governments and the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Tribal Governments are additional resources to support recovery by encouraging involvement of the whole community in the planning process before disasters.[71] [72]

[70] For more information on the Community Recovery Management Toolkit, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/community-recovery-management-toolkit.

[71] For more information on the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Local Governments, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/pre-disaster-recovery-planning-guide-local-governments.pdf.

[72] For more information on the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Guide for Tribal Governments, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/pre-disaster-recovery-planning-guide-for-tribal-government.pdf.

Appendix C: Key National Incident Management System (NIMS) Concepts

NIMS is a "systematic, proactive approach to guide all levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with shared vocabulary, systems and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. NIMS provides a consistent foundation for dealing with all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated federal response."[73], [74] Table 1 outlines general characteristics of NIMS.

Table 1: Explanation of NIMS

NIMS Is…	NIMS Is Not…
▪ A comprehensive, nationwide, systematic approach to incident management, including the command and coordination of incidents, resource management and information management	▪ A static system ▪ Only applicable to certain emergency response personnel ▪ Only the Incident Command System
▪ A set of concepts and principles for all threats, hazards and incidents across all mission areas	▪ A response plan
▪ Scalable, flexible and adaptable, used for all incidents, from day-to-day to large-scale incidents	▪ Used only during large-scale incidents
▪ Standardized resource management procedure that enables coordination among different jurisdictions and organizations	▪ A resource ordering system
▪ Essential principles for communications and information management	▪ A communications plan

NIMS defines operational systems including the Incident Command System (ICS), Emergency Operation Center (EOC) structures, Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups and Joint Information Systems (JISs)/Joint Information Centers (JICs) that guide how personnel work together during incidents.

[73] For more information on NIMS Components, Guidance and Tools, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components.

[74] FEMA, 2017, *National Incident Management System (Third Edition)*, October, p. 67, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_nims_doctrine-2017.pdf.

Incident Command System

ICS is a "consistent, on-scene approach to incident management allowing users to assume a cohesive standardized approach to the command, control and coordination of on-scene incident management, providing a common hierarchy within which personnel from multiple organizations can be effective. ICS is the combination of procedures, personnel, facilities, equipment and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of on-scene resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of incidents and is applicable to small, as well as large and complex, incidents, including planned events."[75]

Unified Command

ICS structures can become more complicated when multiple entitles are involved. "When no one jurisdiction, agency or organization has primary authority and/or the resources to manage an incident on its own, Unified Command may be established. In Unified Command, there is no one 'commander.' Instead, the Unified Command manages the incident by jointly approved objectives. A Unified Command allows these participating organizations to set aside issues such as overlapping and competing authorities, jurisdictional boundaries and resource ownership to focus on setting clear priorities and objectives for the incident. The resulting unity of effort allows the Unified Command to allocate resources regardless of ownership or location. Unified Command does not affect individual agency authority, responsibility or accountability… [E]ach participating partner maintains authority, responsibility and accountability for its personnel and other resources, and each member of Unified Command is responsible for keeping other members of Unified Command informed."[76]

Emergency Operation Centers

EOCs are physical or virtual locations where staff, stakeholders and partners gather to provide support for an incident. Example functions within EOCs include:

- Collecting, sharing and disseminating information;
- Supporting resource needs and requests;
- Coordinating plans and determining current and future requirements;
- Supporting public communications;
- Conducting liaison with partners; and
- Supporting the policy and legal needs of decision makers.

Regardless of which organizations are represented, all EOC teams receive oversight from senior officials such as governors, tribal leaders, mayors and city managers. These senior officials may be present in the EOC, but more often provide guidance from other locations, either as part of a formal MAC group or individually. Regardless of their locations, senior officials typically make decisions

[75] *Ibid*., p. 64.

[76] *Ibid*., pp. 22-24.

regarding priorities and on issues such as disaster declarations, large-scale evacuations, access to extraordinary emergency funding, waivers of ordinances and regulations and adjudication of scarce resources. When senior officials are located away from EOCs, "visits to the EOC can demystify the operation and provide elected officials with more confidence in communicating with their community members about the nature of the city's response."[77]

Multiagency Coordination Groups

MAC Groups provide policy guidance to incident personnel and support resource prioritization and allocation. Typically, these groups are made up of government agency or private sector executives and administrators whose organizations are either impacted by or providing resources to an incident. MAC Groups enable decision making among senior officials and executives. MAC Groups delegate command authority to the incident commander and serve to:

- Cooperatively define the response and recovery mission and strategic direction;
- Identify operational priorities and communicate those objectives to the EOC, incident commander and JIS or JIC; and
- Authorize the EOC and JIS to communicate, coordinate and execute incident management roles.

