



May 1, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: Regional Administrators

FROM: Jeff Byard  
Associate Administrator  
Office of Response and Recovery

SUBJECT: Declaration Factors for Local Impact and Recent Multiple Disasters

As Regional Administrators, you are responsible for reviewing a governor's request for a major disaster declaration, completing joint preliminary damage assessments, and delivering to the Associate Administrator for Response and Recovery a Regional Validation, Analysis and Recommendation (RVAR), relying on the declaration factors listed in 44 CFR § 206.48. FEMA considers certain primary factors when making a disaster declaration recommendation to the President which include localized impacts and recent multiple disasters. Section 1232 of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA)<sup>1</sup> directs the FEMA Administrator to "give greater consideration" to severe local impact and recent multiple disasters when making recommendations to the President regarding whether to declare a major disaster.

As the Administrator relies on the RVAR when making his recommendation to the President, it is important that the RVAR fully describes severe local impacts and the history of recent multiple disasters to ensure the Administrator makes a fully informed recommendation.

When describing localized impacts, you should pay attention to the per capita impact, as well as severe impacts to critical infrastructure, industry, or businesses that provide a primary source of employment for the community; high concentrations of damages to individuals; or other factors illustrative of the event having a particularly severe impact at the local level. Pursuant to 44 CFR 206.48(a)(5), FEMA considers the disaster history of the local area within the last 12 months when describing recent multiple disasters. While a 12-month history may be the most probative of a local community's ability to respond to and recover from a recent event, you should include in the RVAR any additional information provided by the State. For example, a large disaster that occurred 13 months ago may have more significantly compromised a local community's abilities than a small disaster that occurred 13 weeks ago. The RVAR should provide sufficient detail on prior disasters to convey the degree to which those disasters are relevant when considering whether to recommend the President issue a major disaster declaration.

Moving forward, please use the attached cover letter and RVAR templates, which include updated language on localized impacts and recent multiple disasters, when preparing your RVARs for

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<sup>1</sup> Pub. L. 115-254 (Oct. 5, 2018).

Declaration Factors for Local Impact and Multiple Disasters

Page 2

submission to the Associate Administrator for Response and Recovery. Should you have any questions, please contact [FEMA-Declaration-Unit@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Declaration-Unit@fema.dhs.gov).