



Hazard Mitigation Planning for Indian Tribal Governments

This fact sheet provides an overview for Indian tribal governments of hazard mitigation planning under FEMA’s National Mitigation Planning Program. The intended audience is tribal officials, tribal members, and partner organizations.

What is Hazard Mitigation Planning?

Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Mitigation activities are most effective when implemented consistent with risk reduction priorities developed under a comprehensive, long-term mitigation plan. Hazard mitigation planning enables Indian tribal governments to identify risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters, and develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events.

Benefits for Indian Tribal Governments

Indian tribal governments have responsibility for protecting the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Developing hazard mitigation plans enables tribal officials to:

- Increase education and awareness around threats, hazards, and vulnerabilities;
- Build partnerships for risk reduction involving government, organizations, businesses, and tribal members;
- Identify long-term, broadly-supported strategies for risk reduction;
- Align risk reduction with other objectives;
- Identify implementation approaches that focus resources on the greatest risks and vulnerabilities; and
- Communicate priorities to potential sources of funding.

Moreover, a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan is a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects (see the next page).



Mitigation Planning Process

- 1. Organize Resources** – At the start, an Indian tribal government should focus on assembling the resources, partners, and technical expertise needed for a successful mitigation planning process.
- 2. Assess Risks** – Next, the Indian tribal government needs to identify the characteristics and potential consequences of hazards. It is important to understand what geographic areas different hazards might impact and what people, property, or other assets might be vulnerable.
- 3. Develop a Mitigation Plan** – Based on an understanding of risk, the Indian tribal government then needs to set priorities and develop long-term strategies for avoiding or minimizing the undesired effects of disasters. The product is a mitigation plan and implementation approach.
- 4. Implement Plan and Monitor Progress** – The Indian tribal government can bring the mitigation plan to life in a variety of ways, from implementing specific mitigation projects to changing aspects of day-to-day tribal operations. To ensure success in ongoing implementation, the plan must remain relevant. Thus, the Indian tribal government should conduct periodic evaluations to assess changing risks and priorities and make revisions as needed.

For more detailed guidance on the process to complete an approved hazard mitigation plan, please see FEMA’s [Tribal Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance](#).

Mitigation Plan Requirement for Certain FEMA Grants

Under the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act](#) (Stafford Act), an Indian tribal government must develop and adopt a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible for certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance. The Code of Federal Regulations ([44 CFR Part 201](#)) establishes specific requirements for tribal mitigation plans, and FEMA's [Tribal Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance](#) (2010) assists Agency officials in interpreting those requirements in their review and approval of plans. FEMA evaluates an Indian tribal government's mitigation plan under the requirements of 44 CFR Section 201.7 (Tribal Mitigation Plans), even if the plan is part of a larger multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan developed together with nearby local governments. FEMA's approval of a hazard mitigation plan lasts for five years, after which the Indian tribal government needs to update and re-submit for FEMA review. Through the Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, and Flood Mitigation Assistance), FEMA offers planning grants that support Indian tribal governments in developing and updating mitigation plans. The table below summarizes how FEMA's mitigation plan requirement applies to Federally-recognized Indian tribal governments applying directly to FEMA for assistance as "applicants," or Indian tribal governments (Federally-recognized or not) applying for FEMA assistance through a state as "sub-applicants."

Mitigation Plan Requirement for Indian Tribal Governments Applying for Certain FEMA Grants			
Enabling Legislation	FEMA Assistance Program	Is a Mitigation Plan Required?	
		Applicant	Sub-applicant
Stafford Act	Individual Assistance (IA)	No	No
	Public Assistance (PA) Categories A and B (e.g., debris removal, emergency protective measures)	No	No
	Public Assistance (PA) Categories C through G (e.g., repairs to damaged infrastructure, publically owned buildings)	Yes	No
	Fire Mitigation Assistance Grants (FMAG)	Yes	No
	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) planning grant	Yes ⁺	No
	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) project grant	Yes ⁺	Yes ⁺⁺
	Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) planning grant	No	No
	Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) project grant	Yes [*]	Yes ^{**}
National Flood Insurance Act	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) planning grant	Yes [*]	No
	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) project grant	Yes [*]	Yes ^{**}
Notes	⁺ At the time of the Presidential major disaster declaration and at the time of obligation of HMGP grant funds. ⁺⁺ At the time of obligation of HMGP grant funds for mitigation projects. [*] By the application deadline and at the time of obligation of the PDM or FMA award. ^{**} By the application deadline and at the time of obligation of PDM or FMA grant funds for mitigation projects.		

For Additional Information

- FEMA's National Mitigation Planning Program: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-planning>
- FEMA Tribal Affairs: <http://www.fema.gov/fema-tribal-affairs>