Joint Information Systems and Joint Information Centers

Dissemination of timely, accurate, accessible and actionable information to the public is important at all phases of incident management. The JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization for this purpose. The mission of the JIS is to:

- Provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages regardless of individual agency locations;
- Develop, recommend and execute public information plans and strategies on behalf of the Incident Commander;
- Advise the Incident Commander concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and
- Control rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

The JIC is a facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media. PIOs from all participating agencies should co-locate at the JIC.

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[77] Carlee, Ron, 2019, "Leadership and Professional Local Government Managers: Before, During and After a Crisis (International City/County Management Association)," April, p. 32, https://icma.org/sites/default/files/19-117%20Crisis%20Leadership%20Report-FINAL.pdf.

Appendix D: Federal Disaster Financial Resources

The federal government can support jurisdictional governments that respond to and recover from disasters. FEMA's Individual Assistance (IA), Public Assistance (PA) and Hazard Mitigation Assistance are three of the most common disaster grant programs. The Small Business Administration (SBA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) may also expand support during Presidential declarations and are briefly described below.[78]

For more in-depth information about various federal assistance opportunities, see FEMA's Disaster Financial Management Guide.[79]

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after disasters. The Individual Assistance and Public Assistance programs, as well as the Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs may provide federal financial resources for jurisdictions before and after an incident.[80], [81]

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

FEMA's IA Program is designed to assist survivors with food and shelter and other recovery support.

Mass Care and Emergency Assistance

Provides coordination and support to state, local, tribal and territorial governments and/or jurisdictions for the provision and/or direct delivery of life-sustaining services to survivors.

Individuals and Households Program

Provides financial and direct services to eligible individuals and households affected by a disaster, who have uninsured or under-insured necessary expenses and serious needs. This assistance is not a substitute for insurance and cannot compensate for all losses caused by a disaster. The assistance is intended to meet basic needs and supplement disaster recovery efforts.

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[78] Information pulled from federal websites. For more information on specific programs, please refer to specific department or agency websites.

[79] For more information on FEMA's Disaster Financial Management Guide, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/disaster-financial-management-guide.pdf.

[80] For more information on FEMA's IA and PA Programs, see https://www.fema.gov/assistance.

[81] For more information on FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants, see https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation.

Housing Assistance

Homeowners and renters in designated counties who sustained damage to their homes as a result of a federally declared disaster may apply for Housing Assistance. Individuals and households may receive more than one type of Housing Assistance, including a combination of financial assistance (funds provided to an applicant) and direct assistance (housing provided to the applicant by FEMA).

Other Needs Assistance

Financial assistance is available for necessary expenses and serious needs directly caused by the disaster, including:

1. *Disaster Case Management*

Enhances existing case management capabilities to develop and carry out individual disaster recovery plans with survivors.

2. *Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program*

Grant or cooperative agreement to provide crisis counseling services or contract with mental health service providers to prevent or mitigate disaster caused psychological effects in survivors.

3. *Disaster Unemployment Assistance*

Provides temporary benefits and re-employment services to survivors whose employment has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of a disaster and are ineligible for regular unemployment insurance.

4. *Disaster Legal Assistance*

Provides confidential legal assistance to low-income individuals who are unable to secure legal services to meet their disaster-caused unmet needs without a cost-share.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE: CATEGORIES A-G

FEMA's PA Program provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial and local governments and certain types of private non-profits so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. FEMA also encourages protection of these damaged facilities from future events by providing assistance for hazard mitigation measures during the recovery process.

If certain thresholds are met, the PA Program may be authorized to provide federal financial assistance to jurisdictions, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations. PA begins with the declaration process when an area has received a Presidential declaration of an emergency or major disaster. Table 2 describes the various PA categories.

