

Unified Federal Review Process



Unified Federal Environmental and Historic Preservation Review:

Fact Sheet for Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Practitioners

Natural resources, cultural institutions and historic properties define communities and contribute to their well-being and unique character. As disasters continue to challenge our nation and communities grapple with issues of preparedness, resiliency and sustainability, federal, tribal, state and local agencies are working together to support the needs of affected communities and continually improve disaster recovery processes. This work includes helping communities incorporate environmental stewardship and historic preservation into emergency management decisions.

The Unified Federal Environmental and Historic Preservation Review Process

The Unified Federal Environmental and Historic Preservation Review Process (UFR Process) was established on July 29, 2014, by eleven federal departments and agencies entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The UFR Process focuses on the federal EHP requirements applicable to proposed disaster recovery projects following a presidentially declared disaster under the Stafford Act. Through the UFR Process, federal agencies that fund or permit disaster recovery projects and those that perform EHP reviews associated with those projects will coordinate their independent review processes leading to expedited decision making, which can result in efficient delivery of assistance and implementation of recovery projects.

The UFR Guidance for EHP Practitioners is the primary source, along with its accompanying appendices, for federal EHP practitioners to get information on the UFR Process. Since every disaster is different, the UFR Process is not a one-size-fits-all approach but a flexible framework for collaboration among agencies. Following catastrophic disasters, federal agencies may ensure coordination under the UFR Process through the use of a Disaster-Specific MOU with tribal, state and local government partners to identify specific responsibilities, share data and coordinate reviews. During recovery from disasters that involve a smaller federal recovery effort, the coordination required by the UFR Process may be conducted through meetings and conference calls. The UFR Process is beneficial to funding agencies and resource/regulatory agencies. The funding agency EHP practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that EHP reviews for projects, which are jointly funded, are well coordinated among the agencies to ensure that the number of federal reviews is minimized.

Four key questions that EHP practitioners need to consider during the UFR Process are:

- Are other funding agencies involved?
- Are other resource / regulatory agencies involved?
- Is the project covered by an existing analysis or agreement?
- How can the UFR Tools and Mechanisms unify and expedite the EHP review?

Note that the UFR Process does not change EHP requirements but, instead, identifies ways to use existing efficiencies, along with the new Tools and Mechanisms to improve the EHP review of proposed disaster recovery projects for projects involving multiple federal agencies. For more information on the Tools and Mechanisms developed for the UFR Process, visit the UFR Webpage; the link is located at the bottom of this page.

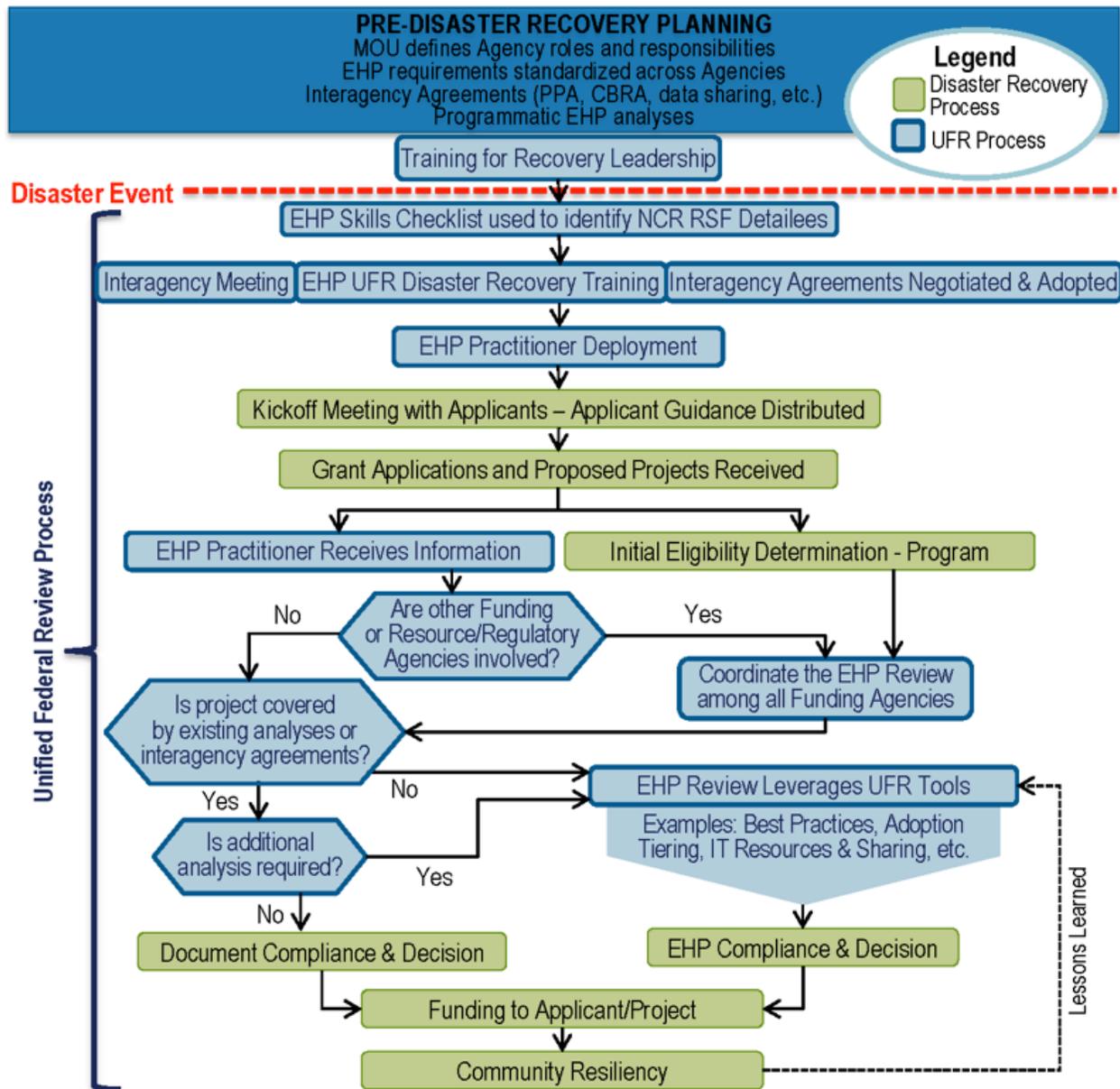
Educating applicants for assistance is an important aspect of the UFR Process. Applicant guidance is available on the UFR Webpage as a source of information on the UFR Process and EHP requirements typically encountered by disaster recovery assistance applicants.

For more information on the UFR Process, please visit the UFR Webpage at: <http://www.fema.gov/environmental-historic-preservation/unified-federal-environmental-and-historic-preservation-review>

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The chart below depicts the UFR Process during disaster recovery, including the use of Tools and Mechanisms that will help EHP practitioners implement the UFR Process. The typical disaster recovery process is depicted in **green** and the expedited UFR Process is depicted in **blue**. The end-state for the UFR Process is community recovery and resiliency. Although not every disaster recovery process is the same, this graphic of the UFR Process can be easily adapted to the needs of individual agencies. These Tools and Mechanisms are available on the UFR Webpage and include: training modules for the UFR Process; Disaster-Specific MOU and Data Sharing Agreement Content; Prototype Programmatic Agreement for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; best practices located throughout the Practitioners Guidance; an Agency Point of Contact List and IT Resources List.



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