

# FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO)

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Grants Management Modernization is a FEMA-wide initiative that began in 2015 to modernize and consolidate existing FEMA grants management systems, business processes, and manual workarounds into one single Information Technology platform and one common grants management lifecycle.

## Grants Management Modernization

### What is FEMA GO? What is its purpose?

FEMA developed the new information technology (IT) platform, FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO), to promote uniformity across all core grant management processes. FEMA GO eliminates reliance on multiple systems, many of which operate on multiple platforms, use different types of grant applications and reporting technologies. The capabilities and data elements used by prior systems were inconsistent and duplicative. Previous grants management processes and systems did not provide data transparency and required users to create spreadsheets and other ad hoc tools or workarounds to get the information required to manage FEMA grant programs.

FEMA GO is targeted toward the entire grants community of users, including FEMA personnel and grant recipients and subrecipients across all FEMA grant programs, including all mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery grant programs.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mitigation: Hazards</li><li>• Mitigation: Risk Analysis</li><li>• Mitigation: Community Assistance</li><li>• Mitigation: Earthquake</li><li>• Preparedness: Fire &amp; Life Safety</li><li>• Preparedness: Community Security</li><li>• Preparedness: Chemical</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparedness: Emergency Management</li><li>• Preparedness: Infrastructure Security</li><li>• Preparedness: Training</li><li>• Preparedness: Other</li><li>• Response: Urban Search and Rescue</li><li>• Recovery: Public Assistance</li><li>• Recovery: Individual Assistance</li></ul> |
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# FEMA

## What are expected outcomes of FEMA GO?

FEMA GO transforms the way FEMA manages grants and strengthens FEMA ability to execute its mission through a user-centered, business-driven approach, consistent with the following key objectives:

- Simplify grants management lifecycle process;
- Improve timeliness of funding to support survivors and facilitate community resiliency;
- Improve allocation of grant funds across the emergency management and homeland security community;
- Enhance FEMA ability to achieve equitable outcomes for our recipient communities;
- Streamline and improve business performance through business process and decision-making improvement;
- Improve business intelligence and decision-making by increasing access to data;
- Facilitate compliance with regulations and statutes;
- Reduce sustainment costs by consolidating legacy systems into a single IT platform; and
- Execute a user-centric, business-driven approach to grants transformation founded on active engagement with all grants stakeholders.

## How will FEMA GO impact state, local, tribal and territorial applicants?

Some state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTTs), nonprofit and government entities use their own internal grants management system, as well as FEMA legacy grant management systems. FEMA continues to work with them to ensure that requirements and needs are considered throughout FEMA GO's development, with the intention of users primarily using FEMA GO instead of their own systems or the legacy grant management systems.

## What additional information is available about FEMA GO?

FEMA GO has a public-facing site containing more information and training materials [here on the FEMA.gov website](#). You can also follow [@FemaGrants](#) on Twitter and [FEMA | LinkedIn](#) to learn about important grant-related information.

# Development

## Why did FEMA start with the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program?

FEMA identified the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program as a good program to start development for FEMA GO for the following reasons:

- The legacy grants management system for AFG, eGrants, provided grants functionality to three grant programs that sent funding directly to recipients who will manage the project funded by the grant. This same functionality needed to be replicated for other FEMA grants;
- eGrants was one of oldest FEMA grants management systems and expensive to maintain; and
- The program used multiple cross-cutting business functions and laid the foundation for other FEMA grant programs.

- The legacy system's business functions covered all phases of the grants management lifecycle: pre-award, award, post-award, closeout and post-closeout.

## **What systems and/or grants programs were developed next?**

The FEMA GO development team used the functions that had been built for AFG to quickly configure the system to support the Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID19 Supplemental Program (AFG-S), funded in response to the pandemic emergency. Simultaneously, the FEMA GO team started work on two Hazard Mitigation grant programs: the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program. These mitigation grant programs provide funding to the states, which then passes money to subrecipients who manage the projects funded by the grant.

The Fire grants provide funding directly to grant recipients. Mitigation's BRIC and FMA grant programs pass grant funding through the recipient to underlying local jurisdictions to execute projects funded by the grant. Both funding routes provide a foundation of reusable, configurable FEMA GO capacity that enable us to more quickly bring more FEMA grant programs into the FEMA GO system. FEMA plans to open funding opportunities for additional 25 non-disaster grant programs in FEMA GO during Fiscal Year2023.

## **Will other FEMA systems undergoing modernization efforts be compatible with FEMA GO?**

Yes. There are currently three major IT modernization efforts underway within FEMA.