Table 2: Public Assistance Categories by Emergency Work and Permanent Work

Emergency Work	Permanent Work
▪ Debris removal (Category A) – expenses related to clearance, removal and disposal of incident related debris. ▪ Emergency protective measures (Category B) – expenses related to activities like flood fighting, search and rescue, firefighting, scene security, operating an emergency operations center, evacuation and sheltering.	▪ Roads and bridges (Category C) – repair damages to pre-disaster condition. ▪ Water control facilities (Category D) – repair damages to pre-disaster condition. ▪ Buildings and equipment (Category E) – repair damage to pre-disaster condition. ▪ Utilities (Category F) – repair damage to pre-disaster condition. ▪ Parks, recreational and other facilities (Category G) – repair damages to pre-disaster condition.

HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE

Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. Mitigation planning breaks the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction and repeated damage. Hazard mitigation includes long-term solutions that reduce the impact of disasters in the future.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Provides federal financial assistance to jurisdictions as well as certain types of private nonprofit organizations for implementing projects to prevent or reduce long term risk to life and property from future natural hazard incidents. FEMA can fund up to 75% of the eligible costs of each project. Examples of hazard mitigation activities include:

- Voluntary acquisition or elevation of flood-prone residential and non-residential structures;
- Storm water management projects that reduce flood risk;
- Protective measures for utility infrastructure;
- Vegetation management for dune restoration or wildfire prevention;
- Construction of safe rooms; and
- Development of a community all-hazards mitigation plan.

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program

Competitive grant program that provides funding to local communities, states, tribes and territories. Funds can be used for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program.

FEMA chooses recipients based on the applicant's ranking of the project and the eligibility and cost-effectiveness of the project. FEMA requires jurisdictions to develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for hazard mitigation assistance projects.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Supports communities as they undertake hazard mitigation projects, reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. The BRIC program's guiding principles are supporting communities through capability- and capacity-building, encouraging and enabling innovation, promoting partnerships, enabling large projects, maintaining flexibility and providing consistency.

Small Business Association: Disaster Assistance Loans

SBA provides low-interest disaster loans to help businesses and homeowners recover from declared disasters.[82] SBA can make federally subsidized loans to repair or replace homes, personal property or businesses that sustained damages not covered by insurance. SBA can provide three types of disaster loans to qualified homeowners, renters and businesses:

- Home disaster loans to homeowners and renters to repair or replace disaster-related damages to home or personal property;
- Business physical disaster loans to business owners to repair or replace disaster-damaged property, including inventory and supplies; and
- Economic injury disaster loans, which provide capital to small businesses and small agricultural cooperatives to assist them through the disaster recovery period.

For many individuals, the SBA disaster loan program is the primary form of disaster assistance.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA offers a variety of programs and services, such as Rural Development Disaster Assistance, to help communities, farmers, ranchers and businesses that have been hard hit by natural disasters.[83] USDA can provide assistance including emergency loan funds, which may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;
- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts, excluding real estate.

USDA can also designate disaster areas. Producers in these designated areas who suffered losses caused by recent natural disasters may be eligible for USDA Farm Service Agency emergency loans.

[82] For more information on SBA Disaster Assistance, see https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance.

[83] For more information on USDA's Rural Development Disaster Assistance, see https://www.rd.usda.gov/page/rural-development-disaster-assistance.

In addition to loan eligibility, other emergency assistance programs, such as Farm Service Agency disaster assistance programs, have historically used disaster designations as an eligibility trigger.[84]

Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD partners with federal and state agencies to help implement disaster recovery assistance through a number of programs.[85] Three key programs include:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Funds local community development activities such as affordable housing, economic revitalization, public services and infrastructure restoration. This is an ongoing program funded by annual appropriation to HUD.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – MITIGATION

Opportunity for eligible grantees to use this assistance in areas impacted by recent disaster to carry out strategic and high-impact activities to mitigate disaster risks and reduce future losses.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT - DISASTER RECOVERY

Supplemental appropriations made by Congress following a Presidential disaster declaration, these grants are often used as a distribution mechanism for disaster recovery funds.

