



February 1, 2024

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) remains committed to its responsibility to engage in consultation and collaboration with tribal officials, consistent with [Executive Order 13175](#), *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, reaffirmed by President Biden's "[Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#)."

The [2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan Goal 1.2](#) includes a commitment to transform our service to Tribal Nations to acknowledge tribal sovereignty and respond to the needs of each Tribal Nation. The [2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy Goal 1.4](#) further commits FEMA to increase Tribal Nations' access to FEMA programs and resources by affecting policy changes.

Following [Executive Order 13985](#) on *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, in April 2021, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) to receive input from the public on FEMA programs, regulations, and collections of information. In response to four comments received from Tribal Nations or members of Tribal Nations to the Agency's RFI, FEMA on January 22, 2024, published an update to its Individual Assistance (IA), Individuals and Households Program (IHP) regulations. The [IA Reform](#) efforts are intended to establish new benefits; cut red tape and expand eligibility; and simplify the application process for certain types of assistance under the IA program.

Consistent with our responsibilities and commitments, FEMA invites Tribal Nations to participate in three government-to-government tribal listening sessions and consultations on the IA Reform taking place on Monday, February 12, from 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET, Tuesday, February 27, 2024, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM ET, and Wednesday, March 27, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM ET. During these consultations and listening sessions, FEMA will share key elements of the IA Reform, and we ask Tribal Nations to provide their input on the rule and share recommendations that will help inform implementation of this rule in the future.

These tribal consultations and listening sessions will be hosted by FEMA's IA Division and FEMA Tribal Affairs. Topics will include:

- A brief overview of the IHP.
- A summary of the changes in the IA Reform.
- Tribal Nation input and comments.

FEMA will host an in person tribal listening sessions during the [National Congress of American Indians \(NCAI\), Executive Council Winter Session \(ECWS\)](#) on **Tuesday, February 12, 2024, from 1:00 to 2:00 PM ET**. The in person listening session will take place in **Meeting Room 4** of the Westin – Downtown DC, 999 9th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001. Tribal Nations do not need to register for NCAI ECWS to attend or participate in this in person listening session.

This first virtual tribal consultation will be conducted via the Zoom for Government platform on **Tuesday, February 27, 2024, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM ET**. You can register in advance for this meeting at: <https://fema.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsfumspjsg-TtlURcd6HcL4hZ1QFpZzM>. After registering, you will receive an email containing information about joining the meeting.

This second virtual tribal consultation will be conducted via the Zoom for Government platform on **Wednesday, March 27, 2024, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM ET**. You can register in advance for this meeting at: <https://fema.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJiscO-oqz8iEgIEtXO96v19bU6JhGEv62g>. After registering, you will receive an email containing information about joining the meeting.

A framing paper with questions for you to consider is available on the FEMA website at www.fema.gov/about/tribes/consultations.

Final Tribal Nation comments can be submitted via the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>, identified by **Docket ID: FEMA-2023-0003**. Please follow the instructions for submitting comments. Responses to any or all portions of the **IA Reform** may be provided by individuals or collective groups but must be submitted not later than **July 22, 2024**. Please also note that all comments submitted through the portal will be made public in accordance with federal requirements.

If you or other Tribal Nations have any questions about these consultations, please reach out to our FEMA Tribal Affairs team at fema-tribal@fema.dhs.gov.

We look forward to your participation and input as we work in partnership in a Nation-to-Nation manner to live up to FEMA's treaty and trust responsibilities to all Tribal Nations.

Respectfully,



William C. Hagmaier
Assistant Administrator
Recovery Directorate

cc: Regional Administrators, FEMA Regions I – X
Regional Recovery Division Directors, FEMA Regions I – X
Individual Assistance Branch Directors, FEMA Regions I – X
Kelbie Kennedy, National Tribal Affairs Advocate
Frank Matranga, Division Director, Individual Assistance Division
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DHS Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council
Individual Assistance Division
Tribal Emergency Managers
Regional Tribal Liaisons
Regional Tribal FEMA Integration Teams (FITs)
Tribal Associations