- The Financial Systems Modernization improves the Integrated Financial Management Information System, which is the FEMA legacy financial management system.
- The Enterprise Data Analytics Modernization Initiative (EDAMI) provides enhanced access to FEMA data to improve the Agency's data-driven decision-making.
- A modernization of the NEMIS (National Emergency Management Information System) system will enhance FEMA's Individual Assistance program's ability to provide rapid, holistic and integrated support to individuals, and to more quickly respond to changing administrative and agency priorities for helping individuals impacted by disasters by replacing the aging and fragile Individual Assistance system in parallel with the FEMA GO development effort.
- A fourth modernization initiative, the National Flood Insurance Program Modernization (commonly referred to as "PIVOT"), was completed in 2021.

Due to the interrelated functions and needs for these efforts, FEMA GO stays connected with modernization programs and actively works in concert with their program management offices. Doing this ensures seamless integration and compatibility between these systems as each one moves toward a new solution. Ultimately, end users will experience enhanced functionality and greater overall satisfaction with the administration of their grants.

## **What planned capabilities will be built into FEMA GO?**

FEMA GO is being built to perform all business functions that fall within all five phases of the Grants Management Lifecycle: pre-award, award, post-award, closeout and post-closeout. Any functionality that is needed to complete grant work will fall within the scope of this initiative.

The following chart explains basic functionality built in the system:

| Developed Functionality                | User Capabilities   |
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| Application development and submission | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accept applications for FEMA grant programs through easy-to-use web-based forms.</li> <li>▪ Enable multiple sub-applicant submissions supporting a variety of project types.</li> <li>▪ Applicants can review subapplications.</li> <li>▪ Enable collaboration within the applicant organization or with FEMA on an application.</li> <li>▪ Near real-time view for FEMA users to provide enhanced technical assistance to applicant.</li> <li>▪ Rapidly open new funding opportunities for supported programs.</li> <li>▪ Extend reusable budget component to expand the ability of FEMA GO to handle a variety of cost data structures which reduce complexity.</li> </ul> |
| Pre-award reviews                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enable competitive peer and program review of applications received.</li> <li>▪ Enable fully virtual peer reviews to support grant review and award during the pandemic.</li> <li>▪ Minimize Operations and Maintenance support for panel review events by automating a paper-based process.</li> <li>▪ Provide Web-based pre-award program, financial, legal and compliance review workflows.</li> <li>▪ Complete system integration between FEMA GO and the legacy Environmental and Historic Preservation system to enable Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation compliance reviews.</li> </ul>  |
| Award                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enable funding obligation and approval through an integration with the financial system.</li> <li>▪ Ensure legislatively required Congressional notifications occur prior to award.</li> <li>▪ Provide automatic notifications to the applicant when an award is approved.</li> </ul>  |
| Reporting                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete requirements for financial reporting and report reviews.</li> <li>▪ Enable program process reporting and report reviews.</li> </ul>   |
| Award Management                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enable recipient's ability to submit requests for period of performance, scope, and budget amendments.</li> <li>▪ Enable recipient ability to request and receive payment.</li> <li>▪ Reduce risk of improper payments.</li> <li>▪ Enhance monitoring of grant awards.</li> </ul>  |
| Sub-Organization Management            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create reusable subrecipient/non-FEMA user roles and permissions model.</li> <li>▪ Extend organization management to entities not in SAM.gov.</li> <li>▪ Improve performance of recipient user management.</li> <li>▪ Enable recipient's ability to easily implement effective internal controls for subrecipients.</li> <li>▪ Open FEMA GO prior to funding opportunity for subapplicants to register and create organizations, mitigating technical risks during application period.</li> </ul>  |

## What systems and/or grants programs are to be developed next?

FEMA is gathering business requirements across all grant programs to plan for future system development efforts. The program has a FEMA GO Product Roadmap to deliver new products and features in the system over a 12-month period. Roadmap planning is a fully collaborative effort with key stakeholders, including the FEMA grant programs, programmatic subject matter experts, and external stakeholders (including FEMA applicants and recipients) that meet quarterly to recommend prioritization of programs and functionality being integrated into FEMA GO.

Currently, our top priorities remain development of remaining post-award functionality, including ability to close out grants and onboarding all remaining non-disaster grant programs. At the same time, we will complete design of pre-award consultative project development functions needed for Public Assistance and additional Hazard Mitigation disaster grants to comply with the [Robert T. Stafford Act](#) requirements, and to provision Individual Assistance Community Support Services grants, including Disaster Case Management and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

## Stakeholder Engagement

### How does Grants Modernization Management engage its stakeholders?

FEMA develops FEMA GO using an incremental, iterative approach to delivering high-quality software with frequent deliveries to ensure value throughout the process for its stakeholders. We value working collaboratively with ability to incorporate user feedback to respond to change.

In 2015-2016, FEMA conducted extensive stakeholder outreach sessions across the country, with FEMA regional offices, states, tribes and other interested stakeholders to capture how these groups manage grants to create a streamlined and unified grants management experience for all FEMA grant programs that will look and behave the same every time a stakeholder comes to FEMA for a grant.