Department of Health and Human Services

HHS leads the nation in preventing, preparing for and responding to the adverse health effects of public health emergencies and disasters. Resources include:

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (ASPR)

The Health Care Readiness Programs Funding improves the ability of health care systems to plan for and respond to disasters and emergencies.[86] Recipients use the awards to fund health care coalitions and health care entities, support local and regional collaboration, enhance comprehensive readiness and encourage workforce capability and capacity building.

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[84] For more information on USDA's Farm Service Agency Disaster Assistance Programs, see https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index.

[85] For more information on HUD's Community Development Block Grant Programs, see https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/.

[86] For more information on ASPR's Health Care Readiness Program Funding, see https://aspr.hhs.gov/HealthCareReadiness/HPP/Pages/Funding.aspx.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement is a critical source of funding for state, local and territorial public health departments.[87] The cooperative agreement provides assistance to public health departments across the nation. This helps health departments build and strengthen their abilities to effectively respond to a range of public health threats, including infectious diseases, natural disasters and biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological events.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

The Indian Health Service, an agency within HHS, is responsible for providing federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives.[88]

Department of Transportation

DOT disaster response and recovery resources include:

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

The Federal Transit Administration's Emergency Relief Program provides operating assistance and capital funding to states, governmental agencies and public transportation systems to repair and reconstruct public transportation assets to a state of good repair, as expeditiously as possible after an emergency or major disaster.[89]

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

The Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads assists federal agencies with the repair or reconstruction of tribal transportation facilities, federal lands, transportation facilities and other federally owned roads that are open to public travel suffering severe damage from a natural disaster or catastrophic failure over a wide area.[90]

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA's Brownfields Program provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse contaminated properties.[91]

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[87] For more information on CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement, see https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/phep.htm.

[88] For more information on HHS' Indian Health Service, see https://www.ihs.gov/aboutihs/overview/.

[89] For more information on the Federal Transit Administration's Emergency Relief Program, see https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/emergency-relief-program.

[90] For more information on the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program for Federally Owned Roads, see https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs/erfo.

[91] For more information on EPA's Brownfields Program, see https://www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA's Memorandum of Understanding with FEMA establishes a framework for EPA's Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs to assist and collaborate with FEMA's disaster assistance grant programs.[92], [93]

Bureau of Indian Affairs

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience has an annual awards program.[94] Examples of programmatic categories include:

- Adaptation Planning;
- Ocean and Coastal Management Planning;
- Capacity Building;
- Relocation, Managed Retreat or Protect-in-Place Planning; and
- Internships and Youth Engagement.

[92] For more information on EPA's Clean Water State Revolving Fund, see https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf.

[93] For more information on EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, see https://www.epa.gov/dwsrf.

[94] For more information on BIA's Tribal Climate Resilience Program, see https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/tcr.

Appendix E: Federal Training

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers general emergency management courses and courses designed specifically for senior officials. EMI's menu of courses changes frequently. Check the EMI website for the most up-to-date information.[95] Work with the emergency manager for specific course recommendations. States may also have specific training programs and offerings.

Independent Study Courses (self-paced and free of charge)

IS-0100: Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS). Introduces ICS and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles and organizational structure of ICS. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c

IS-0200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response. Reviews ICS and provides the context for ICS within initial response and supports higher level ICS training. This course provides training on, and resources for, personnel who are likely to assume a supervisory position within ICS. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.c

IS-0368: Including People with Disabilities and Others with Access & Functional Needs in Disaster Operations. This course increases awareness and understanding of the need for full inclusion of disaster survivors and FEMA staff who are people with disabilities, and people with access and functional needs. The course provides an overview of disabilities and access and functional needs and explains how disaster staff can apply inclusive practices in their disaster assignments. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-368

IS-0393: Introduction to Hazard Mitigation. FEMA has produced a series of courses intended to train those who have responsibility for, or simply interest in, reducing hazard risks in their states, communities or tribes. This course provides an introduction for those who are new to emergency management or hazard mitigation. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-393.b

IS-0700: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System. This course provides an overview of NIMS. NIMS defines the comprehensive approach guiding the whole community - all levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector - to work together seamlessly to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of incidents. The course provides learners with a basic understanding of NIMS concepts, principles and components. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b

IS-0706: NIMS Intrastate Mutual Aid-An Introduction. This course introduces NIMS intrastate mutual aid and assistance and discusses the purpose and benefits of mutual aid and assistance. The

