

# Public Comment Period for Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide Update

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency is accepting comments on the draft Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Program and Policy Guide. Once finalized, the HMA Program and Policy Guide will replace the currently effective 2015 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance and the 2015 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance Addendum.

FEMA is accepting comments until Sept. 23, 2022. The current draft can be accessed at the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#) and reference **Docket ID FEMA-2022-0023**.

## Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide Background and Overview

FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs provide funding for eligible mitigation activities that reduce disaster losses and protect life and property from future disaster damage.

The last comprehensive HMA policy guidance was issued in February 2015 through the publication of the 2015 HMA Guidance and the 2015 HMA Guidance Addendum. These documents covered all HMA programs in effect in 2015: the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA); and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program.

Since the issuance of the 2015 HMA Guidance and Addendum, FEMA's HMA programs have significantly grown and changed. Over the past seven years, FEMA published a variety of new policies and supporting materials; Congress passed legislation that authorized new programs, including Building Infrastructure and Resilient Communities (BRIC) and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post



Fire (HMGP Post Fire); hazard mitigation methods have advanced; and FEMA stakeholders provided extensive feedback on existing guidance. FEMA incorporated these updates into the HMA Program and Policy Guide (HMA Guide) that is published online for public comment.

The HMA Guide comprehensively outlines the policy and procedural requirements of the following Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs:

1. Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
2. Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
3. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
4. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire (HMGP Post Fire)

The Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program is no longer covered in the HMA Guide. Congress may appropriate additional grant funds under Section 203 of the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act](#) outside of the established hazard mitigation assistance programs, and such funds may be administered through the Pre-Disaster Mitigation program. FEMA will announce these funding opportunities separately, as needed, which will specify the applicable program requirements.

The HMA Guide does not include guidance for assistance provided under the Safeguarding Tomorrow Through Ongoing Risk Mitigation Act (STORM Act). [Public Law 116-284](#) (Jan. 1, 2021) amended the Stafford Act by creating a new grant program under [Title 42 United States Code Chapter 68, Section 5135 – Disaster Relief – Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Assistance](#), allowing for capitalization grants to be made to eligible entities for the establishment of hazard mitigation revolving loan funds. FEMA is assessing the implementation of the STORM Act and will issue separate guidance in the future.

## Purpose of the HMA Program and Policy Guide Update

The primary purpose of the HMA Guide update is to incorporate existing policies and guidance materials issued since 2015, simplify and clarify guidance, and incorporate strategic mitigation priorities. These revisions aim to create a document that is easier to navigate and use. Those interested are invited to participate in the update by submitting public comments and related materials.



## Request for Public Comment

FEMA is seeking comments on the proposed HMA Guide, which is available online at <http://www.regulations.gov> with Docket ID FEMA-2022-0023.

The public may submit comments, identified by **Docket ID FEMA-2022-0023**, with the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#).

### **Comments must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Sept. 23, 2022.**

FEMA will consider all comments and materials received during the comment period. When submitting comments, please:

1. Clearly identify the issue you are commenting on. For instance, if you are commenting on a specific sentence, include the page number and line number. For broader comments, include the relevant part or section number.
2. Provide a reason for each comment.
3. Include the Docket Number Information in all comments: **Docket ID FEMA-2022-0023**

All submissions, including any personal information that was provided, may be posted without change to the [Federal e-Rulemaking Portal](#). For this reason, commentors should be aware that their submissions will be made public. For more about privacy and the docket, see the [Privacy Act](#). To access the docket and read associated documents or comments received, visit the [Federal e-Rulemaking Portal](#).

Based on the comments received, FEMA may make appropriate revisions to the HMA Program and Policy Guide. When or if FEMA issues a final policy, FEMA will publish it on its [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants website](#).

## Highlights of Proposed Changes

The HMA Guide consolidates the 2015 HMA Guidance and the 2015 HMA Guidance Addendum into one document.

The HMA Guide:



- Updates FEMA priorities such as resilience and climate adaptation, community lifelines, whole community, equity, capability and capacity building, comprehensive planning and building codes.
- Reflects changes resulting from the [Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018](#).
- Incorporates additional policy changes that were published after 2015.
- Expands information on project types based on existing job aids and factsheets, such as aquifer storage and recovery, floodplain and stream restoration, flood diversion and storage, wind retrofit, acquisition projects, and generators.
- Incorporates 2021 updates to Hazard Mitigation Assistance and Mitigation Planning regulations
- Expands the eligibility of codes and standards assistance.
- Incorporates regulatory changes made to [Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200](#) in 2020 and expands information on grants management requirements and procedures.
- Expands mitigation planning content and resources.
- Includes new guiding principles, such as ones related to implementing nature-based solutions and the [National Mitigation Investment Strategy](#).
- Makes non-substantive revisions to increase overall accessibility and organization of the document.

A comprehensive list of changes can be found in Part 1 of the current draft of the HMA Guide.

### **Additional Information**

Members of the public should submit all comments, identified by **Docket ID FEMA-2022-0023**, in the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

For any non-HMA Guide concerns, please send an email to [FEMA-HMA-Guide@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-HMA-Guide@fema.dhs.gov).

For any media inquiries, please email the [FEMA News Desk](#).

