

The Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program is to provide assistance to state, tribal and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations. PA reimbursements provide funding on a percentage basis to eligible applicants who have suffered damages as result of a Presidentially declared disaster and whose damages are within a county authorized for PA. Funding under this program is limited to repairing/restoring damages items/facilities to their pre-disaster condition and will only be provided once all other means of funding have been exhausted.

Such assistance may take the form of equipment, supplies, personnel or other available capabilities. Eligibility is determined based on certain criterion applied to the applicant, the facility, the work and the cost of the requested assistance.

Examples of Eligibility Factors:

Applicant Eligibility

- State Agencies and Authorities
- Local Governments (County, City, Town)
- Certain Private Non-Profit Organizations
- Indian Tribes or Tribal Organizations

Facility Eligibility

- Responsibility of eligible applicant
- Located in a designated disaster area
- Not be under the specific authority of another Federal agency
- Active use at the time of the disaster

Work Eligibility

- Required as the result of a major disaster event
- Located within a designated disaster area
- Legal responsibility of an eligible applicant

Cost Eligibility

- Reasonable and necessary to accomplish work
- Work must comply with Federal, State and Local laws and regulations
- Insurance proceeds, salvage value and purchase discounts must be deducted from otherwise eligible costs

There are two types of work eligible for reimbursement through a Public Assistance Grant: emergency work and permanent work.

Each of these work types are further divided into categories based on the action being performed for emergency work, or the type of facility repaired for permanent work. The categories of work are often identified by a single letter. The TWO categories are:

Emergency Work (6 month time frame for completion) – an activity done immediately after a disaster to save lives, protect and preserve property, public health and safety, and to provide essential public services.

- Category A: Debris Removal

May include but is not limited to vegetation, soil/mud/sand bags, construction and demolition, metals, white goods, furnishings and animal carcasses. Debris removal is usually handled in two phases: emergency debris clearance and estimation and debris removal and disposal.

- Category B: Emergency Protective Measures

Includes measures taken before, during and after a disaster to save lives, protect the public health and safety and protect improved public and private property. Examples of eligible measures include overtime for public safety employees involved in barricading, sandbagging and other protective measures. Measures related to the personnel and equipment used in search and rescue operations, emergency management operations, shelter operations, emergency medical care operations and the providing of temporary facilities, food and water.

Permanent Work (18 month time frame for completion) – activity required to restore a damaged facility to its pre-disaster condition.

- Category C: Road System Repairs

Work related to the repair of roads, bridges and features including shoulders, ditches, culverts, lighting and signs. Work to not only repair the road or bridge but also ensure it meets current formally adopted codes and standards. Examples of road work may include repairs to surfaces, bases, ditches, culverts, low water crossings and guardrails. Examples of bridge work may include repairs to decking, guardrails, girders, pavement, abutments, pier slope protection and approaches. Damage assessments will be used to determine if repair or replacement is the most viable cost efficient option. Facilities funded by other federal agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are not eligible for repair.

- Category D: Water Control Facilities

These facilities can include work to repair irrigation systems, drainage channels, pumping facilities, levees, dams and flood control channels. If the facility falls within the control of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is not eligible for Public Assistance.

- Category E: Buildings and Equipment

Public buildings may be restored to pre-disaster design capacity under the Public Assistance Grant Program. The building must have been in active use at the time of the disaster to be eligible and all insured losses must be utilized as the primary reimbursement source before requesting reimbursement for uninsured losses. The amount available from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) whether or not a policy exists will be taken into account for any structures/contents within the 100 year flood zone. Eligible costs may include repair of buildings/equipment, supplies or inventory, vehicles and transportation systems. Activities eligible under this category may include repair or replacement of buildings, contents such as furnishings to include interior systems such as electrical and HVAC work; replacement of consumable supplies inventory, library books and other publications; and removal of mud, silt and other accumulated debris.

- Category F: Public Utility Systems

Public Utility Systems include water treatment, storm drainage, sewer systems, telecommunications and electric power. Costs should be based on estimates to restore damaged utilities and not include any disaster related increase in operating expenses or lost revenue.

- Category G: Parks, Recreation, Other

Recreational facilities include structures like playground equipment, swimming pools, tennis courts, piers, golf courses and sports related fields (baseball, soccer, football, etc.). Trees and other plantings are not eligible but grass, seeding and sod may be eligible only if needed to stabilize slopes and minimize sediment runoff. For beaches to be eligible, the beach must have been improved and properly maintained prior to the disaster.

Any work under the Public Assistance Grant Program will require documented evidence of disaster related damage. Photographic and/or video evidence is the best and should be used throughout the disaster and repair process. All work will require a project worksheet or multiple project worksheets be written and approved for each category of work and location.