



FEMA

October 23, 2013

Dear Chief Executive,

As you remember, the President signed the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (P.L. 113-2) into law earlier this year. The law included a provision which amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) to provide Federally recognized Indian tribal governments (tribal governments) the option to request a Stafford Act emergency or major disaster declaration independently of a state. The amendment also preserves the tribal government's choice to seek assistance under a state declaration request.

In order to immediately carry out the provisions of the new law, FEMA is implementing direct tribal declarations in three phases:

- (1) Use of current regulations
- (2) Development of Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance
- (3) Final regulations

The attached document provides an overview of the current regulations FEMA uses to process declaration requests. The overview includes information on types of Stafford Act declarations and available assistance as well as required procedures and considerations prior to initiating the declarations request process.

The process outlined in the overview will be used while FEMA drafts the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance and consults with tribal governments. More information on consultation for the draft Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance will follow.

Please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Administrator should you have any questions about declaration request procedures or requirements. If your staff has questions, please have them contact your Regional Tribal Liaison.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth A. Zimmerman", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Elizabeth A. Zimmerman  
Deputy Associate Administrator  
Office of Response and Recovery

Attachment