[95] For more information on EMI training, see https://training.fema.gov/emicourses/. Search for other National Preparedness courses and schedules at https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/frts/npccatalog?catalog=EMI.

course explains how to develop mutual aid and assistance agreements and mutual aid operational plans. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-706

IS-0800: National Response Framework, An Introduction. This course provides guidance for the whole community. Within this broad audience, the National Response Framework focuses especially on those who are involved in delivering and applying the response core capabilities. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-800.d

IS-0908: Emergency Management for Senior Officials. The purpose of this course is to introduce senior officials to the important role they play in emergency management. The responsibility for preparing for, responding to and recovering from incidents, both natural and manmade, begins at the local level—with individuals and public officials in the county, city or town affected by the incident. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-908

IS-2200: Basic Emergency Operations Center Functions. The Basic Emergency Operations Center Functions course is designed to introduce the role, design and function of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the supportive relationship as a NIMS Command and Coordination component of the Multiagency Coordination System. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-2200

IS-2900: National Disaster Recovery Framework Overview. The National Disaster Recovery Framework outlines the basis for a national approach to disaster recovery. The framework defines how we will work together to best meet the needs of individuals, families, communities and states in their ongoing efforts to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond to and recover from any disaster. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-2900.a

Senior Official Oriented In-Person Courses

G-0205: Recovery from Disaster: Local Community Roles. This course covers foundational concepts in disaster recovery and the latest guidance on recovery planning. Participants will either assess their own recovery plan or a sample against this national planning guidance.

G-0402: NIMS Overview for Senior Officials (Executives, Elected, & Appointed). The purpose of this course is to familiarize Senior Officials (e.g., executives, elected and appointed officials, city/county managers, agency administrators) with their role in supporting incident management within NIMS.

L-0324: Hurricane Preparedness for Decision-Makers. This course, held at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida, instructs emergency managers on how to plan for and make decisions to implement and execute protective actions from hurricanes, particularly hurricane evacuations.

L-0583: Emergency Management Overview for Tribal Leaders. This four-hour course provides senior tribal officials with the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare their communities to respond to and recover from incidents and help tribal leaders understand how effective emergency management can improve the sustainability of their tribal community and better protect tribal members, lands, culture and sovereignty.

Appendix F: Links to Additional Informational Resources

Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Climate Resilience Program: This guide is a one-stop-shop for tribes and partners to find resources related to both tribes and other resilience programs in a single format across agencies, regions, tribes and groups. https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/tcr

Community Recovery Management Toolkit: Helps communities manage long-term recovery. The toolkit guides users through a three-step process of organizing, planning and managing recovery, while also giving resources from other recovery support functions. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/community-recovery-management-toolkit

Declaration Process: Provides procedural information regarding the Stafford Act declaration process and is intended for emergency managers, elected officials, media and stakeholders interested in the formal declaration process. https://www.fema.gov/disasters/how-declared

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Case Study Library: Browse case study reports and best practice articles from across FEMA's areas of expertise. Search by title or keywords, select additional content filters or jump to a collection. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/case-study-library

FEMA Flood Risk Communication Toolkit for Community Officials: Helps community officials begin and maintain an open channel for communication. The Toolkit includes templates and guides for designing a communication plan, effective public meetings and a social media strategy for addressing flood risk. It is supported by story maps and videos that visually communicate the objectives of updating flood risk data and maps. https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/manage-risk/communication-toolkit-community-officials

FEMA Grants: Grant funds are available for pre- and post- emergency or disaster related projects. These funds support critical recovery initiatives, innovative research and many other programs. Grants are the principal funding mechanism FEMA uses to commit and award federal funding to eligible local, state, tribal, territorial, certain private nonprofits, individuals and institutions of higher learning. https://www.fema.gov/grants

FEMA Planning Guides: Planning resources from Comprehensive Preparedness Guides (CPGs) to specific planning considerations guides (such as disaster financial management, disaster housing or supply chain resilience) to pre-disaster recovery planning guides for state, local, tribal and territorial governments. https://www.fema.gov/plan

FEMA Resources for Climate Resilience: Provides a roadmap of FEMA programs and initiatives that advance community climate resilience. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_resources-climate-resilience.pdf

