

FAQs: Updates to State and Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guides

On April 19, 2022, FEMA updated the State and Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guides (policies). The policies are the official interpretation of the requirements in the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act \(Stafford Act\)](#), as amended and other federal statutes as well in federal regulations, specifically [Title 44 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 201 Mitigation Planning](#). Below is a list of frequently asked questions on the changes.

What are the local and state mitigation planning policies?

The State and Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guides are FEMA's official policies on and interpretation of the requirements in law and regulations, including Title 44 CFR Part 201 Mitigation Planning. They support the review and approval of hazard mitigation plans, which are required for certain FEMA non-emergency assistance.

Why are the policies being updated?

FEMA requires a routine review and updates to the policies. This allows FEMA to improve the policies to better support stakeholders in meeting federal requirements for mitigation plans. It also allows the policies to remain current with related legislative, programmatic, and regulatory changes.

What is changing?

Updates to the policies include references to new FEMA grant programs, such as [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities](#), [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post-Fire](#) and [High-Hazard Potential Dam grant program](#). They also include a strengthened connection with [Fire Management Assistance Grants](#); alignment with national initiatives and programs such as the [National Mitigation Investment Strategy](#); and priorities such as climate adaptation, equity, resilience and building code adoption and enforcement.

For a full list of updates, visit FEMA's [Policy Update web page](#) and download the [Summary of Changes](#) document.

How were these changes decided?

The updates were formed through a collaborative effort with FEMA stakeholders and partners. FEMA received more than 400 comments from state, local, private, academic, non-governmental, regional and other federal partners. A summary of stakeholder feedback is available on FEMA's [Policy Update web page](#).



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When will these changes be effective?

The State and Local Mitigation Planning Policies were released on April 19, 2022 and will be in effect for all plans approved by FEMA starting on or after April 19, 2023. The transition period before policy changes take effect for mitigation plan approvals provides time for state and local governments to review and incorporate the changes needed for an approved hazard mitigation plan. During this time, FEMA will provide additional information to help state and local governments develop or update their hazard mitigation plans in accordance with the newly released policies.

When do the policies go into effect? Where is this stated?

The effective date is on the cover of both policies – April 19, 2023. Plans that are not approved by the effective date will have to meet the requirements in the updated policies.

If I already started my mitigation plan update, will I need to switch to the updated policies?

Yes, if the plan is expected to be approved on or after the effective date, April 19, 2023. Jurisdictions interested in plan approval prior to the new policy effective date should submit their plan well in advance of the effective date to allow time for review by their state and FEMA, plan adoption by the jurisdiction and final approval by FEMA or the state, where applicable. The transition year between the release date and the effective date gives everyone time to review, learn, and understand what's in the new policies.

What if my jurisdiction participated in a multi-jurisdictional plan, and one jurisdiction adopted the plan, but my jurisdiction is in Approvable Pending Adoption (APA) status when the updated policy goes into effect?

Jurisdictions that participated in a mitigation plan that received FEMA approval under the 2011 Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide but are still in APA status as of the effective date of the updated policy (April 19, 2023) do not need to meet the requirements of the updated policy in order to receive final approval following adoption. FEMA encourages all jurisdictions to adopt and submit the adoption resolution with the mitigation plan for review and approval. All plans approved on or after the policy effective date, April 19, 2023, must meet the updated policy for approval.

What does the word “all” mean in the HMA Grants Performance requirements for state enhanced plans? For example, “all applications are complete and submitted by the end of each program’s respective application period.”

Where “all” is used in these requirements, this means that the state must meet the requirement 100% of the time. However, FEMA can consider circumstances such as multiple disasters as described by the State.

Are there resources to help me understand these changes?

FEMA is hosting webinars to discuss updates to both the State and Local Mitigation Planning Policies. Please visit the [Policy Update web page](#) to sign up for a session. During the transition period, FEMA will also continue to provide additional communications and information to help state and local governments develop or update their mitigation plans with these changes.

Do you have an additional question?

This document will be updated on a regular basis to address common questions. Please contact your FEMA regional mitigation planner or email FEMA-Mitigation-Planning@fema.dhs.gov.