FEMA took extensive notes from those outreach sessions and used that feedback to develop a grants management lifecycle that captures 43 unique business functions across all grant lifecycle phases. FEMA GO will simplify the customer experience in the system, by developing standard, less complex workflows to support those 43 business functions across the entire grants management lifecycle.

As FEMA builds capability in the system, functionality is validated with users through progressive demonstrations, click-through prototypes and retrospectives, or hot washes. Users can participate in user acceptance testing (UAT) where developers use business requirements to build a prototype and work with users to test the prototype to ensure it functions properly. After testing, FEMA will make the functionality available for users in FEMA GO.

FEMA conducted three FEMA GO usability and design surveys to solicit feedback from all FEMA GO stakeholders, including internal FEMA employees and registered FEMA GO users. The results of these surveys are integral to the User Experience (UX) design approach that FEMA GO employs in its system design, testing and delivery. UX design helps ensure that we are achieving Agency and program strategic objectives to reduce complexity, simplify grant management processes, and make FEMA programs more accessible to applicants.

FEMA facilitates multiple working groups, user research interviews, and outreach sessions to keep stakeholders informed about the development of FEMA GO. For more information or to get involved with the planning efforts, please email [FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov).

## Transition

### **What is happening to the other Grants systems? How is FEMA socializing this transition?**

The previous grants systems' functionalities and business processes will be modernized and developed in FEMA GO. The systems will be decommissioned once FEMA GO is at full operating capacity and the grants and data in the legacy system are migrated to FEMA GO. Users of FEMA's legacy grants management systems will transition to FEMA GO as grant programs migrate onto the new platform. FEMA will socialize training opportunities with users to support the transition.

### **Will FEMA GO provide resources to guide applicants through the grants application process?**

Yes. To successfully transition all FEMA grant recipients, applicants and users to FEMA GO, FEMA continues to develop guides and training materials to create a more user-friendly and customer-centric experience.

### **Will FEMA provide training for FEMA GO?**

Yes. FEMA GO has a comprehensive training program for all stakeholders using the system. The FEMA grant programs will offer training webinars to their users. FEMA developed system user guides for the fire and mitigation grant programs and are located on [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov). FEMA will add additional user guides as new functionality is available and when new grant programs get built in FEMA GO.

The goal is to make FEMA GO user-friendly and intuitive to eliminate or reduce the need for extensive training. The training team will continue to work with system developers to provide training following the initial deployment for each functionality and then in an on-going, as-needed basis. FEMA also will produce training materials and guides for users. The training program will cover each phase of the grant lifecycle.

Training priorities are determined by each of FEMA's grant programs and may be subject to change as the virtual training environment is developed and aligned with new FEMA GO capabilities.

### **Are there data analytics and reporting resources or tools available?**

Yes, but the current functionality is only available to a specific set of users. FEMA GO provides reporting and analytic data through data hubs accessible to data analysts in the FEMA Headquarters and Regional Offices. FEMA GO will continue to enhance access to grants data and will, ultimately, integrate with the EDAMI system that will support the full analytics community, including non-FEMA users for data sets that have been cleared for public access, through integrated access to FEMA data through powerful analytics tools.

## Will there be a FEMA GO Help Desk?

Yes. All issues should be reported to the FEMA GO Help Desk to resolve user issues as quickly and efficiently as possible. Users can contact the Help Desk by calling 1-877-585-3242 or by emailing [femago@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:femago@fema.dhs.gov).

All issues should be reported to the FEMA GO Help Desk to create and track a ticket, research, analyze and resolve the issue being reported by a user. If the resolution of the issue requires more in-depth knowledge or research, the Help Desk will escalate the issue to program or technical experts:

### FEMA GO/ Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program/ Hazard Mitigation Assistance Help Desks

- The FEMA GO Help Desk accepts phone calls at 1-877-585-3242 and emails at [femago@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:femago@fema.dhs.gov). The Help Desk creates tickets for users reporting system-related incidents and escalates them to programmatic Help Desks, if necessary. The FEMA GO Help Desk is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday–Friday.
- A key goal of the Help Desk is to resolve a user’s questions as quickly as possible, ideally in a single conversation. Because user questions could be related to system programs, questions on how to use the system, program or policy questions, the Help Desk also facilitates a “hand-off” to non-technical experts.
  - The Fire Grants Help Desk is not technical in nature but is designed to answer programmatic questions. The Help Desk accepts calls at 1-866-274-0960 and emails at [firegrants@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:firegrants@fema.dhs.gov). The Help Desk is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET Monday–Friday.
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  - The Hazard Mitigation Assistance Help Desk answers programmatic questions about hazard mitigation grant programs (such as eligibility) and accepts calls at 1-866-222-3580. This Help Desk is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday–Friday.

## How will the FEMA GO Help Desk address an issue reported by a user?

The FEMA GO Help Desk will respond to emails and calls received from users. Once system issues are resolved, the Help Desk will contact the reporting user to validate that the software fix has addressed their problems and they are able to successfully complete work in the FEMA GO system.