Glossary of FEMA Terms: Terms frequently used by FEMA. In a few instances, standard insurance industry terms have been added for additional focus and emphasis. https://www.fema.gov/about/glossary

Hazard Mitigation: Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. Mitigation planning breaks the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction and repeated damage. Hazard mitigation includes long-term solutions that reduce the impact of disasters in the future. https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP): Provides a set of fundamental principles for exercise programs, as well as a common approach to program management, design and development, conduct, evaluation and improvement planning. www.fema.gov/hseep

Historical Disasters by State/County: An interactive tool to allow you to explore historic federal disaster declarations by state, county, hazard and year. https://www.fema.gov/data-visualization/disaster-declarations-states-and-counties

Individual Assistance (IA): FEMA's IA Program provides assistance to eligible individuals and households who have sustained losses as a direct result of a disaster that receives a federal disaster declaration. https://www.fema.gov/assistance/individual

Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS): FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts, to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System, and on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio. https://www.fema.gov/ipaws

National Planning Frameworks: The National Planning Frameworks, one for each preparedness mission area, describe how the whole community works together to achieve the National Preparedness Goal. The Goal is the cornerstone for the implementation of the National Preparedness System. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Components – Guideline and Tools: NIMS guidance and tools for the National Qualification System, Resource Typing, Inventorying, Mutual Aid, Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Centers. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components

National Risk Index for Natural Hazards: The National Risk Index is an online mapping application from FEMA that identifies communities most at risk to 18 natural hazards. This application visualizes natural hazard risk metrics and includes data about expected annual losses from natural hazards, social vulnerability and community resilience. https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/

National Exercise Program (NEP): NEP provides exercise design, development, conduct and evaluation support and other exercise-related resources to state, local, tribal, territorial and other whole community partners. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/exercises/about

NIMS Senior Leader Toolkit: Includes quick reference guides and a NIMS senior leader briefing template to help emergency management and senior leaders understand their role and responsibility during incidents. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components/senior-leader-toolkit

Overview of Stafford Act Support to States: Overviews actions federal agencies are likely to take to assist local, state and tribal governments that are affected by a major disaster or emergency. https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-stafford.pdf

Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) Pocket Guide: Serves as a quick reference tool for FEMA, local, state, tribal and territorial government partners conducting PDAs to determine the magnitude of damage and impact of disasters. For more detailed information on PDAs, refer to the FEMA PDA Guide. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_preliminary-disaster-assessment_pocket-guide.pdf

Preparedness Toolkit: An online portal that provides the whole community with tools to aid in implementing all six areas of the National Preparedness System. https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/

PrepTalks: Given by subject-matter experts and thought leaders to spread new ideas, spark conversation and promote innovative leadership for the issues confronting emergency managers over the next 20 years. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/preptalks

Public Assistance (PA): PA fact sheets, job aids and frequently asked questions provide general overviews of the PA process and program eligibility. https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/policy-guidance-fact-sheets/job-aids-faqs

Recovery and Resilience Resource Library: This tool helps users to find and research federal disaster recovery resources that would be beneficial in pre-disaster recovery planning or in the wake of a disaster. The resources are intended for state, local, territorial and tribal governments, as well as non-profits, business, healthcare institutions, schools, individuals and households. https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/recovery-resilience-resource-library

Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT): A free geographic information system web map that allows local, state, tribal, territorial and federal emergency managers and other community leaders to examine the interplay of census data, infrastructure locations and hazards, including real-time weather forecasts, historic disasters and projected hazard risk. https://www.fema.gov/rapt

Social Vulnerability Index: Employs U.S. Census Bureau variables to help users identify communities that may need support in preparing for hazards or recovering from disasters. The tool is particularly useful for emergency response planners and public health officials, as it can identify and map the communities that are most likely to need support before, during and after a hazardous event. https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html

Appendix G: Glossary

Access and Functional Needs: Individuals including, but not limited to, people with disabilities, older adults and individuals with limited English proficiency, limited access to transportation and/or limited access to financial resources to prepare for, respond to and recover from the emergency. Federal civil rights law and policy require nondiscrimination, including on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, economic status. Many individuals with access and functional needs are protected by these provisions.

