

FEMA Announces Operational Guidance for Disaster Response and Recovery in Pandemic Environment

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WASHINGTON -- For the second year in a row, FEMA is prepared to respond to disasters as the nation continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

FEMA released the [“COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance: All-Hazards Incident Response and Recovery,”](#) a document aimed at helping emergency managers plan for disaster response and recovery, while adhering to public health guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

For more than a year, the emergency management community has been operating in a pandemic environment, and FEMA has emphasized the importance of all state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) governments applying lessons learned from 2020, as they prepare for operations in 2021. To aid in that effort, this document serves as a tool for governments, outlining not only guidance based on lessons learned and best practices, but also guidance related to new priorities that have arisen in recent months. This document builds upon the guidance released last year and:

- [Describes continued challenges to disaster operations posed by COVID-19 and planning considerations, based on science and the best available data, for emergency managers in addressing those challenges.](#)
- Outlines considerations for SLTT governments related to planning COVID-19 testing and vaccination operations. This includes an overview of how FEMA supports SLTTs to establish and operate testing facilities and vaccination sites that ensure fair and equitable distribution of vaccines to all individuals who want one.
- Provides updated resources (e.g., checklists, reports, and other guidance) reflecting current lessons learned and best practices for operating in a pandemic environment to enable emergency managers to best adapt response and recovery plans.



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- Outlines how FEMA plans to continue adapting response and recovery operations to the evolving COVID-19 risks to ensure prioritization for life safety, life sustainment, workforce protection and to maintain the delivery of FEMA's programs.

FEMA is offering a series of [webinars](#) throughout the month of June to further educate people on the pandemic operational guidance:

- Webinar 1 – 10 a.m. ET, Thursday, June 3.
- Webinar 2 – 3 p.m. ET, Tuesday, June 8.
- Webinar 3 – 11 a.m. ET, Thursday, June 10.
- Webinar 4 – 7 p.m. ET, Wednesday, June 16.
- Webinar 5 – 1 p.m. ET, Thursday, June 17.

FEMA will continue operating under the framework of locally executed, state/tribal managed and federal supported incident response. By creating a shared understanding of expectations among FEMA and state, local, tribal and territorial partners, the nation will be better positioned to achieve operational outcomes in disaster response and recovery efforts.

