

Six Months After Earthquake, Collaborative Effort Helps Alaskans Recover

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska – As Alaska moves from response to recovery from the Nov. 30 earthquake, state and federal partners as well as community and faith-based organizations are providing technical and tangible assistance to help individuals and communities make meaningful strides toward normalcy.

These partnerships have helped individuals and communities in the six months since the earthquake, which affected the Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Kenai Peninsula Borough. Alaskans feeling distress over a daily drumbeat of aftershocks were offered mental health counseling. State and federal funding will help restore and rebuild homes and businesses, damaged schools, roads and other critical infrastructure.

The state of Alaska has been working with FEMA to ensure **51** community applicants accurately assess and document damage to schools, buildings and other infrastructure for possible federal reimbursement and funding.

By the Feb. 28 state registration deadline, **13,843** residents applied for the State Individual Assistance program. Those who made their way through the federal assistance pipeline may now be reconsidered for further assistance from the state; to date, **157** residents have applied for reconsideration to the state program.

Residents who applied for state assistance and exhausted all avenues of federal assistance can visit ready.alaska.gov/Recovery/Reconsideration to request the state reconsider their application.

“While the amount of federal disaster support for Alaskans exceeds **\$84 million** so far, the real recovery successes are those that show the efforts of residents, communities and businesses moving forward to rebuilding a more resilient Alaska,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Timothy B. Manner, who is leading



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FEMA's recovery efforts in the state.

Restoration and rebuilding efforts include projects focused on a holistic approach—with state and federal agencies working with community leaders, faith-based partners and volunteer organizations. FEMA and state voluntary agency liaisons are identifying resources to provide education and training to help create long-term recovery groups.

Long-term recovery groups in Anchorage, Eagle River and Mat-Su were established to assist those affected by the earthquake and unable to recover with their own resources. More than 40 state, municipal, faith-based, nonprofit and community partners make up these groups. One goal is to engage students to support disaster recovery as part of their education, and to that end one group is developing a partnership with the University of Alaska.

Anchorage and Mat-Su Valley also have an active human services and voluntary agency safety net which has continued to provide regular services to Alaskans, with little interruption post-disaster.

In the Borough of Mat-Su, Alaska 211, Alaska Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Catholic Charities, American Red Cross and the U.S. Department of Agriculture provide referrals to faith-based and non-governmental organizations as well as state and federal agencies.

Alaska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and the state are providing administrative and technical support to communities working toward their recovery goals.

A major disaster declaration was issued Jan. 31 for the earthquake, making FEMA's Individual and Households Program and the Public Assistance program available to affected individuals, governments and certain private nonprofits in the designated areas.

As of May 28, more than **\$84 million** in federal funding was provided to assist residents. This includes funding for temporary housing assistance, basic home repairs, other needs not covered by insurance and low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. FEMA awarded funds to **3,871** households with uninsured and underinsured disaster-related losses.



FEMA's Public Assistance program provides federal funding of no less than 75 percent to reimburse approved applicants for eligible earthquake-related costs. This can include debris removal, emergency protective measures and the repair, replacement or restoration of damaged facilities. For many of these applicants, the state will cover the remaining 25 percent of the cost.

Sixty requests for Public Assistance were submitted to FEMA by the April 1 deadline, including 31 nonprofit organizations. **Fifty-one** applicants have been deemed eligible for reimbursement.

Federal funding is also available for approved costs for hazard mitigation projects undertaken by state, tribal and local governments to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from disasters. From March to May, FEMA's mitigation specialists provided information to the public at hardware stores, supermarkets and special events, offering counsel to more than **16,000** residents on disaster preparedness and how to rebuild safer, stronger and more resilient.

Recovery Highlights as of May 28:

- More than **\$16.3 million** was approved under FEMA's Individuals and Households Program for home repair and personal property expenses, and rental assistance was provided to **more than 860** Alaskans.
- **\$16 million** was approved under FEMA's Housing Assistance program and **\$269,152** under its Other Needs Assistance program, which provides funding for serious disaster-related essentials including medical and dental, transportation, child care, moving and storage expenses.
- SBA approved nearly **\$67.8 million** in low-interest disaster loans including 91 business loans and **1,524** loans for homeowners and renters.
- **5,741** visitors sought help from the five state/federal disaster recovery centers that operated in Anchorage, Mat-Su and Kenai Peninsula during the four-month registration period. The Wasilla disaster recovery center began operating as an SBA disaster loan outreach center on May 16.

Federal disaster assistance is intended to help jump-start recovery from the earthquake; it may not cover all damage or property loss. SBA's low-interest disaster loans are for businesses of all sizes, certain private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters. Completing an SBA loan application may make additional assistance available to pay for home repairs, replace essential



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household items, replace or repair a damaged vehicle, pay for storage costs or cover an insurance deductible. SBA may also offer a loan while an insurance claim is pending.

Residents have until **May 31** to register for federal disaster assistance the following ways:

- Visit a disaster recovery center. The centers also cease operations **May 31**.
- Apply online at DisasterAssistance.gov
- Call **800-621-3362 (FEMA)**, **voice/VP/711**. Multilingual operators are available. TTY users may call **800-462-7585**. Lines are open daily from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Residents are encouraged to call the federal assistance helpline if they received a determination letter from FEMA and later uncovered additional damage.

For more information on Alaska's disaster recovery, visit ready.alaska.gov/earthquake, FEMA.gov/disaster/4413, Twitter.com/FEMARegion10 and Facebook.com/FEMA, [Alaska Earthquake](https://AlaskaEarthquake) or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/readyalaska.



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