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Public Assistance Alternative Procedures for Permanent Work Pilot (Version 4)

FEMA Recovery Policy FP 104-009-7

Date: August 29, 2019 (Superseded on June 1, 2020)

BACKGROUND

Section 428 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, (Stafford Act)¹ authorizes FEMA to award Public Assistance (PA) funding based on fixed estimates. This version 4 of the *Public Assistance Alternative Procedures for Permanent Work Pilot* (Pilot) policy supersedes version 3 and the Alternative Procedures Project language in Chapter 2.VII.G of the *Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide*² (PAPPG). All other portions of the PAPPG apply except where specifically stated otherwise. This policy is applicable to all major disasters declared on or after August 29, 2019.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the framework and requirements to ensure appropriate and consistent implementation.

PRINCIPLES

- A. Increase flexibility in the administration of such assistance by allowing Applicants to use funds in a manner that best meets their specific needs for recovery, long-term resiliency, and future preparedness.
- B. Simplify the delivery of assistance and reduce administrative costs associated with PA projects.

REQUIREMENTS

A. FIXED-COST OFFER ACCEPTANCE

Outcome: Enable Applicants to drive their own recovery.

1. FEMA and the Recipient will work with the Applicant to formulate disaster-related damage into projects and reach agreement on the eligible scopes of work (SOW) for all Permanent Work projects. Once agreement is reached on the disaster-related damage and eligible SOW, FEMA or the Applicant will develop a cost estimate in accordance with Section G, *Cost Estimates*.
2. After the cost estimate is developed by FEMA or developed by the Applicant and validated by FEMA as being reasonable and eligible based on the work required to address the disaster-related damage, FEMA will transmit a fixed-cost offer via its Grants Manager/Portal to the Applicant for acceptance.

¹ Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121, *et seq.*, as amended.

² www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781



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3. The total fixed-cost amount is established based on the aggregate of:
 - a. The estimated cost to restore disaster damaged facilities to pre-disaster design (size and capacity) and function in accordance with eligible codes and standards; and
 - b. The estimated cost for cost-effective hazard mitigation measures associated with the actual restoration SOW to be implemented.
4. If the Applicant accepts the fixed-cost offer for a Large Project, it is considered a Pilot Project and the Applicant will:
 - a. Not be required to rebuild the facilities back to what existed prior to the disaster.
 - b. Be allowed to share funds across all of its Pilot Projects.
 - c. Not be required to track costs to specific work items.
 - d. Not be required to track costs or work to specific Pilot Projects since funds can be shared across all of its Pilot Projects.
 - e. Be allowed to retain and use excess funds to reduce risk and improve future disaster operations (subject to timely closeout).
 - f. Be eligible for cost-effective hazard mitigation on replacement projects.

B. DEADLINES

Outcome: Increase speed of recovery through timely agreement on fixed-cost offers.

1. Applicants have no more than 18 months from the disaster declaration date to:
 - a. Determine the actual SOW and hazard mitigation measures to be implemented; and
 - b. Accept a fixed-cost offer for each project (also subject to 30-day deadline from receipt, see B.2).
2. Each time FEMA transmits a fixed-cost offer, the Recipient and Applicant will have a combined total of 30 calendar days from the date of FEMA's transmittal of the fixed-cost offer to accept the offer (not to exceed the 18-month deadline). Any projects without accepted fixed-cost offers by the 30-day and 18-month deadlines will be processed using standard PA policies and procedures and funded in accordance with Title 44 Code of Federal Regulations §206.205.
3. Time extensions to accept fixed-cost offers must be approved by FEMA's Assistant Administrator for Recovery.

C. HAZARD MITIGATION

Outcome: Promote resiliency through inclusion of hazard mitigation.

1. When the Applicant is restoring a facility to pre-disaster function, size, capacity, and location, FEMA evaluates the proposed hazard mitigation SOW and cost-effectiveness based on the criteria in Chapter 2.VII.C of the PAPPG.
2. When the Applicant is restoring the function, but changing the pre-disaster capacity of a facility (Improved Project), the proposed hazard mitigation SOW is developed based on the actual SOW to be implemented; however, the cost-effectiveness is evaluated based on the fixed-cost amount accepted for the pre-disaster restoration SOW. If the capacity is



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increased, the proposed hazard mitigation SOW and cost is limited to the SOW and cost necessary to mitigate to the pre-disaster capacity of the damaged facility.

- 3. Applicants must complete the approved hazard mitigation in order to retain the fixed-cost amount accepted for hazard mitigation.

D. USE OF FUNDS

Outcome: Increase effectiveness of assistance through increased flexibility and expanded use of funds.

