

# FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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The following FAQs are organized by topic. For questions, please send email at [FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov).

## FEMA Grants

### What is a grant, and what are grant programs?

Grants are the principal funding mechanism FEMA uses to commit and award federal funding to eligible state, local, tribal and territorial government entities, certain private non-profits, individuals and institutions of higher learning.

Grant programs identify available funding for pre-disaster, disaster, non-disaster and resilience grants. This excludes programs providing subsidies, loans or insurance. Each grant program has different requirements and application processes.

### How many FEMA grants programs are there?

FEMA has more than 40 active grant programs grouped into the 14 categories below:

Grant Program Categories:	
▪ Mitigation: Hazards	▪ Preparedness: Emergency Management
▪ Mitigation: Risk Analysis	▪ Preparedness: Infrastructure Security
▪ Mitigation: Community Assistance	▪ Preparedness: Training
▪ Mitigation: Earthquake	▪ Preparedness: Other
▪ Preparedness: Fire & Life Safety	▪ Response: Urban Search and Rescue
▪ Preparedness: Community Security	▪ Recovery: Public Assistance
▪ Preparedness: Chemical	▪ Recovery: Individual Assistance



# FEMA

## Who receives FEMA grants?

FEMA grants recipients and subrecipients fall into the following categories:

- States and territorial governments
- Tribal governments
- Local governments and communities
- Private or nonprofit organizations
- Associations, institutes, academies and universities
- Individuals

## Grants Management Modernization Initiative

### What is this? What is its purpose?

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 IT platform and one common grants management lifecycle using an iterative approach to better support the agency's mission.

FEMA GO is being developed to promote uniformity across all grant processes. This will eliminate the reliance on multiple systems operating on multiple platforms, each utilizing different technologies that are non-standard, and many of the platforms are no longer well supported. The capabilities and data elements are also inconsistent and duplicative. The individual systems have continued to evolve independently. The current grants management processes and systems do not provide data transparency and require users to create spreadsheets and ad hoc tools or workarounds to get the information required to manage FEMA grant programs.

The new IT platform, FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO), is targeted toward the entire grants community of users, including FEMA personnel and grant recipients (including subrecipients) across stakeholders.

### What are the expected outcomes of FEMA GO?

FEMA GO aims to transform the way FEMA manages grants, strengthening FEMA's ability to execute its mission through a user-centered, business-driven approach. This approach focuses on the following key objectives:

- Simplify the grants management lifecycle process.
- Improve the timeliness of funding to support survivors and facilitate community resiliency.
- Improve the allocation of grant funds across the emergency management community.
- Streamline and improve business performance by improving business processes and supporting decision-making.
- Improve business intelligence and decision-making by increasing access to data.

- Facilitate compliance with regulations and statutes.
- Reduce overall sustainment costs by consolidating legacy systems into a single grants management IT platform.
- Execute a user-centered, business-driven approach to grants transformation founded on active engagement with all grants stakeholders.

## How will FEMA GO impact the SLTT user?

The state, local, tribal and territorial governments community uses internal systems as well as FEMA systems. FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate will continue to work with them to ensure that requirements and needs are considered in FEMA GO's development, with the intention of users primarily using it over their internal systems.

## What additional information is available about FEMA GO?

FEMA GO has a public-facing site containing more information and training materials at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/fema-go>. You can also follow [@FemaGrants](https://twitter.com/FemaGrants) on Twitter to learn about important grant-related information.

## Development

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

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

- The AFG system provides grants functionality to three grant programs.
- These programs use multiple cross-cutting business functions and lay the foundation for other FEMA grant programs.
- The system's business functions cover all phases of the grant 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 was able to use what had already been built for AFG to configure the functionality required for Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID19 Supplemental Program (AFG-S) and two Hazard Mitigation grant programs: the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program, and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant Program.

FEMA is continuously gathering business requirements across all grant programs to feed system development efforts. The FEMA GO Product Roadmap is a visual representation of the plan of action to deliver new products and features in the system over a 12-month period. The roadmap planning is a fully collaborative function with key

stakeholders, including FEMA GO product owners, programmatic subject matter experts, other FEMA employees, and external stakeholders (including FEMA applicants and recipients) that meet quarterly to prioritize and recommend prioritization of programs and functionality being integrated into FEMA GO. Currently, the adoption of the Environmental and Historic Preservation service remains a top priority to ensure FEMA is compliant with law and regulation. The next recommended program integration into FEMA GO is Individual Assistance and to prioritize Community Support Services, including Disaster Case Management and Disaster Unemployment Assistance. This effort is in its early stages.

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

Yes. There are currently two other major IT modernization efforts underway within FEMA: the Financial Systems Modernization and the National Flood Insurance Program Modernization (commonly referred to as “PIVOT”). The financial program is modernizing FEMA’s legacy financial management system, the Integrated Financial Management Information System. Due to the interrelated functions and needs for each of these efforts, FEMA stays connected with both modernization programs and actively works in concert with their respective 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. Essentially, any functionalities that are needed to complete grant work will fall within the scope of this initiative.

The following chart explains the basic functionality built in the system.

