

FEMA Grants for Home Acquisitions

Release Date: Dec 5, 2024

Acquisition may be an option for a property owner whose house is in a high flood risk area and who experienced substantial flood damage.

Home Acquisitions

FEMA does not buy houses directly from the property owners. The state manages the acquisition program, working with local communities.

Local communities may purchase flood-prone properties, remove the buildings and maintain the land as open space. FEMA may pay up to 75% of acquisition costs through its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and 25% is non-federal, meaning the property owner could ultimately be responsible for 25% of the project cost.

To obtain more information about funding opportunities, please contact your [State Hazard Mitigation Officer](#). You may also contact your local floodplain or emergency manager whose information may be on your city or county webpage.

How Acquisitions Are Funded

Most of FEMA property acquisitions have been funded through the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#). This program is available following presidentially declared disasters.

The amount of HMGP funds available for the state varies every disaster. The total is a formula calculation based on a percentage of the estimated total federal assistance through other FEMA programs.

Voluntary Opportunity



Participation in the acquisition program is voluntary. After a presidentially declared disaster, HMGP funding is available for communities to purchase properties that have either flooded or been determined to be substantially damaged. Communities apply through the State or Territory on behalf of homeowners voluntarily seeking acquisition funding through HMGP.

Homeowners can withdraw from participation at any time before property closing.

How Specific Properties Are Determined

States and local communities determine funding priorities for their HMGP funds. Therefore, decisions are initiated and managed locally. Local officials will work with you on the application requirements to determine whether your home qualifies. The local community would submit the application to the state for review and submission to FEMA for final review and approval. Once FEMA provides an approval, the local official will work with you to acquire your property with the approved funding.

Properties typically have repetitive flood losses and must be primary residences. Please check with your state and local emergency manager on specific eligibility requirements.

How Much Homeowners Receive

If a home is eligible for acquisition, the homeowner is offered a pre-disaster fair-market value for the property as determined by the community. There is appeals process available for homeowners who disagree with the appraisal value of the property. Keep in mind that FEMA deducts benefits from other sources such as insurance and repair grants, that have not been used for its intended purpose.

Deed Restricted

The land will be deed-restricted and maintained by the community as open space for the conservation of natural floodplain functions.



How Long It Takes

The HMGP is not an emergency recovery or repair program. Project work cannot begin until the project has been reviewed, approved, and a contract has been executed.

Acquisition projects typically take two to three years or more to apply for and complete the buyout. Acquisition requires substantial coordination between the property owner, community and the state.