- 1. Applicants may use fixed-cost funds, including any excess funds across all Pilot Projects.
- 2. Applicants may request to use fixed-cost funds for any of the activities defined as eligible under the *Use of Fixed-Cost Funds* column in the table below. Once FEMA approves and the Applicant completes the SOW associated with these activities, the Applicant may use any excess funds for the expanded list of eligible activities listed under the *Use of Excess Funds* column.
- 3. Any excess funds remaining after the approved SOW is complete may be used for cost-effective activities that reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, or suffering from a major disaster, and activities that improve future PA operations or planning. The Applicant must submit a proposed SOW for use of any excess funds, along with a project timeline to the Recipient within 90 days of the date the last Alternative Procedures Project was completed. The Recipient must forward the request to FEMA within 180 days of date the last Alternative Procedures Project was completed. FEMA will evaluate the proposed use of excess funds for reasonableness to ensure prudent use of funds. FEMA will also evaluate the submitted project timeline and approve an appropriate deadline for project completion, not to exceed the overall disaster period of performance.
- 4. The following table lists examples of eligible and ineligible types of work and costs when using fixed-cost funds and excess funds.

Type of Work or Cost (all work or costs listed must otherwise be eligible for PA)	Use of Fixed-Cost Funds	Use of Excess Funds
Restoration of disaster-damaged facilities and equipment	Eligible	Eligible
Restoration of disaster-damaged facilities in undeclared areas within the same State or Tribal area	Ineligible	Eligible
Alternate Projects (e.g., purchasing equipment, constructing new facilities, improvements to undamaged facilities such as shelters and emergency operation centers) in declared areas	Eligible	Eligible
Cost-effective hazard mitigation measures for undamaged facilities	Ineligible	Eligible
Covering future insurance premiums, including meeting obtain and maintain (O&M) insurance requirements, on damaged or undamaged facilities	Ineligible	Eligible



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Work on facilities that are ineligible due to a failure to meet previous O&M requirements	Ineligible	Ineligible
Conducting or participating in training for response or recovery activities, including Federal grants management or procurement courses	Ineligible	Eligible
Planning for future disaster response and recovery operations, such as developing or updating plans (e.g., Debris Management Plans, Hazard Mitigation Plans, Pre-disaster Recovery Plans, Emergency Management/Operation Plans), integrating these plans into other plans, preparedness activities, exercises, and outreach	Ineligible	Eligible
Salaries for PA or emergency management staff. This may include but is not limited to staff performing PA grant administration, monitoring, and closeout activities for other PA disaster grants, and staff developing or updating disaster plans	Ineligible	Eligible
Paying down debts	Ineligible	Ineligible
Covering operating expenses	Ineligible	Ineligible
Covering budget shortfalls	Ineligible	Ineligible
Covering the non-Federal cost share of FEMA projects or other Federal awards	Ineligible	Ineligible

E. SCOPE OF WORK CHANGES

Outcome: Reduce administrative burden by simplifying requirements for changes to a SOW.

1. Once the SOW is approved and a fixed-cost offer is accepted:
 - a. The Applicant must notify FEMA prior to making SOW changes that involve:
 - i. Buildings or structures that are 45 years of age or older;
 - ii. Ground disturbing activities; or
 - iii. Work in or near waterways.
 - b. With exception of buildings or structures that are 45 years of age or older, the Applicant does not need to notify FEMA when it intends to make changes that substantially conform to the approved SOW. Changes that substantially conform include items, such as:
 - i. Substitutions in material type (e.g., pre-cast concrete vs. steel beam, stainless steel vs. galvanized fasteners); or
 - ii. Interior floor plan reconfigurations (e.g., adding, moving, or removing rooms/features).
 - c. If the Applicant wishes to change the SOW to the extent that it changes the hazard mitigation, such changes must be approved within the 18-month deadline and the fixed-cost offer amount will be adjusted to reflect the revised hazard mitigation SOW.



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F. ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Outcome: Ensure all projects are compliant with environmental and historic preservation (EHP) laws, regulations, and executive orders.

1. FEMA will conduct EHP compliance reviews on the actual SOW to be implemented. EHP review needs to occur prior to FEMA approval and prior to the Applicant starting any work that has potential to impact the environment, historic properties, or archaeological resources. This includes, but is not limited to, demolition, site preparation, and ground disturbing activities.
2. The Applicant must comply with all applicable EHP laws, regulations, and Executive Orders in accordance with the FEMA Directive 108-1, *Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Responsibilities and Program Requirements*, and accompanying Instruction. Non-compliance with EHP conditions and requirements may result in the deobligation of funds.

G. COST ESTIMATES

Outcome: Develop fixed-costs based on accurate cost estimates.

