



## Regional Disaster Finance Coordination Program

As emergency managers in the state of Texas, we tend to concentrate on mitigating, preparing and responding to emergencies from an operational perspective. Seldom do we do the same for the fiscal side of emergency management, with areas such as recovery often being an afterthought. With today's economy, fiscal responsibility needs to be considered at the beginning of the emergency, not at the end. Finance is part of all four areas of emergency management (mitigation, planning, response and recovery) and we should be concerned with much more than just how to respond to an emergency.

**PURPOSE:** On May 7, 2014, the Office of the Governor authorized a grant to help implement the Regional Disaster Finance Coordination Program. The Regional Disaster Finance Coordination Program is an innovative, proactive pilot program designed to give local jurisdictions the financial tools needed to help recover from a disaster before a disaster occurs, as well as facilitate collaboration and communication between disaster responders and financial managers prior to an emergency occurring. Embedded within the Recovery Section, this program is overseen by a state coordinator and employs eight finance coordinators stationed throughout the state:

- One each for DPS Regions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6
- Two for DPS Region 2
- One at headquarters to assist with state agencies

**FOCUS:** Program efforts focus on accounting practices of individual finance departments, cataloguing current budget capabilities and ensuring compliance with federal rules to improve financial standard operating procedures and systems used during a disaster.

This focus is aligned with interim changes for the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature for the Texas House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety and the Committee on County Affairs to assess and improve the level of preparedness and to coordinate with local emergency response to ensure economic stability.

**NEXT STEPS:** The finance coordinators will continue to conduct courses, workshops and meetings with executive staff and finance personnel throughout all 254 counties in Texas to promote financial responsibility and equip the jurisdictions with the tools necessary to track, calculate and justify the costs of an emergency.

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