



Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Building Stronger and Safer

FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) provides grants to States, local governments, and Indian tribes for long-term hazard mitigation projects after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property in future disasters by funding mitigation measures during the recovery phase of a natural disaster.

HMGP leads to long-term solutions

HMGP funds can be used to make improvements to public or private property. To be eligible, a project must provide a long-term solution to a specific risk. Examples are:

- **Elevating** flood-prone homes or businesses. The structure is rebuilt with a higher first floor. This allows floodwater to flow under the house rather than through it.
- **Acquisition** of (and either demolishing or relocating) flood-prone homes from willing owners and returning the property to open space. The owner receives a check for the sale, and the local government becomes the new owner of the property.
- **Retrofitting** buildings to minimize damage from high winds, flooding, earthquakes, and other hazards. FEMA and other organizations have worked to develop model code requirements and building guides to aid in the process.
- **Floodwall systems** to protect critical facilities.

HMGP funds administered by States

During the recovery phase of a disaster, local jurisdictions select projects that could reduce property damage from future disasters, and submit a grant application to the State. Indian tribes and certain nonprofit organizations can also apply. Local governments can apply on behalf of individual property owners. The States administer the HMGP program. They establish mitigation priorities for the State, set a timeline for accepting applications, and award grants based on State criteria and available funding. They can also set limits on grant amounts.

HMGP grants available to communities affected by disasters

- **Total grant funding:** For each State, HMGP can provide up to 7.5 percent of the total Federal funds for repairing roads, bridges, and other infrastructure (called Public Assistance) and individual and family grants (called Individual Assistance) in the State. Once Public Assistance and Individual Assistance totals are estimated, FEMA can determine available HMGP funding for each State. However, project planning can begin right away.
- **Funding formula:** FEMA pays up to 75 percent of the project cost. Either the State or applicants covers the remaining 25 percent, though it need not be in cash. In-kind services and materials can be used.

FEMA conducts a final eligibility review to ensure compliance with Federal regulations. HMGP projects must comply with Federal environmental laws and regulations, be cost-effective, and be technically feasible. Federal law requires States and local jurisdictions to have a mitigation plan prior to receipt of HMGP funds. The plan identifies hazards, assesses community needs, and describes a community-wide strategy for reducing risks associated with natural disasters.

Additional funding opportunities

The **Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program** assists States, Indian tribes, and local governments with cost-effective hazard mitigation activities that complement a comprehensive mitigation program. The program provides applicants with an opportunity before disasters strike to raise risk awareness and reduce disaster losses through planning and project grants. Potential activities range from plan development to structural retrofits, acquisitions of property in high-risk areas, and safe room construction.

PDM applicants compete for funding on a national basis. Public colleges and universities can apply as sub-applicants through a State or local government. In addition, State or local governments can apply on behalf of private non-profit organizations and institutions. The program operates on an annual cycle and is subject to Congressional appropriations.

FEMA's **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)** is a pre-disaster program that provides project, planning, and technical assistance grants to States and communities to help reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage. Mitigation projects must address buildings and structures that are insurable under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The States set mitigation priorities and award grant applications.

Property acquisitions:

Removing people and property from harm's way

Federal acquisition of property can be an effective way to move people and property away from high-risk areas. An acquisition can apply to a single piece of property or an entire neighborhood.

Acquisition projects are voluntary and homeowners are never forced to sell their property. The decision to buy damaged property is made by the local government and the property owners, not FEMA. Once an acquisition project is approved by the state and FEMA, the community uses Federal funds to purchase the home or building, and the land is restricted to open space, recreation, or wetlands in perpetuity.

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