



New Jersey Office of Emergency Management Directive

	EFFECTIVE DATE January 14, 2022	NUMBER NJOEM-4 (2022)
	SUBJECT Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA)	
REFERENCE New Jersey State Emergency Operations Plan; FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide; FEMA Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide; FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment Guide	EXPIRES N/A	
	RESCINDS Directive 84 (1975)	

Damage Assessment is the systematic process of gathering preliminary information including dollar value estimates and general descriptions of the location, type and magnitude of damage sustained by both the public and private sectors (Public Assistance and Individual Assistance, respectively) during an emergency or disaster. It is the basis for determining the need for, and types of, State and federal assistance necessary to recover from the effects of an incident. The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) Emergency Response Bureau and Recovery Bureau will coordinate the collection of preliminary data with the affected municipal, county, State agency, and quasi-State agency Offices of Emergency Management (OEM). They will also facilitate the State’s requests for federal resources and assistance.

The Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) provides:

- a justification for applying for federal public assistance and/or individual assistance,
- the supporting data for the Governor’s request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration, and
- a basis for the effective implementation of State and Federal disaster relief programs.

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I. Definitions

- **Individual Assistance (IA):** FEMA's Individuals and Households Program provides financial and direct services to eligible individuals and households affected by a disaster, who have uninsured or underinsured necessary expenses and serious needs.
- **Public Assistance (PA):** FEMA's Public Assistance reimbursement program provides federal funding to support communities with recovery from major disasters by providing them with financial reimbursement for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and restoration of public infrastructure owned by, or the legal responsibility of, a State, county, local, territorial, or tribal government, or other eligible applicant. The PA Program defines seven (7) categories of work for reporting disaster-related damages/costs:
 - Category A – Debris Removal
 - Category B – Emergency Protective Measures
 - Category C – Roads and Bridges
 - Category D – Water Control Facilities
 - Category E – Buildings and Equipment
 - Category F – Utility Systems
 - Category G – Parks, Recreation, and Other Facilities
- **Public Assistance Thresholds:** In order to qualify for PA, disaster damages/costs must meet or exceed minimum dollar criteria at both the State and county levels.
 - Each county must meet or exceed its own threshold, as determined below, and combined they must meet or exceed the State threshold to be included in a Governor's request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration.
 - Thresholds are based on a "per capita impact indicator" published by FEMA yearly: (<https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/applicants/per-capita-impact-indicator>).
 - The per capita impact indicator is multiplied against the most recently published State and county populations (per the U.S Census) to determine the thresholds:
 - County per capita impact indicator x County population = County Threshold
 - State per capita impact indicator x State population = State Threshold
 - The Recovery Bureau develops and maintains a list of these thresholds.

Note: State agency, quasi-State agency, or any other eligible applicant damage costs incurred in multiple counties will be applied to the county threshold in which they occurred, or to the statewide threshold (if unable to be specifically allocated to a county).

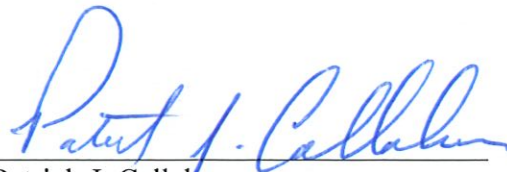
II. Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) Report Procedures

- A. Immediately after a significant incident or event has occurred, a “windshield survey” is conducted to quickly and safely identify the scope and scale of damage to critical infrastructure and/or private structures. Windshield surveys are an efficient way to assess damage from a vehicle and can be used to verify reports from the field. They also help identify critical service needs.
- B. After completion of windshield surveys, if it is determined that the incident or event resulted in significant expenses for debris removal and emergency protective measures, or for damage to critical infrastructure and/or private structures, a PDA shall be submitted in accordance with Phase One and Phase Two, below, to justify the need for PA and IA. The PDA shall be completed using the current NJOEM PDA procedures issued by the Recovery Bureau and the official NJOEM reporting platform.
- C. **PHASE ONE** – Phase One of the PDA shall be completed as soon as possible, but no later than seven (7) days after an incident or event, or as otherwise directed by NJOEM.
 1. Emergency Response Bureau Regional Representatives will work with county OEMs in communicating to all affected municipalities and any other eligible applicant that initial PDA submissions should be completed and submitted.
 2. Each municipal emergency management coordinator in the affected area shall collect the required information and submit the PDA to its respective county emergency management office. The county OEMs shall also collect and provide initial PDA data for county-owned assets.
 3. The County OEMs must forward the completed PDA submissions to the Emergency Response Bureau for review and reporting accuracy.
 - a. If preliminary damage assessments do not satisfy FEMA thresholds, the Emergency Response Bureau will notify the affected counties in writing that the State is unable to satisfy the State threshold and cannot seek federal assistance.
 - b. If it is determined that there is a possibility of meeting the State threshold, the Emergency Response Bureau will notify the Recovery Bureau and the affected counties and proceed to **Phase Two**.
 4. The Recovery Bureau Public Assistance Unit personnel shall be responsible for contacting State agencies and quasi-State agencies and coordinating their initial cost estimates with Emergency Response Bureau personnel.
- D. **PHASE TWO** – During Phase Two, the affected municipalities, counties, State agencies, quasi-State agencies, and any other eligible applicants shall prepare a more detailed / updated version of their PDAs and forward them to the Recovery Bureau. The Recovery Bureau will analyze the updated PDA submissions, verify the damage information and costs incurred, and advise NJOEM leadership if the State has met the threshold (as outlined above).

1. Upon the recommendation of NJOEM leadership, the State Director will ask the Governor to submit a formal request to the FEMA Region II Administrator for a FEMA and State Joint PDA.
 - a. If the result of the Joint PDA finds that the State will not meet its threshold to request a Federal declaration, each affected municipality, county, State agency and quasi-State agency will be notified by the NJOEM Recovery Bureau.
 - b. If the result of the Joint PDA determines that the State's damage cost threshold for the incident has been met, the Governor may request a Federal declaration from the President via a formal request to the FEMA Region II Administrator within 30 days of the incident date.
 - i. If a Presidential Disaster Declaration is granted, each affected municipality, county, State agency, quasi-State agency, and any other eligible applicant will be notified by the Recovery Bureau as to the next steps in the reimbursement process.
2. If a municipality, county, State agency or quasi-State agency, or any other eligible applicant cannot prepare and submit its PDA within the specified timeframes, the applicable OEM must notify the Recovery Bureau. The Recovery Bureau will ensure that the situation is identified and taken into consideration and include a delayed report in the State's submission to FEMA, as per Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

III. Effect

This directive rescinds and replaces Directive 84 issued February 1, 1975. This order shall take effect immediately.



Patrick J. Callahan

Colonel

State Director of Emergency Management