1. FEMA or the Applicant may develop cost estimates as follows:
 - a. FEMA will prepare its estimates using the Cost Estimating Format (CEF) and will include the CEF contingency factor "Applicant Reserve for Change Orders."
 - b. Applicant-submitted estimates must comply with Chapter 3.II.D of the PAPPG. FEMA will evaluate Applicant-submitted estimates using the *Public Assistance: Reasonable Cost Evaluation Job Aid*. This Job Aid includes a checklist in Appendix A: *Validation of Applicant-Provided Cost Estimates*, which FEMA will use to review and validate cost estimates.
 - c. The estimate must be based on the current phase of design or construction inclusive of any known costs.
 - d. If eligible work has been completed at the time the cost estimate is developed that portion of the fixed amount will be based on the actual cost.
 - e. The cost estimate must include a reduction to account for any anticipated insurance proceeds based on the Applicant's insurance policy, or if known, the actual insurance proceeds.
2. A FEMA-funded, independent panel of cost estimating experts may review project estimates. The review will be limited to issues pertaining to the estimated cost and the panel will not make decisions related to the eligibility of work. However, it may make determinations about whether cost elements are required to execute the SOW. The panel may review cost documentation for completed work, if necessary.
 - a. FEMA may request the independent panel review for any cost estimate.
 - b. Applicants may request the panel review the estimate for any project with an estimated Federal share of at least \$5 million.
 - c. All project estimates with an estimated Federal share of \$25 million or greater will be reviewed by the independent panel.



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- d. The panel will complete its review before FEMA transmits the fixed-cost offer.

H. INSURANCE

Outcome: Ensure FEMA assistance does not duplicate insurance proceeds.

1. Fixed-cost amounts will be reduced to avoid duplication with insurance proceeds in accordance with Chapter 2.V.P.1 of the PAPPG. This includes any necessary adjustments at closeout.
2. All insurable facilities for which funds are used (including excess funds) are subject to O&M requirements in accordance with Chapter 2.VII.A of the PAPPG. If the Applicant does not comply with the O&M requirement, FEMA will deobligate the fixed amounts related to the non-compliance and the facilities for which the Applicant failed to comply will not be eligible for future PA funding.

I. CLOSEOUT REQUIREMENTS

Outcome: Reduce the administrative costs associated with closeout by simplifying closeout documentation requirements and incentivize timely closeout.

1. Work must be completed by the end of the latest Pilot Project period of performance and the Recipient must certify that all incurred costs are associated with the approved SOW and that the Applicant completed all work in accordance with FEMA regulations and policies. The Recipient must submit its certification to FEMA within 180 days of the Applicant completing its last Pilot Project or the latest Pilot Project deadline, whichever occurs first, in order for the Applicant to retain and use any excess funds.
2. The closeout certification must include a final report of Pilot Project costs and documentation to support the following:
 - a. Summary of actual work completed;
 - b. Mitigation measures achieved, if applicable;
 - c. Compliance with EHP requirements;
 - d. Compliance with the O&M insurance requirement;
 - e. Summary of total actual costs to complete the Pilot Projects;
 - f. Compliance with Federal procurement procedures; and
 - g. Actual insurance proceeds received.
3. Applicants do not need to track costs to specific work items. Applicants only need to substantiate and certify that all claimed costs are related to the overall work deemed eligible for the Pilot Projects.
4. Applicants must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, including document retention.

J. APPEALS

FEMA will not consider appeals on a Pilot Project unless it is related to a cost adjustment made by FEMA after the fixed-cost offer is accepted (i.e., related to insurance, non-compliance, or an audit). Any disagreement on damage, SOW, or cost must be resolved



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prior to accepting a fixed-cost offer. Additionally, time extension denials on a Pilot Project are not appealable.

K. AUDITS

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General and the U.S. Government Accountability Office have authority to audit any project. Once the Applicant signs the fixed-cost offer, FEMA may still adjust funding due to audit findings.

L. PILOT POLICY VERSUS STANDARD PA POLICY

The following table summarizes the differences between the Alternative Procedures Pilot policy and the standard PA policy:

Alternative Procedures Policy	Standard Policy
Fixed-cost project with use of excess funds.	Actual cost project. No retention of excess funds associated with the approved estimate.
May use funds across all Pilot projects.	Can only use funds toward the specific work identified in each specific project.
After FEMA approves a SOW, approval is only required for changes that involve buildings or structures aged 45 years or older, ground disturbing activities, or work in or near water.	After FEMA approves a SOW, approval is required for any change to the SOW.
Do not need to track costs associated with changes to the SOW.	Must track costs associated with all changes to the SOW.
Do not need to track costs to specific work items. Only need to track the total costs associated with the Pilot Projects.	Must track costs specific to each work item within each individual project.
Do not need to track work to specific Pilot Projects. Only need to substantiate that the work is related to the approved SOW covered in the Pilot Projects.	Must track all work to each individual project.

Keith Turi
Assistant Administrator, Recovery Directorate

August 29, 2019

Date



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed, reissued, revised or rescinded by the Assistant Administrator of Recovery within 4 years of the date of signature on this policy.

AUTHORITIES

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121, *et seq.*, as amended.

QUESTIONS

Direct questions to Tod Wells, Acting Director, Public Assistance Division, at Tod.Wells@fema.dhs.gov.

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