Preparedness Product/Feature	Functionality for Fire Grants
Application development & submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FY19 Assistance to Firefighter Grants applications (first use of application functionality in FEMA GO).</li> <li>▪ Enabled collaboration on an application.</li> <li>▪ Near real-time view for FEMA users to provide technical assistance.</li> <li>▪ Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response and Fire Prevention &amp; Safety FY19 application periods opened.</li> <li>▪ Assistance for Firefighter Grants COVID-19 Supplemental application period opened.</li> </ul>
Pre-award reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enable competitive review of FY19 AFG applications.</li> <li>▪ Minimize Operations and Maintenance support for FY18 panel event by automating a paper-based process.</li> <li>▪ FY18 pre-award reviews for Assistance to Firefighters Grants, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response and Fire Prevention and Safety.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FY19 pre-award reviews for those three grant programs, including enhancements deferred from FY18 pre-award services.</li> <li>▪ Configured FY20 AFG-S COVID-19 grants pre-award services.</li> <li>▪ Configured FY19 panel reviews to be 100% virtual.</li> </ul>
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed requirements for financial reporting.</li> </ul>
Award Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grantees can submit period of performance amendments and payment requests.</li> <li>▪ Enhanced FY20 Assistance for Firefighter Grants COVID-19 Supplemental grant awards and payments.</li> <li>▪ Awards can be amended.</li> </ul>
Disbursement of Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce risk of improper payments.</li> </ul>

Mitigation Product/Feature	Functionality for Mitigation Programs
Application development & submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extended reusable budget component; expanded the ability of FEMA GO to handle a variety of cost data structures which will reduce the complexity of onboarding additional programs.</li> <li>▪ Building Resilient Infrastructure &amp; Communities and Flood Mitigation Assistance subapplicants can begin developing applications for multiple project types.</li> <li>▪ Enhanced existing FEMA GO capability to handle a variety of cost data structures to reduce complexity of onboarding additional programs in future.</li> <li>▪ Applicants can review subapplications in work to improve pre-opportunity planning.</li> </ul>
Sub-Organization Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create reusable subrecipient/non-FEMA user roles and permissions model.</li> <li>▪ Extended organization management to entities not in SAM.gov.</li> <li>▪ Improved performance of recipient user management.</li> <li>▪ Recipients can easily implement effective internal controls for subrecipients.</li> <li>▪ Opened FEMA GO prior to funding opportunity for subapplicants to register and create organizations, mitigating technical risks during application period.</li> </ul>

EHP Product/Feature	Functionality for Environmental and Historic Preservation Compliance Review
Interoperability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed system integration design between FEMA GO and the legacy Environmental and Historic Preservation system.</li> </ul>
Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developed Version 1 of the new service integration with legacy system, which enables mitigation application data to be passed to the legacy system for review (pending workflow development in FEMA GO).</li> </ul>

## Stakeholder Engagement

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

FEMA GO is being developed around an incremental, iterative approach to delivering high-quality software functionality with frequent deliveries to ensure value throughout the process for its stakeholders. A high value is placed on people working collaboratively with the ability to respond to change based on user feedback. FEMA will identify enhancements through user feedback sessions, consulting with the grant programs on best practices and solutions throughout the development process. Stakeholders are involved in every stage of development, from the planning and design phase through validating functionally. 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. GPD will help inform and transition all FEMA personnel and stakeholders from the legacy systems to the new system in close collaboration with the grant programs impacted.

### 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 continue to develop guides and varying training materials to create a more user-friendly and customer-centric experience.

### Will training for FEMA GO be provided?

Yes. FEMA GO has a training strategy that will provide a comprehensive and strategic training approach for stakeholders using the system.

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 solution developers to provide training following the initial deployment for each functionality, then on an as-needed basis. FEMA will also produce training materials and guides for users. All training will cover each phase of the grant's lifecycle.

The 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, the FEMA GO reporting and analytic workstreams are in active development. More information pertaining to what is available, and what is forthcoming will be provided in a later FAQ edition.

## Will there be a Fema GO help desk?

Yes. FEMA GO has implemented a Help Desk. The Help Desk is designed in Tiers:

### **Tier 1: FEMA GO Help Desk/Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program Help Desk/Hazard Mitigation Assistance Help Desk**

- 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) from users reporting their issues. The Help Desk creates tickets for users reporting system-related incidents and escalate them to either Tier 2 or programmatic Help Desks if necessary. The FEMA GO Help Desk is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday – Friday.
  - 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.
  - 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.

### **Tier 2: FEMA GO Help Desk**

- Receive escalated incidents from Tier 1 for more questions requiring more in-depth knowledge or research.

### **Tier 3: FEMA GO Help Desk**

- This is a technical team that assists with any system inquiries and issues. The team conducts both front end and back end research in FEMA GO.

All issues should be reported to Tier 1 FEMA GO Help Desk in order to create and track a ticket, research, analyze and resolve the issue being reported by a user.

## How will the FEMA GO Help Desk Communicate with system users?

The FEMA GO Help Desk will respond and communicate directly with users who report or submit issues.