Community: Community has more than one definition. Each use depends on the context:

- A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government, or a political subdivision of a state or other authority that has zoning and building code jurisdiction over a particular area.
- A political entity that has the authority to adopt and enforce floodplain ordinances for the area under its jurisdiction.
- A network of individuals and families, businesses, governmental and non-governmental organizations and other civic organizations that reside or operate within a shared geographical boundary and may be represented by a common political leadership at a regional, county, municipal or neighborhood level.
- Any State, or area or political subdivision thereof, or any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization or Alaska Native village or authorized native organization, which has authority to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations for the areas within its jurisdiction.

Community Lifeline: A means of identifying, grouping, evaluating and reporting on the status of government and business functions that are essential to the health, safety and economic security of the community.

Continuity: The ability to provide uninterrupted services and support while maintaining organizational viability, before, during and after an incident that disrupts normal operations.

Continuity of government (COG): An outcome of continuity planning and the continuity capabilities that support it. COG planning efforts and COG plans prepare jurisdictions to preserve or reconstitute statutory, constitutional, legislative and administrative responsibilities and authorities at all levels of government when an incident affects government organizations with roles in emergency response and recovery.[96]

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plans: Outline essential functions and services to perform and deliver, and how to do so, if an incident disrupts normal operations. They also address the timely

[96] For more information on FEMA's Guide to Continuity of Government, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_sltt-cog-guidance_070921.pdf.

resumption of normal operations once the emergency has ended. COOP plans address the continued performance and delivery of core capabilities and critical operations during any potential incident.

Core Capabilities: The core capabilities are distinct critical elements, necessary to achieve the National Preparedness Goal, which the whole community must be able to perform. They provide a common vocabulary describing the significant functions that must be developed and executed across the whole community to ensure national preparedness.[97]

Damage Assessment: Appraising or determining the number of injuries and deaths, damage to public and private property and status of key facilities and services (e.g., hospitals and other healthcare facilities, fire and police stations, communications networks, water and sanitation systems, utilities, transportation networks) resulting from a human-caused or natural disaster.

Disability: Individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (an "actual disability"), or a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity ("record of"), or an actual or perceived impairment, whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity, that is not both transitory and minor ("regarded as") and specific changes to the text of the Americans with Disabilities Act. State laws and local ordinances may also include individuals outside the federal definition.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): The physical location where the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities (on-scene operations) normally takes place. It may be a temporary facility or located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.

Emergency Operations Plan: A plan for responding to a variety of potential hazards.

Equity: The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO): The official appointed by the President to execute Stafford Act authorities, including the commitment of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s resources and mission assignments of other Federal departments or agencies. In all cases, the Federal Coordinating Officer represents the FEMA Administrator in the field to discharge all FEMA responsibilities for the response and recovery efforts underway. For Stafford Act incidents, the Federal Coordinating Officer is the primary Federal representative with whom the State or Tribal

[97] For more information on the core capabilities, see https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/mission-core-capabilities.

Coordinating Officer and other response officials interface to determine the most urgent needs and to set objectives for an effective response in collaboration with the Unified Coordination Group.

Incident: An occurrence, natural or human caused, that necessitates a response to protect life or property. In this document, the word "incident" includes planned events as well as emergencies and/or disasters of all kinds and sizes.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized approach to the command, control and coordination of on-scene incident management, providing a common hierarchy within which personnel from multiple organizations can be effective. ICS combines procedures, personnel, facilities, equipment and communications in a common organizational structure to aid in the management of on-scene resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of incidents and is applicable to small, as well as large and complex, incidents, including planned events.

Insular Area: Per the Stafford Act, insular areas include Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Other statutes or departments and agencies may define the term 'insular area' differently.

Joint Field Office: The primary federal incident management field structure. The joint field office is a temporary federal facility that provides a central location for coordinating organizations with primary responsibility for response and recovery, including state, local, tribal and territorial governments, insular areas and federal governments and private sector and nonprofit organizations.

Joint Information Center (JIC): A facility in which personnel coordinate incident-related public information activities. It serves as the central point of contact for all news media. Public information officials from all participating agencies co-locate at, or virtually coordinate through, the JIC.

Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction has more than one definition. Each use depends on the context:

- Public agencies have a range or sphere of authority at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be political or geographical (e.g., city, county, state, tribal or federal boundary lines) or functional (e.g., law enforcement, public health).
- A political subdivision (e.g., federal, state, county, parish, municipality) with the responsibility for public safety, health and welfare within its legal authorities and geographic boundaries.

Local Government: A county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under state law), regional or interstate government entity or agency or instrumentality of a local government; a rural community, unincorporated town or village or other public entity.

Mass Care and Emergency Assistance: Mass care and emergency assistance is comprised of seven activities including sheltering; feeding; distribution of emergency supplies; support for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; reunification services for adults and

children; support for household pets, service animals and assistance animals; and mass evacuee support.

Mitigation: Capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Mitigation capabilities include, but are not limited to, community-wide risk reduction projects; efforts to improve the resilience of critical infrastructure and key resource lifelines; risk reduction for specific vulnerabilities from natural hazards or acts of terrorism; and initiatives to reduce future risks after a disaster has occurred.

Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Group: MAC Groups, sometimes called policy groups, typically consist of agency administrators or executives from organizations or their designees. MAC Groups provide policy guidance to incident personnel, support resource prioritization and allocation and enable decision making among elected and appointed officials and senior executives in other organizations as well as those directly responsible for incident management.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A systematic, proactive approach to guide all levels of government, nonprofits and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. NIMS provides a consistent foundation for dealing with all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated federal response.

Nonprofit Organization: A group that meets the requirements of Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(3) and is based on the interests of its members, individuals or institutions.[98] A nonprofit is not created by a government, but it may work cooperatively with the government. Examples of nonprofits include faith-based groups, relief agencies, organizations that support people with access and functional needs and animal welfare organizations.

Policy Group: Please see definition of Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups.

Prevention: The capabilities necessary to prevent, avoid or stop an imminent threatened or actual act of terrorism.

Protection: The capabilities to safeguard the homeland against acts of terrorism and manmade or natural disasters, focusing on actions to protect United States people, vital interests and way of life.

Public Information Officer: A member of the ICS Command Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information needs.

[98] For more information, see https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/organizational-test-internal-revenue-code-section-501c3.

Recovery: The timely restoration, strengthening and revitalization of infrastructure, housing and a sustainable economy, as well as the health, social, cultural, historic and environmental fabric of communities affected by an incident.

Resilience: The ability to adapt to changing conditions and withstand and rapidly recover from disruption due to emergencies.

Resource Management: Systems for identifying available resources at all jurisdictional levels to enable timely, efficient and unimpeded access to resources needed to prepare for, respond to or recover from an incident.

Response: The capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.

State/Territorial Coordinating Officer: The individual appointed by the governor to coordinate state or territorial disaster assistance efforts with those of the federal government. The state or territorial coordinating officer plays a critical role in managing the response and recovery operations following Stafford Act declarations. The lines of authority flow from the governor to the state or territorial coordinating officer, following the state/territory's policies and laws.

Tribal Coordinating Officer: The individual designated by tribal authorities to coordinate local disaster assistance efforts with that of the Federal government. The Tribal Coordinating Officer may also be designated as the Tribal Authorized Representative.[99]

Whole Community: The whole community includes individuals and communities, businesses, private and public sector owners and operators of critical infrastructure, faith-based organizations, nonprofit organizations and all levels of government (regional/ metropolitan, state, local, tribal, territorial, insular and federal areas).

[99] For more information, see https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_tribal-pa-admin-plan_template_3-2020.pdf.

Appendix H: Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASL	American Sign Language
ASPR	Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations
COG	Continuity of Government
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CPG	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide
DOT	Department of Transportation
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EMI	Emergency Management Institute
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FCO	Federal Coordinating Officer
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance
FMAG	Fire Management Assistance Grant Program
GIS	Geographic Information System
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
HHS	Health and Human Services
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
HUD	Housing and Urban Development

IA	Individual Assistance
ICS	Incident Command System
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
MAC	Multiagency Coordination Group
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NEP	National Exercise Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIMS	National Incident Management System
PA	Public Assistance
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment
PIO	Public Information Officer
RAPT	Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool
SBA	Small Business Administration
SRIA	Sandy Recovery Improvement Act
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture