

Request For Information

The following summarizes feedback and actions taken relating to the 2021 Request for Information on FEMA Programs, Regulations, and Policies.

Background

On [April 22, 2021](#), FEMA issued a Request for Information (RFI) seeking information from the public on how the agency's programs, regulations, and policies could better advance the goals of equity for all, environmental justice, and bolster resilience to the impacts of climate change.

During the 90-day comment period, FEMA hosted two public meetings – the first on June 15, followed by a tribal webinar on June 16. The events helped to gather additional feedback and maximize public participation in the RFI. There were 274 total attendees for both events and 23 of those attendees provided verbal feedback.

As a result of the RFI comment period, which closed on July 21, 2021, FEMA received a total of 340 comments. The comments included written responses posted directly to [regulations.gov](#) and feedback received during the two public meetings. The public docket, including the [RFI and supporting documentation](#), transcripts from the two public meetings, and public comments, is available on [regulations.gov](#).

Actions Summary

FEMA received comments from a range of stakeholders including individuals, non-profit organizations, industry associations, and state, local, and tribal governments. The comments ranged in length from one line to over 25 pages. Stakeholders provided agency-wide, cross-cutting comments related to equity, climate change, information collection, data sharing, and suggested process improvements. Stakeholders provided comments directed toward specific FEMA programs and sub-topics within those programs. FEMA leveraged many of the comments received in the development of the agency's [2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#) release in early December 2021.

Program-specific Actions

Actions taken by FEMA programs in response to this RFI are further detailed below:

RECOVERY GRANT PROGRAMS

FEMA already acted based on several comments received, specifically in regard to its Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) grant programs. The PA program will update the [PA Program and Policy Guide \(PAPPG\)](#) based on comments received. The IA program took significant action, to include increasing coordination with the Small Business Administration (SBA) on a [pilot program](#) to raise the minimum income threshold so that more eligible lower income applicants could be assisted by FEMA as opposed to being referred to the SBA for a loan. The IA Program is



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also providing more [documentation flexibilities](#) to verify occupancy and home ownership for Individual and Household Program (IHP) eligibility. FEMA is increasing outreach to disaster applicants with Access and Functional Needs and those needing language accommodations.

FEMA plans to take additional actions based on the RFI comments in these areas. Specifically, FEMA is reviewing ways to modify the PA application process and simplify the PA program while also providing more training and outreach to rural areas, underserved areas, socially and economically vulnerable communities, and Tribal Nations. FEMA is also planning to propose amendments to its IA regulations to increase equity and ease of entry into the program. More information can be found on the DHS Unified Agenda Fall 2021 [Statement of Regulatory Priorities](#).

MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS GRANT PROGRAMS

Based on the comments focused on FEMA mitigation grant programs, including [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#), [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program \(HMGP\)](#) and [Flood Mitigation Assistance \(FMA\)](#), FEMA recently developed an Equity Action Plan to comprehensively assess how these programs help increase state, local, tribal, and territorial capacity and capability in the areas of mitigation and preparedness. FEMA continues to explore ways to improve the benefit-cost analysis tool as part of the Agency's continuous improvement efforts and exploring other grant-specific changes.

FEMA's preparedness grant programs are also acting based on the RFI comments. Some technical changes designed to improve customer service include converting the [Nonprofit Security Grant Program \(NSGP\) Investment Justification \(IJ\) template](#) into a more user-friendly, PDF format and conducting more stakeholder outreach and technical assistance on the template. Another suggested change FEMA intends to pursue includes allowing cybersecurity training and education as allowable costs under various preparedness grant programs. FEMA continues to review ways to improve its preparedness programs by simplifying application requirements for specific programs and increasing targeted grants management technical assistance to assist underserved communities, to complete competitive grant applications.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP)

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is taking several actions based on the comments received. To gather further information for specific programs, the agency issued two additional RFI in 2021 – one focused on improvements to the [Community Rating System](#) and one focused on potential changes to the [NFIP floodplain management minimum standards](#). FEMA is currently working to update the [Standard Flood Insurance Policy](#), and is considering updates to the [Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands](#) regulations, and the State and Local Mitigation Plan Review Guides.

Conclusion

FEMA is committed to creating stronger partnerships that enable and support communities and underserved populations when it comes to disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. FEMA continues to take significant actions based on the feedback and input received as part of this RFI. These actions result in continuous improvement of FEMA programs and enhance our ability to better meet our mission in a manner that will allow us to advance equity for all and instill equity as a foundation of emergency management.