

IS ELEVATION RIGHT FOR YOU?  
AN ELEVATION  
GUIDEBOOK FOR  
LOCAL COMMUNITIES



NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

**MITIGATION UNIT**



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# ACRONYMS

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\$/sq. ft.	Dollar per square foot
A/AE A0-9	Riverine elevation code
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASCA	American Society of Civil Engineers
BCA	Benefit Cost Analysis
BCEGS	Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule
BCR	Benefit Cost Ratio
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
CBRA	Coastal Barrier Resource Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CID	Community Identification Number
CRS	Community Rating System
DRRA	Disaster Recovery Reform Act
EHP	Environment Planning and Historic Preservation
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFRMS	Federal Flood Risk Management Standard
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FIS	Flood Insurance Study
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance
GPS	Geographic Positioning System
GTSF	Greatest Savings to the Fund
HEC	Home Elevation Contractor
HMA	Hazard Mitigation Assistance
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning



ICC	Increased Cost of Compliance
LIDRS	Lowest Impact Debris Removal
LOC	Line of Credit
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NJDCA	New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
NJDEP	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
NJOEM	New Jersey Office of Emergency Management
NOVI	Notice of Voluntary Interest
PDM	Pre-Disaster Mitigation
PE	Professional Engineer
PM	Project Management
POP	Period of Performance
RFQ	Request for Qualification
RL	Repetitive Loss
SAM	System for Award Management
SD	Substantially Damaged
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SHMO	State Hazard Mitigation Officer
SOW	Scope of Work
SRL	Severe Repetitive Loss
TB	Technical Bulletin
UCC	Uniform Construction Code
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
V/VE	Coastal elevation code



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) created this guidebook to help homeowners and communities determine whether elevation is the best mitigation option to reduce flood risk. If so, the guidebook can serve as a resource to effectively apply for, manage, and implement an elevation program. This guidebook provides more specific guidance, broken down into understandable steps to supplement the high-level guidance currently available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and to address the issues, concerns, and questions that have arisen during implementation of elevating homes in the State of New Jersey since Superstorm Sandy.

## UNDERSTANDING STATE AND FEDERAL STRATEGY AND PRIORITIZATION

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When considering applying for an elevation grant, it is helpful to understand the State of New Jersey's goals for mitigation and prioritization of funding for residential properties. NJOEM established statewide programmatic goals to support more resilient and safer communities, as outlined in the State's 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) Update. The Repetitive Loss Strategy section of the 2019 HMP was written to demonstrate the ways in which New Jersey works to reduce the number of Repetitive Loss (RL) and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) properties in order to be eligible for an increased federal cost share. More information regarding the strategy and priorities can be found in this guidebook in Section 2, FEMA Programs.

After a community has determined that their potential project aligns with the State's goals, what are the next steps?

This guidebook provides information for communities motivated to reduce flood vulnerability within their community by supporting homeowners to obtain funding under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) pre-disaster mitigation programs. It provides a decision flow chart to inform the community of issues to consider, decision points, and potential costs associated with managing a community structural elevation program. It serves to help communities determine the next steps toward elevation as a mitigation action and is set up to address each step in the following sections and appendices:

- **Section 1 – Introduction:** This section provides an overview of the purpose, logistics, and administration of the available State-supported grant programs for homeowners to use to elevate structures to reduce the impacts of flooding.
- **Section 2 – FEMA Programs in Support of Elevation:** This section reviews FEMA grant programs for which local communities can apply.
- **Section 3 – Guidance for Communities:** This section provides guidance and information for communities in application development and implementation.
- **Section 4 - Frequently Asked Questions:** This section provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about structural elevations for both the community and the homeowners.



- **Appendices:** These sections provide relevant FEMA and NJOEM guidance documents, elevation packets, diagrams, and forms to assist homeowners and communities throughout the elevation project implementation.

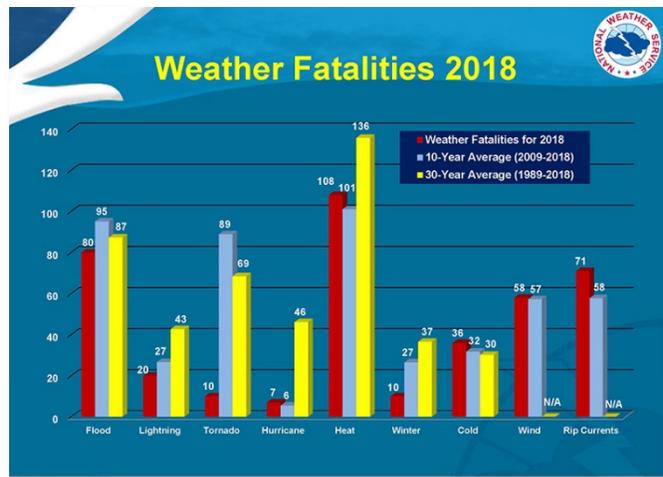


# SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Hazard mitigation works to ensure that fewer individuals and communities become victims of disasters. Mitigation efforts are sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risks and impacts to people and property from hazards. It results in safer communities that resist becoming victims when disaster strikes. Elevation is one of the tools in a community's toolbox to mitigate hazards and become more resilient.

## ELEVATION CAN PROTECT LIVES!

Floods of any size can have devastating effects on homes, families, and communities. In 2018, flooding was the second leading cause of death by weather-related fatalities. Elevating structures can mitigate the impacts flooding can have on the lives of a community's population.



## ELEVATION CAN SAVE MONEY!

From reductions in flood insurance premiums, to improving a community's Community Rating System (CRS) classification, to reducing flood-related structural damages, elevating structures saves homeowners and communities money.



## ELEVATIONS CAN KEEP HOMES IN COMMUNITIES!

Unlike acquisitions, elevation allows residents to stay in their homes and in the community by protecting and enhancing the existing structure.

Families stay in their homes, and communities are stronger.

## ELEVATIONS ARE GRANT ELIGIBLE!

This guidebook will help communities determine how best to apply for and access grants to elevate homes, with many of these grants offering reimbursement to communities for elevation costs.



# ELEVATION CAN WORK FOR YOUR COMMUNITY!

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FEMA recognizes the importance of mitigation measures and has funded community grants to assist with mitigation. One way to mitigate flood loss to individual at-risk structures is by elevating the first floor above the base flood elevation (BFE). NJOEM is responsible for supporting the FEMA grant programs for elevation and assisting New Jersey communities applying for and implementing awarded elevation grants. Elevations, while a viable option to help protect properties from flooding, are complex to administer.

Several FEMA documents include general requirements and guidelines related to elevating homes; however, there is not one specific document dedicated to providing a community-specific direction to apply for and administer awarded elevation grants. Therefore, in coordination and review with FEMA, NJOEM has developed this elevation guidebook to assist homeowners and communities through the elevation process—from application to implementation, reimbursement, and closeout. Before getting into all of the processes and documentation, homeowners and communities need to ask themselves if an elevation program is worth the effort and expense because it will provide a significant benefit to the community.

Additional information on how communities and homeowners can benefit from elevating homes is provided in **Appendix A** (Flood Insurance Premium Comparisons), **Appendix B** (Insurance Impacts at Premiums Move to Actuarial), and **Appendix C** (Insurance Premium Savings by BFE).

This guidebook will help communities answer the question: *Is an elevation program right for you?* It addresses funding considerations, physical elevation considerations, and community capabilities for elevation. It serves guide a community through the grant application process, and if awarded, the implementation, required documentation, reimbursement, and closeout of the grant.

NJOEM also developed a companion guidebook that provides homeowners with information regarding the elevation process, financial and structural abilities, the roles of the community and homeowner after grant award, and answers to frequently asked questions.



# SECTION 2. FEMA PROGRAMS IN SUPPORT OF ELEVATION, ELEVATION REQUIREMENTS, AND METHODS

FEMA offers three primary grants for which jurisdictions can apply for home elevations: the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program, and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program. Each of these programs are described in this section.

## HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

The HMGP was authorized in 1988 by the Stafford Act with the purpose of providing funding to significantly reduce or eliminate future risk to lives and property from natural hazards. A presidential declaration of a major disaster triggers the availability of HMGP funds in every county within the affected state, instead of only those designated for Individual or Public Assistance. The HMGP funds projects in accordance with priorities outlined in state and local HMPs. Cost-share requirements state that HMGP funds may be used to pay up to 75 percent of the eligible project costs. Administered through the state, available funds are based on a sliding scale of the total federal assistance for a disaster, excluding administrative costs, as illustrated in the figure below:



Elevation is an eligible project in the HMGP, and a homeowner does not need to have flood insurance at the time of application. FEMA does, however, require any home elevated with grant funds to carry flood insurance for the life of the structure that was elevated, regardless of the program used to fund the elevation. In fact, FEMA requires that the homeowner file a deed restriction on the property after the elevation. For properties that receive federal hazard mitigation assistance, FEMA states:

*“Federal law requires that flood insurance coverage on this Property must be maintained during the life of the Property regardless of transfer of ownership of*



*such property. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §5154a, failure to maintain flood insurance on this property may prohibit the owner from receiving federal disaster assistance with respect to this property in the event of a flood disaster. The Homeowner is also required to maintain this property in accordance with the flood plain management criteria of Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.3 and local ordinances. Flood insurance is required on the property.”*

## FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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The FMA Program is authorized by Section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, with the goal of reducing or eliminating claims under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The FMA Program provides funding to states, territories, federally-recognized tribes, and local communities for projects and planning that reduce or eliminate long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the NFIP. Funding is appropriated by Congress annually and cost shares are based on the guidance given each year with the application. In addition to having to be insured under the NFIP, a property must achieve the following to be considered a project eligible for funding under the FMA Program:

- Conform with the approved state and local mitigation plan.
- Conform with environmental regulations.
- Solve a problem and be technically feasible.
- Meet all applicable state and local codes and standards.
- Demonstrate cost effectiveness.
- Consider a range of alternatives.

## BUILDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE COMMUNITIES

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The PDM Program is being phased into a new program in 2020 due to the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018. While elevation is an eligible mitigation project, the program is highly competitive, and the non-competitive side set aside for states makes this grant very difficult to obtain for elevations.

The DRRA was introduced to address the rising costs of disasters and to reform federal disaster programs. The Act established more than 50 new authorities and requirements across FEMA. One of the most substantive provisions of the DRRA is Section 1234: National Public Infrastructure Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation, which allows FEMA to set aside 6 percent of estimated disaster expenses for each major disaster to fund a new grant program, BRIC. BRIC will supersede the existing PDM Program beginning in FY 2020. FEMA’s vision for BRIC is to reduce costs and loss of life from natural disasters by building a national culture of preparedness through encouraging investments to protect our communities and infrastructure and strengthening national mitigation capabilities to foster resilience.



# COST-SHARE REQUIREMENTS

Grant programs vary in cost responsibilities for the grantee. Cost share requirements for the different programs are summarized in the table below. Cost shares of up to 90-percent reimbursement for a 10-percent share and 100-percent full reimbursement are available for eligible projects.

Programs	Mitigation Activity (Percent of Federal / Non-Federal Share)	Grantee Management Costs (Percent of Federal / Non-Federal Share)	Subgrantee Management and Pre-Award Costs (Percent of Federal / Non-Federal Share)
HMGP	75/25	100/0	(1)
BRIC	75/25	100/0	100/0
BRIC - Subgrantee is small impoverished community	Up to 90/10	100/0	100/0
BRIC - Tribal Grantee is small impoverished community	90/10	100/0	100/0
FMA - Insured properties and planning grants	75/25	75/25	75/25
FMA - Repetitive loss property (2)	90/10	90/10	90/10
FMA - Severe repetitive loss property (2)	100/0	100/0	100/0

(1) Sub-applicants should consult their State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) for the percentage amount of HMGP subgrantee management cost funding that their state has determined to be passed through to subgrantees. FEMA will provide all management cost funding to NJOEM on behalf of the community. NJOEM must provide the community management cost funding for documented actual costs, up to 5 percent of the total amount of the HMGP award. All costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary as required by 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E, applicable program regulations, and Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Guidance (2015). Pre-award costs are those incurred prior to the effective date of the federal award directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work.

(2) To be eligible for an increased federal cost share, a FEMA-approved state or tribal (standard or enhanced) mitigation plan that addresses repetitive loss properties must be in effect at the time of grant award, and the property that is being submitted for consideration must be a repetitive loss property.

# REPETITIVE LOSS AND SEVERE REPETITIVE LOSS PROPERTIES

Communities and homeowners should understand that NFIP and FEMA FMA Program each maintain their own definitions of Repetitive Loss (RL) and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) properties. The table below lists the definitions for RL and SRL in both programs.

Program	Repetitive Loss (RL) Definition	Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Definition
NFIP	Any insurable building for which two or more claims of more than \$1,000 were paid by the NFIP within any rolling 10-year period since 1978. At least two of the claims must be more than 10 days	A severe repetitive loss property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is covered under a contract for flood insurance made available under the NFIP</li> <li>Has incurred flood related damage:</li> </ul>



Program	Repetitive Loss (RL) Definition	Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Definition
	apart but within 10 years of each other. A repetitive loss property may or may not be currently insured by the NFIP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o For which 4 or more separate claims payments (includes building and contents) have been made under flood insurance coverage with the amount of each such claim exceeding \$5,000, and with the cumulative amount of such claim payments exceeding \$20,000, or</li> <li>o For which at least 2 separate claims payments (includes only building) have been made under such coverage, with the cumulative amount of such claims exceeding the market value of the insured structure.</li> </ul>
FMA	<p>A structure covered by NFIP-backed flood insurance that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has incurred flood-related damage on two occasions, in which the cost of the repair (on average) equaled or exceeded 25% of the market value of the structure at the time of such flood event; and</li> <li>• At the time of the second incidence of flood-related damage, the contract for flood insurance contains ICC.</li> </ul>	Same as the NFIP definition

## NJOEM STRATEGY AND PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

Section 8 of the 2019 State HMP details the State’s RL strategy. The State has placed a high priority on the mitigation of RL and SRL properties as evidenced by the successful mitigation of 2,651 SRL properties in the State as of 2019. As noted in Section 3 (Coordination of Local Planning), the State actively coordinates and prioritizes planning and project grant funding and continues to use SRL and RL as prioritized mitigation actions.

In the wake of Superstorm Sandy and the massive impact on vulnerable properties, the State has continued to place a high priority on the mitigation of SRL properties. According to the State of New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Administrative Plan (FEMA-4086-DR-NJ), under a state-run acquisition and/or reconstruction/elevation program, eligible identified projects include Substantially Damaged (SD), RL, and SRL properties (refer to Annex A for the Plan).

The State has categorized New Jersey elevation and buyout projects into six levels of priority. Funding to mitigate SRL properties that are substantially damaged (SD) is the highest priority. The six categories are listed below in order of priority:

1. SD, SRL Properties (FEMA-insured)
2. SD, RL Properties (FEMA-insured)
3. SRL Properties (FEMA-insured)
4. RL Properties (FEMA-insured)



5. SD (FEMA-insured)
6. Other Properties (Non-FEMA Insured)

The State has placed a high priority on the mitigation of RL and SRL properties, as evidenced by the successful mitigation of 2,651 SRL properties in the State as of 2019. The State actively coordinates and prioritizes mitigation planning and project grant funding, and continues to prioritize SRL and RL mitigation actions.

In the wake of Superstorm Sandy and the massive impact on vulnerable properties, the State has continued to place a high priority on the mitigation of SRL properties. According to the State of New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Administrative Plan (FEMA-4086-DR-NJ), under a State-run acquisition and/or reconstruction/elevation program, eligible identified projects include SD, RL, and SRL properties. The State prioritizes eligible properties based on the following criteria:

- Clusters of SD properties in proximity to publicly-owned or preserved undeveloped natural areas containing sensitive and/or regulated features, and/or Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) zones
- Clusters of SRL or RL properties in proximity to publicly-owned or preserved undeveloped, natural areas containing sensitive and/or regulated features and/or CBRA zones
- Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) properties
- Other properties

## Communities Interested in Elevation Grants

Now that communities understand the State's priorities, it's helpful to know what the State requires for each priority. BFE +4 is the starting point for consideration of all elevation projects. This achieves greater resiliency in the community, and long-term insurance savings for the homeowner. The applicant should consider a thorough review of the increased cost associated with achieving the higher standard of protection considering cost share, construction cost, return on investment, and long-term savings. If a project is either (1) not able to achieve a higher standard due to community ordinances (e.g., height restrictions), overall project cost, or (2) not cost effective, the project should use the state or community regulatory minimums (whichever is most restrictive).

In addition to the higher standards, prior to design, a community must use best-available data that provides the most restrictive flood hazard areas, the highest BFE, and/or the greatest discharge (NJAC 7:13). The community should contact New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and NJOEM for guidance on data sources.

When applying for an elevation grant, a community should consider the above priorities to compare with the structures they wish to elevate. Additionally, the State evaluates competitive applications based on the following criteria:

- Most cost effective projects with the highest level of protection.
- Projects that identify mitigation measures that result in the most cost-effective insurance options (majority of structures mitigated to highest standard for maximum insurance savings)
- Projects that increase insurance penetration - number of insurance policies in SFHA



- Projects that increase livability, resiliency, and economic viability of flood-prone communities
- Projects that maximize available CRS credits

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE OF GRANT PROGRAMS

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In addition to the aforementioned grant programs, homeowners may be able to use additional funding sources to help with the upfront costs. This includes Coverage D of the flood insurance policy and the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) 203(k) Rehabilitation Program to Reduce Flood Losses for Homeowners.

### Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC)

Coverage D of the flood insurance policy to offset up to \$30,000 of a required non-federal share (Local Match). This is referred to as Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC), and a homeowner might be eligible for this type of funding if one or more of the following situations apply:

- A jurisdiction official determines that the building is substantially damaged as a result of a flood.
  - Substantial damage meets the cost of repair equal or exceeding 50 percent of the buildings value.
- When elevated, the home meets local floodplain management ordinance requirements.
  - A floodplain management ordinance requires that a substantially damaged building be elevated to or above the level of the BFE.
- If Coverage D is included in the flood policy for the home.

Homeowners need to coordinate with their insurer, as NJOEM and the community have no involvement with this funding mechanism.

There are many requirements to access ICC funds. FEMA guidance relative to ICC states:

*“A policy holder may be able to receive a partial advance payment for up to half of the eligible benefit or up to \$15,000 once the claims representative has a copy of the signed contract for work, a permit from the community to do the work, and a return of your signed ICC Proof of Loss. If the work is not completed, you must return any partial payment to your insurer.”*

*When the work is completed local officials will inspect and issue a certificate of occupancy or a confirmation letter. Once you submit this document to your claims representative, your insurer will pay the final installment or full payment.*

*ICC claims will only be paid on flood-damaged homes and businesses and can only be used to pay for costs of meeting the floodplain management ordinance in your community. For more information on ICC coverage, call your insurance agent, or call the NFIP toll-free at 1-800-427-4661 or TDD#1-800-427-5593.”*



## FHA 203(k) Rehabilitation Program to Reduce Flood Losses for Homeowners

Through the FHA 203(k) loan program, a homeowner can apply through an FHA-approved lender to qualify for a single, long-term, fixed, or adjustable-rate loan to elevate their property. If a homeowner is interested in this program, they must apply through an FHA-approved lender.

**Appendix D** provides additional information about this program. A list of approved lenders can be found online at [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/housing/sfh/lender/lenderlist](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/lender/lenderlist)

## ELEVATION REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS

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FEMA requires communities and homeowners to follow specific conditions and methods when elevating homes in a FEMA-funded program, as detailed below.

### Elevation Requirements

Structure elevation is defined in the Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Guidance as physically raising and/or retrofitting an existing structure in accordance with American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 24-10 BFE or higher, when required by FEMA or local ordinance. The State supports having structures mitigated to the highest standard. Elevation may be achieved through a variety of methods, including elevating on continuous foundation walls; elevating on open foundations such as piles, piers, posts, or columns; or elevating on fill. Foundations must be designed to properly address all loads and be appropriately connected to the floor structure above, and utilities must be properly elevated as well. FEMA and the State require that Recipients and Subrecipients design all structure elevations in accordance with ASCE 24-14 or the latest edition (see **Appendix E**, New Jersey Uniform Commercial Code Codes). For additional information about structure elevation projects, communities should review the HMA 2015 Guidance and Addendum, specifically Addendum, Part E.

Buildings proposed for elevation must be structurally sound and capable of being elevated safely. Important design considerations for structure elevations consistent with 44 CFR Part 60 are as follows:

- The lowest floor of the structure must be elevated to the most restrictive State or local requirements. Upon completion of the elevation work, an elevation certificate (FEMA Form 81-31) verifying “as-built” elevations must be completed to ensure that the structure complies with the local floodplain ordinance and NFIP floodplain management and HMA requirements.
- Elevation projects must be designed and adequately anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, and lateral movement of the structure caused by hydrodynamic and hydrostatic loads, including the effects of buoyancy. An engineer must certify the design elevation will withstand the depth and velocity of 1% annual chance flood events (hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads), any potential increase in wind load, or any other relevant load factors.
- For elevation projects in Zone V with open foundations (piles, piers, posts, or columns), the space below the lowest floor must be free of obstructions or constructed with non-supporting breakaway walls, open wood lattice-work, or screening intended to collapse under wind and water loads without causing collapse, displacement, or other structural damage to the



elevated portion of the building or supporting foundation system. Guidance on free-of-obstruction and breakaway wall requirements is available in FEMA Technical Bulletin (TB) 5, Free-of-Obstruction Requirements (2008), and FEMA TB-9, Design and Construction Guidance for Breakaway Walls Below Elevated Coastal Buildings (2008).

- For elevation projects on continuous foundation walls with fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor, the area must be used solely for parking of vehicles, building access, or storage as identified in 44 CFR 60.3(c)(5).
- Elevation projects on continuous foundation walls must be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. Designs to meet these criteria must be certified by a registered Professional Engineer or meet or exceed the criteria in 44 CFR 60.3(c)(5). Guidance on meeting this requirement can be found in FEMA TB-1, Openings in Foundation Walls and Walls of Enclosures (2008).

## Elevation Methods

Standard structure elevation methods are identified in FEMA P-312, Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting – Third Edition (2014), and FEMA P-347, Above the Flood: Elevating Your Floodprone House (2000) (refer to **Appendix F**). In addition, FEMA has developed guidance for the design of appropriate foundations based on the requirements of the International Codes and other applicable standards, as provided in FEMA P-550 and available for use with HMA structure elevation projects. Furthermore, FEMA requires Applicants and Subapplicants to design all structure elevation projects in accordance with ASCE 24-14, or latest edition.

Available elevation methods, which are thoroughly described in FEMA P-312, Chapter 5, FEMA P-347, and *FEMA Fact Sheet: Second-Story Conversion (Appendix G)*, include the following:

- Elevating the existing structure on piles, posts, or piers.
- Filling in the basement and replacing it with an elevated floor.
- Elevating by vertically extending the foundation walls of the home.
- Abandoning the first floor or converting the second story.

Activities that result in the construction of new living space at or above the BFE are considered only when they are consistent with mitigation reconstruction requirements described in HMA 2015 Guidance, Addendum Part E.2.1. Activities include structure elevations that abandon a lower enclosed area and add a second story above the BFE to an existing structure.

The method that is selected for elevating a house depends on factors such as:

- Foundation type
- Condition of the house
- Applicable State and local building codes
- Soil type and bearing capacity
- Weight of the house and lateral forces on the house from water and other natural hazards, such as winds and earthquakes
- Height of proposed elevation based on State or local most restrictive requirements

Determining the elevation height of a home, a community should use best available data that provides the **most restrictive** flood hazard areas, the highest BFE, and/or the greatest discharge (NJAC 7:13).



- Number of additions to the original structure

The most common foundation types include the following:

- Crawl space on foundation walls
- Slab-on-grade
- Open type foundation – piers, posts, or pilings.

Additional guidance to consider when implementing an elevation project can be found in the following publications:

- FEMA P-55, Coastal Construction Manual, Fourth Edition (2011)
- FEMA P-259, Engineering Principles and Practices of Retrofitting Floodprone Structures (2012)
- FEMA P-499, Home Builders Guide to Coastal Construction Technical Fact Sheet Series (2010)
- ASCE 24-14, Flood Resistant Design and Construction (2014), or most restrictive edition
- FEMA Fact Sheet: Second-Story Conversion
- N.J.A.C. 7:13, Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules (last amended July 15, 2019)

This list is not a comprehensive list of publications on retrofitting and elevations. More documents are available at <http://www.fema.gov/building-science-publications>.



# SECTION 3. FOR COMMUNITIES

This section of the guidebook will assist communities in determining whether or not an elevation grant is right for the community, what the community's role is when applying for a grant, and whether or not the community can implement a grant program.

## Important to Note

In the application, the local community will need to include a brief discussion of evidence of consideration for all mitigation options or alternatives. Communities should have at least three alternative solutions, with one being elevation. Communities

## CAN THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AN ELEVATION APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION?

What does a community official need to know to determine whether the community can support the application and implementation of an elevation grant? The following diagram can help with that determination.

Is an elevation grant right for my community?

- Is there interest from homeowners willing to provide necessary data to determine viability of elevation?
- Can the homeowner afford the local match?



What is the community's role in applying?

- Can the community help pay for costs or will all costs be borne by homeowners?
- How will the grant opportunity be advertised to eligible homeowners?
- When can a community hold a public meeting to outline needs for an application?
- What homes can be included in an application?
- Can the homeowners provide all necessary documentation?
- Who will complete the grant application?
- If awarded, who will implement the grant and host a kickoff meeting for homeowners to explain next steps?



Can the community implement a program?

- Does the community have the staff to support grant management?
- Does the community have support of departments - code official, floodplain administrator, finance department, elected officials?
- Are contracting processes/vehicles available to help develop an implementation plan?



The text below discusses reviewing the community's goals to ensure they align with an elevation program, details each of the major questions from the diagram above, provides information about applying for and preparing a grant application for elevations, and summarizes implementing a grant program.

## Community Goals – Does the program align with community goals?

Why would a community want to support an elevation program? The following lists several reasons to help answer that question:

- The elevation will help keep residents safe.
- The elevation will create a more resilient community (i.e., elevated structures offer increased protection from flooding).
- The elevation will help sustain or increase your Community Rating System (CRS) credits.
- The elevation could increase a community's ratables.
- Much of the cost is covered by a grant, if awarded. Other costs could be covered by the community, the homeowners' flood insurance policy through ICC, or the homeowner.
- The elevation could help lower the cost of flood insurance for your residents.
- Once elevated, a community completes an AW501, which shows the home as mitigated, thus reducing the number of SRL and RL properties within the community (when/if those elevated homes were originally on the SRL or RL list).
- Only communities can apply for grants. A homeowner cannot apply on his/her own behalf.

Another important aspect that the local officials must consider is whether the community and elected officials understand the importance of elevation. Safety of its residents and protection of property are of utmost importance to a community and elected officials. An elevation of a flood-prone structure results in the home remaining in the community and continues to support the economic and social viability of a community. Supporting an elevation grant can indicate community commitment to at-risk homeowners and can be done with minimal cost to the community, as grants cover most of the costs.

## Community Goals – What is the community's role in applying?

A homeowner cannot apply for any FEMA grant directly. Applications for elevation projects must be completed and submitted by the community (towns, townships, boroughs, cities, or counties). This point cannot be understated. Before applying, a community should consider the following financial matters:

- The cost of the application. Can the community complete an application on their own, or will they need to competitively procure an application development firm?
- The cost to implement if awarded. Can the community implement the awarded grant on its own, or will it need to competitively procure a grant implementation consultant?
- All grants are managed by the State on a cost reimbursable basis. Can the community assist homeowners by establishing a bond (as an example) to help with advance payments under the grant until reimbursement is obtained from the State for grant eligible costs, or will the community require the homeowners to front all costs prior to reimbursement?



## Community Goals – Can the community implement a program?

If the community is awarded an elevation grant, a community must establish the following procedures:

- Clearly-defined processes for the community, homeowners and contractors
- Checklists of documents needed before the elevation begins, during elevation implementation, and after the elevation is complete
- Documented reimbursement and closeout processes

## Community Goals – Summary

Understanding what is needed and how it can be accomplished from application through implementation and closeout is paramount to the success of any elevation program. Next, the guidebook will provide information on how to apply for and implement (if awarded) an elevation grant, including advice regarding reimbursement and closeout.

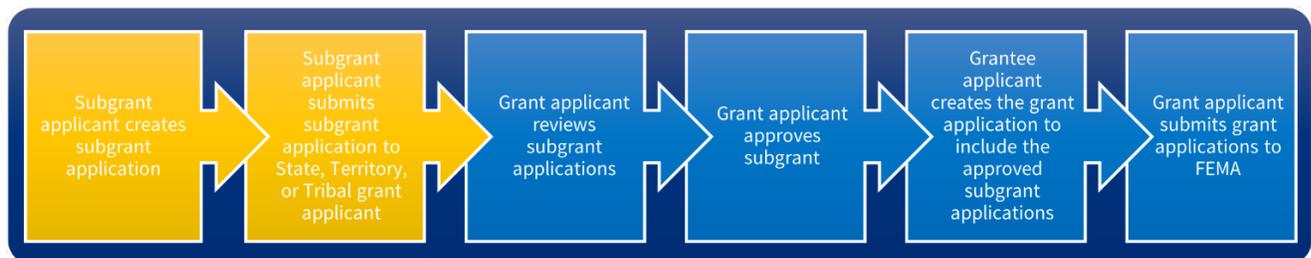
# COMMUNITY APPLICATION PROCESS

What can a community expect after initiating an elevation grant? This section details responsibilities, how to apply, information needed for the application, and how a local community can determine eligibility.

## Introduction

A homeowner cannot apply for a FEMA grant. The application must be submitted by the community. As backup to an application, the community will need elevation certificates, engineering reports, FEMA-required forms, pictures, and information from the homeowner. The application development section is found after this section and provides a list of documents needed from an interested homeowner.

While there are different grant opportunities, the application process (shown in the flow diagram below) is the same for all grants. The community (Subgrantee) applies to the State (New Jersey, as the Grantee), who applies to FEMA.



## Responsibilities

Before starting the application, a local community should reference the following two checklists at the end of this section (***Eligibility and Completeness Review Checklist for Project Subapplications*** and ***Job Aid: Elevation – Information for Technical and Environment and Historic Preservation [EHP] Reviews***) prepared by FEMA as a guide to make sure all of the necessary documents and information are collected, examined, and included in the application.

## How to Apply

Based on the type of grant, two systems are used: (1) FEMA Grants Outcomes (GO) for the FMA and BRIC applications or (2) NJOEM's grant portal or printed application for HMGP. **Appendix I** (FEMA Blank Application for FMA/ BRIC) provides an example of FEMA's blank application and **Appendix J** (NJOEM Application for HMGP) provides NJOEM's blank application. The directions for completing these applications are explained below in the application section. **Before applying, you must obtain access to the appropriate application system.**

### *FEMA Grants Outcomes*

The community will develop an application through the FEMA Grants Outcomes (GO).

#### Access

FEMA Grants Outcome (FEMA GO) is the web portal used by FEMA for submission of the annual Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants. (<https://go.fema.gov>). The registration process for FEMA GO requires multiple steps of approval:

- Notify the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management Mitigation Unit that you want to register for FEMA GO and provide your Organization's DUNS Number.
- NJOEM Mitigation Unit will enter the provided Organization's DUNS number and make them an eligible sub-applicant under the State of New Jersey within FEMA GO.
- Individuals associated with the Organization may now register on the FEMA GO website however, additional approval within your own organization may be required and is discussed further in the next slide.
- Once an individual is approved within their organization they should contact the NJOEM Mitigation Unit who can now give the individual access rights to create a sub-application.

## HOMEOWNERS

While the community is responsible for grant development and submittal, information from each homeowner needs to be collected and included in the grant application. Each homeowner must provide the following information to the community:

- Affidavit
- FEMA Model Acknowledgement of Conditions
- Low Impact Debris Removal Stipulations form
- FEMA Declaration and Release
- Initial elevation certificate
- Engineering Report, including method to elevate
- Proposed elevation height
- Four pictures of home clearly showing each side of the house
- Estimate cost to elevate home
- Flood Insurance declaration page if FMA

See **Appendix G** (NJOEM Homeowner Elevation Packet) for the required homeowner documentation to complete the application.



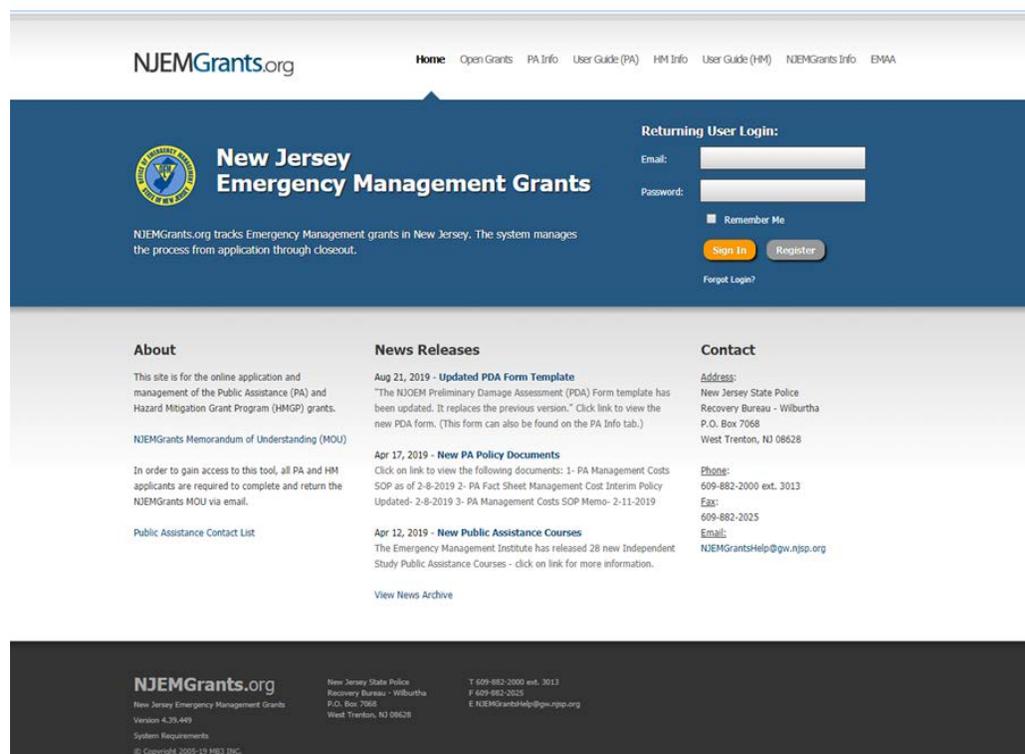
**Appendix K** provides a NJOEM Guide to help navigate the FEMA GO system access.

Preparation of the Application in FEMA GO

**Appendix L** is a helpful guide for completing a sub-application in FEMA GO.

### *NJOEM EMGrants*

HMGP applications are submitted to NJOEM as a printed application or through the NJOEM EMGrants portal (<https://NJOEMgrants.org/>). The picture below shows the first screen that the subapplicant will see on the NJOEMGrants.org site.



### Access

Similar to the FEMA portal, an applicant must register with the State and upon approval, establish a password for access.

### Preparation of the Application in New Jersey EMGrants

While the HMGP application is in a different platform, the information required for HMGP is the same as the FMA application.

## Information Needed for Application

This section will briefly describe the data that need to be included in the application. In addition to the brief overview provided here, additional details and examples will be provided for the following:

- Identification of eligible elevation properties and a discussion of prioritization.
- Information needed in the SOW.
- Schedule, cost estimate, description of project, evaluation of alternatives and budget.



- NJOEM list of Insured, RL and SRL properties.
- BCA and required documentation.
- Federal and state (NJDEP) environmental and historic considerations.
- NJDEP jurisdictional determination to identify the minimum height requirement to elevate a home in order to meet NJDEP/NFIP regulations. A community will submit a list of properties to be included in the grant application to NJDEP. NJDEP will provide the official determination of the flood zone and required elevation height for each property listed in the request.
- System for Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal.

The application templates are provided in **Appendix I** (FEMA Blank Application for FMA/BRIC) and **Appendix J** (NJOEM Application for HMGP). **Appendix K** (FEMA GO Sign-Up Instructions) and **Appendix L** (FEMA GO Sub-application Development User Manual) provide a Reference Guide to help navigate the FEMA GO system access and sub-application development. Communities will need to include basic applicant contact, and community information, including the following:

- Legal status and function.
- State and federal employer tax identification numbers.
- Program eligibility category (state, tribal, or local government; special government district; or eligible private nonprofit group or agency).
- State and federal legislative district information.
- NFIP community name, CID, participation status (NFIP and CRS), compliance history, and BCEGS score (required for non-disaster grants only).
- Information regarding the applicable HMP for the jurisdiction in which the project is being implemented.
- Section in the County HMP that the proposed activity is listed.
- A copy of the current FEMA approved HMP, or link to said plan, as applicable.
- Descriptions of the hazard, the problem, and the project.
- Prior flooding in the area and how it has affected the homes included in the elevation application.
- Information regarding the FIS and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). FIRMs must be provided for each home included in an application, whether or not the home is in the SFHA. Multiple homes can be identified in a FIRM.
- Building inventory. Information clearly defining the location of the proposed project, including latitude and longitude of each structure to be elevated. Make sure to include:
  - Homeowner name (confirm if there are multiple owners) and contact information.
  - Project location(s), including street names, block numbers, latitude, and longitude.
  - Building/structure type, size, construction, and occupancy.
- Map showing the location of the project. Acceptable map formats include recent topographic mapping or aerial photographs, and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle maps. Users can show latitude, longitude, topographic, and aerial photographs at <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/Mapper.html>.

The community will need to collect the following documentation from each homeowner (see **Appendix H** – Homeowner Grant Application Information):



- Notice of Voluntary Interest (NOVI)
- Model Acknowledgement of Conditions
- FEMA Declaration and Release form
- Affidavit of Duplication of Benefits
- Low-Impact Debris Removal Stipulation form
- Flood insurance declaration page (only for FMA Program)
- Pictures of home from all four sides
- Elevation certificate
- Engineering report including elevation method, elevation height, and estimate cost

The community will need to prepare the following documentation to include in the application:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) if applicable
- Assurances and certifications
- FEMA SF424 form
- Certifications regarding lobbying; debarment, suspension, and other responsibilities matters; and drug-free workplace requirements
- EHP letters to state and federal agencies and any responses from these agencies
- NJDEP flood zone and required elevation height determination request and response from NJDEP
- Funding commitment letters
- Cost effectiveness documentation
- Maps (including but not limited to FIRMs) that the community uses to determine BFE

The application requires a record of all relevant information that led the community to include each structure in the project. EHP requires a minimum of two color photographs showing at least three sides of each structure, and no closeups will be accepted. Each side must show the full extent possible. NJOEM recommends attaching four color photographs of the main structure from different angles and collecting specific data regarding the property and its damage history.

## How a Local Community Can Determine Eligibility?

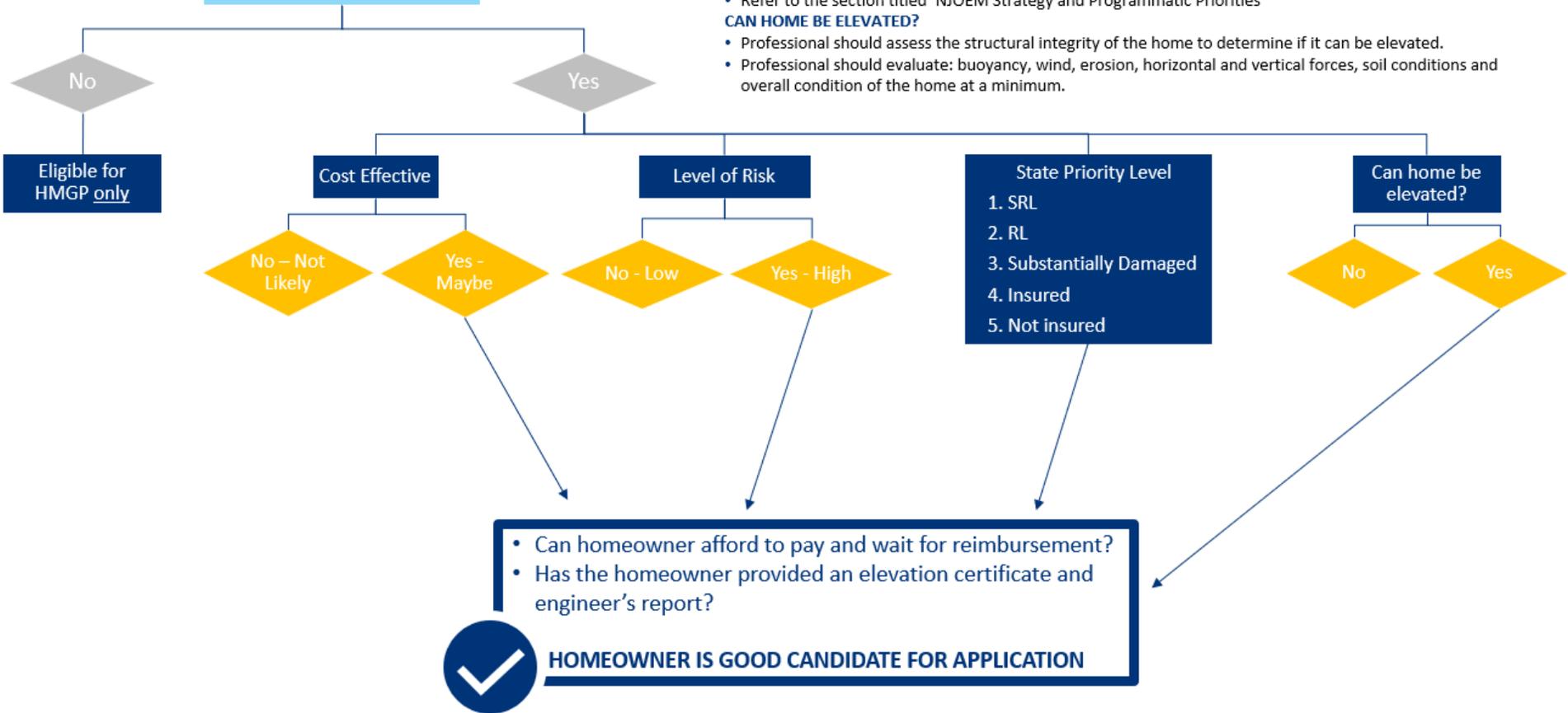
The diagram below is a high-level view on what a community should evaluate for potential candidates in a grant application.





## Interested Homeowner

Do you have NFIP-backed flood insurance?



### KEY TERMS

#### COST EFFECTIVE:

- Cost to elevate the home results in a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 1 or greater. Obtaining an engineer's estimate would help determine a home's BCA.

#### LEVEL OF RISK:

- Is the home's lowest finished floor below the BFE?
- Has the home experienced significant prior flood losses?

#### STATE PRIORITY LEVEL:

- Refer to the section titled 'NJOEM Strategy and Programmatic Priorities'

#### CAN HOME BE ELEVATED?

- Professional should assess the structural integrity of the home to determine if it can be elevated.
- Professional should evaluate: buoyancy, wind, erosion, horizontal and vertical forces, soil conditions and overall condition of the home at a minimum.



A community can determine properties that might be good candidates for inclusion in an elevation grant by looking at those with lowest floors below the BFE and those that have experienced significant flood losses in the past. Relevant factors include the following:

- The home's lowest inhabitable floor is below the BFE, as documented by the elevation certificate to show the BFE and first-floor elevation. If the home does not have an elevation certificate, the owner should be requested to obtain and provide one.
- The NFIP RL list and paid claims list from the State. The lists will include specifics of prior paid claims for each NFIP insured property in the community.

The State proposes to create a tiered ranking system to prioritize homes that communities should consider including in mitigation applications. This ranking system is as follows:

1. FMA SRL, SD (NFIP Insured)
2. FMA RL, SD (NFIP Insured)
3. FMA SRL (NFIP Insured)
4. FMA Repetitive Loss (NFIP Insured)
5. SD – Uninsured (HMGP grant only)
6. NFIP Insured (not SRL or FMA RL)
7. Uninsured (HMGP grant only)

Secondary determining factors include the following:

1. NFIP claims payments compared to the structure's insured value
2. Municipal CRS Classification
3. Flood history and frequency
4. Mitigation status of neighboring properties (geographical proximity)
5. Homeowner/community participation

## Scope of Work (SOW)

The SOW for elevation applications should include a schedule, detailed cost estimate, property inventory information/budget, and project description including alternatives considered. This section will discuss each element. **Appendix N** (Scope of Work Example) provides an example of an approved SOW for an elevation project.

## Schedule

An example of a detailed schedule is included below. Schedules should consider the following major elements of an elevation project:

- Engineering and permitting
- Mobilization
- Tunneling
- Lifting the home
- Temporary cribbing
- Obtaining occupancy permit
- Construction of foundation
- Disconnecting/reconnecting utilities



- Attaching elevated home to foundation and construction of ingress and egress

The following is an example of a schedule to include in the grant application.

### EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

Description of Task	Starting Point	Unit of Time	Duration	Work Completed By
Grant and project management	1	months	36	Community
Procurement of project manager	2	months	3	Community
Kickoff meeting with property owners and obtain required documents	6	months	1	Community and Project Manager
Property owner provides elevation certificate (if not provided during application)	7	months	1	Property owner working with licensed professional
Procurement of contractors for engineering and design	7	Months	3	Community or property owner working with licensed professional
Conduct engineering and architectural services	10	Months	2	Property owner working with licensed professional
Procurement of contractor(s) for elevation of property	12	Months	2	Community or property owner working with licensed professional
Obtain local and state permits	12	Months	3	Property owner working with licensed professional
Disconnect utilities	15	Months	2	Property owner working with licensed professional
Elevation construction activities	16	Months	7	Elevation contractor
Local municipal inspections and reviews	23	Months	2	Contractor working with property owner and municipality
Reconnect utilities	25	Months	1	Contractor working with property owner and utility company
Final site restoration	26	Months	1	Contractor working with property owner
Obtain post-construction elevation certificate	27	Months	1	Licensed surveyor working with property owner and municipality
Obtain certificate of occupancy	28	Months	2	Contractor working with property owner and municipality
Legal deed recordation of deed restriction	31	Months	1	Property owner and municipality
Complete and submit AW501	31	Months	1	Municipality and project manager
Complete and submit reimbursement package	31	Months	1	Project manager working with property owner and municipality
Project closeout	35	Months	1	Municipality and project manager
Estimated total duration of proposed activity		Months	36	



## Cost Estimate

A detailed cost estimate should include the following cost elements, at a minimum, sorted by pre-construction costs, construction costs, post-construction costs, and management costs:

- Pre-Award Costs – Costs incurred by the community to develop the grant application and any costs incurred prior to grant award.
- Pre-Construction - Engineering/design/permitting.
- Pre- Construction - Elevation certificates.
- Construction - Temporary living - Typically set at the number of days the primary owner occupant is expected to be displaced from their home during elevation times the nightly federal government per diem rate for the area for which the home to be elevated is located.
- Construction - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements (as necessary).
- Construction - Foundation Surveyor (if not done during pre-construction).
- Construction - Project/construction management.
- Construction - Structure elevation. This is the largest cost and most difficult to estimate accurately. It is important to have an accurate budget for the application so there are enough funds to implement an awarded grant. There are two main elements to this budget line item: dollar per square foot and linear footprint to be elevated.
- Dollar per square foot (\$/sq. ft.). This varies depending on foundation type, lift height, number of stories, type of construction (brick or frame). The heavier the home, the more piers, posts, pilings, or footers will be needed to support the elevated home, resulting in a higher \$/sq. ft. Notes:
  - A two-story home typically weighs more than a one-story home. Therefore, it is typically more \$/sq. ft. to lift a two-story home with a vertical footprint of 1,500 sq. ft. than it is to lift a one-story home with a vertical footprint of 1,500 sq. ft.
  - A brick home typically weighs more than a wood frame home. The heavier the home, the more piers, posts, pilings, or footers will be needed to support the elevated home, resulting in a higher \$/sq. ft.
  - The smaller the home, typically the higher the \$/sq. ft. due to the set costs of mobilization, permitting, insurance, and bonding costs being somewhat standard regardless of the size of the home to be elevated.
- Linear footprint to be elevated. This is a very important budget element to get correct. If a jurisdiction estimates the cost to elevate using the first floor living area of a home, only to find out after the grant is awarded that the garage has to be elevated with the living area being

### Recommendations

- Request that homeowners provide an engineering report from a professional engineer that can help with the cost estimate and identification of the type of lift and house information.
- Inspect each home to be included in the application during the application process for the following:
  - Measure to determine the vertical footprint to be elevated
  - Verify the number of stories of the home
  - Determine whether or not the garage will be elevated, left on the ground, or walls extended
  - Record any other factors that affect the cost of elevation.
- If using the square footage and foundation method described below, include a narrative description of how those costs were determined



integrated into the living area and home's roof line, the budget could be low by tens of thousands of dollars.

- Construction - Electrical, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, interior/exterior/portable bathroom/site restoration.
  - This can also include bringing homes into code compliance if required by the municipality. Per FEMA regulations, a structure must be physically able to be "elevated". When elevating older structures, older structures may incur additional costs to come into code compliance.
- Post Construction - Deed recordation.
- Post Construction - Final elevation certificate.
- Management Costs - Grant administration.



The following is an example of a cost estimate template.

Address	Municipality	Block	Lot	First Floor Area Sq. Ft.	Stories	Base Flood Elevation	Municipal Elevation Standard	Proposed Elevation Method	Elevation Standard	First Floor Elevation (NAVD 88)	First Floor Elevation Source	Post Project First Floor Elevation (NAVD 88)	# Feet First Floor Being Raised

Pre-Construction Costs				Construction Costs								
Pre-Construction Elevation Certificate	Local Permits	Design Engineer and Architect	Utility Disconnect and Reconnect	Lodging	Foundation Surveyor	Elevation Costs (construction, foundation, debris removal)	Electrical Finish	HVAC Finish	Plumbing Finish	Interior/Exterior Finish	Portable Bathroom	

Post-Construction Costs				Management				Overall Project Total	RL / SRL / Insured
Final Elevation Certificate	Legal/Deeds	Final Site Restoration	Elevation Costs (Total)	Pre-Award	Project Management	Indirect Costs	Contingency (5% elevation costs)		

Cost Share	FEMA Elevation Cost	Regional Factor	FEMA Threshold	FEMA Share	Homeowner Share



Cost Share	FEMA Elevation Cost	Regional Factor	FEMA Threshold	FEMA Share	Homeowner Share



## Project Description

The description should explain the project, including how many homes, location, how it will help mitigation in the area, the process and responsibilities. In addition, the project description should also include the following:

- Reference to the community's current HMP and the specific mitigation initiative for RL/SRL mitigation
- BFE for each home using best-available data
- Municipal ordinances
- Any required permit
- Engineering standards
- When feasible, design plans, maps, drawings, and photos to illustrate work to be completed
- A list of alternate homes in the event any homeowner on the primary list withdraws from the program

### *Evaluation of Alternative Solutions*

An important step in preparing an application is to justify the decision-making process that resulted in identification of the project proposed within the SOW. In other words, the SOW should help clarify the process for selecting the project. An outline of the decision-making process should include the following:

- A description of the process used to select this project as the best solution to the problem
- Alternatives mitigation options that were considered and why these options were not chosen
- References to relevant technical documentation

Each alternative for the project should be evaluated for:

- Eligibility
- Cost effectiveness
- EHP issues
- Engineering feasibility
- Safety

## Budget

The budget can be built from the property inventory list and includes much of the information from the cost estimate. Other important information for the application and implementation is provided by FEMA online at <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-grant-program>.

## Additional Details

Additional details that should be included in the application and organized in one spreadsheet include:

- Address of property to be mitigated

### Important to note

Homeowners must disclose any plans to complete any additional work or increase the footprint of their existing home, in addition to the elevation.



- Owner/Co-Owner information (Name[s], phone, cell, e-mail, fax, work phone, mailing address if different than elevation address).
- Property Information:
  - Geographic positioning system [GPS] coordinates
  - Year built
  - Structure type
  - Property tax ID
  - Legal description
  - NFIP policy number
  - FMA RL or SRL
  - If RL or SRL, Property Location Number is required
  - Identify hazards to be mitigated
  - Property action (i.e., elevation)
  - Whether or not property is substantially damaged
- Property Action:
  - Current foundation type and proposed foundation type.
  - Current elevation height and proposed elevation height.
  - First-floor elevation.
  - Flood zone designation.
  - Number of feet the lowest floor is raised.
  - A description of the property dimensions, footprint of house square footage, acreage, depth of any ground disturbance.
  - Mechanism for elevation (i.e., crib/jack; on fill; second-story conversion, etc.).
  - How cost effectiveness was determined for the property (Greatest Savings to the Fund [GSTF]/BCA).
- Costs – Spreadsheet should include all of the cost-estimate components.

## List of Insured, RL, and SRL Properties

Each year FEMA provides New Jersey with the entire State's RL and SRL (NFIP and FMA) properties by community, the Policy database for the State, and the Claims database. Local communities should request this information every year from the State to help determine significant flood areas and patterns, as well as to use for the benefit cost analysis required in applications. The community should work with the homeowners to verify their property RL/SRL determination and obtain flood loss history from each homeowner.



## Benefit Cost Analysis and Required Documentation

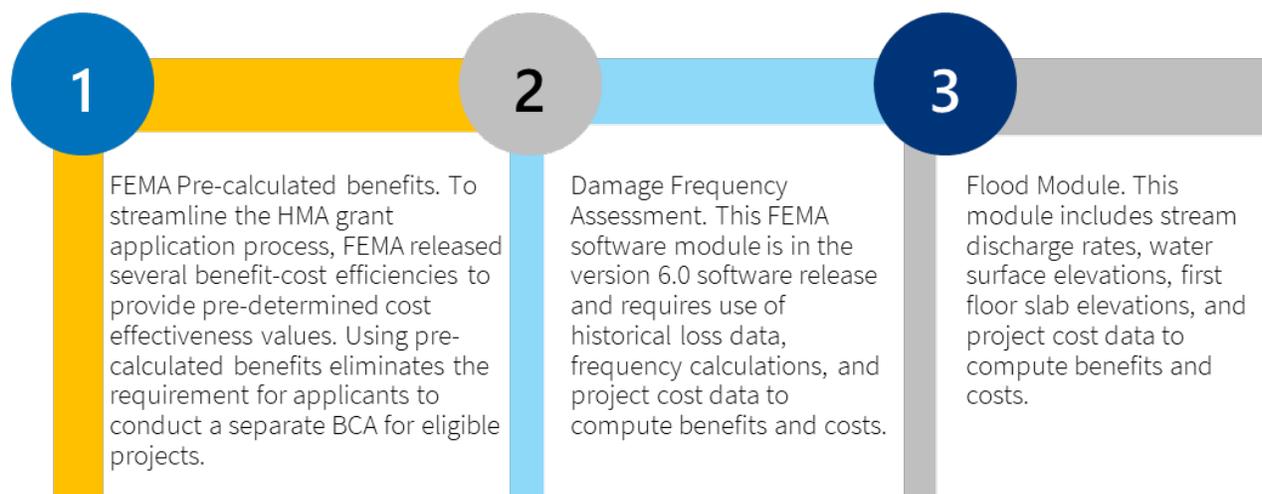
Note that in the new version 6.0 software, the DFA is not a separate module; all modules are integrated, including the tool's pre-calculated benefits.

The BCA is the method by which the future benefits of a mitigation project are determined and compared to its cost. The end result is a benefit-cost ratio (BCR), which is derived from a project's total net benefits divided by its total project cost. The BCR is a numerical expression of the cost effectiveness of a project. A project is considered to be cost effective when the BCR is 1.0 or greater.

Although the preparation of a BCA is a technical process, FEMA has developed software, written materials, and training to simplify the effort. The FEMA BCA software provides a suite of tools to analyze each of the major natural hazards, including flood, which is the relevant hazard for an elevation project's BCR calculation. The

FEMA BCA software and relevant training manual is available on the FEMA website at <https://www.fema.gov/benefit-cost-analysis>.

There are three main types of BCAs for elevation projects:



If a home is in the SFHA, the FEMA pre-calculated benefits methodology can be used as the benefit for an elevation. The FEMA-provided avoided damages calculation (benefit) for elevations is \$175,000. For New Jersey, there is a locality multiplier prepared by the State, which increases this benefit amount. The State provides the current multiplier to use prior to each application cycle. If the multiplier is used in the application for the benefit analysis calculation, a copy of the current State multiplier letter must be included as part of the grant application. The current State multiplier letter is available from the NJOEM Mitigation Division upon request.

## Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Considerations

FEMA requires that the applicant fill out the EHP section and provide relevant supporting information and documentation. The list of items requested in the EHP section of the grant application are in **Appendix O** (EHP Forms). If a community states yes to any of the questions in the EHP Checklist, they must provide a consultation letter to the applicable agency. NJOEM requires that letters be obtained from various federal and state agencies, including but not limited



to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NJDEP, and the State Historic Preservation Office.

The local community also must obtain from each homeowner a signed EHP Lowest Impact Debris Removal (LIDRS) form, as provided in **Appendix P** (Community Elevation Package).

The EHP checklist and additional information for communities on preparing EHP requests are found in **Appendix O** (EHP Forms).

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Communities need to consider the following when preparing an elevation application:

### Coastal Versus Riverine Areas

There are different requirements for Coastal (V/VE) elevation applications versus Riverine (A/AE A0-9) for elevating homes. The application must be clear whether the home is located in a riverine or coastal area. In coastal areas V zones, the velocity water and wave action associated with coastal flooding can exert strong hydrodynamic forces on any obstruction to the flow of water. Standard foundations, such as solid masonry walls or wood-frame walls, will obstruct flow and be at risk to damage from high-velocity flood forces. In addition, solid foundation walls can direct coastal floodwaters into the elevated portion of the building or into adjacent buildings. The result can be structural failure of the building. For these reasons, the area below the lowest floor of the elevated building in a V zone must either be free of obstruction constructed with open wood lattice-panels or insect screening, or be constructed with non-supporting/non-load-bearing breakaway walls that meet applicable NFIP criteria. Any enclosed area below the BFE can only be used for the parking of vehicles, building access, or storage.

### Engineering and Survey Support

Communities should always enlist engineering and survey professional support. Any additional documentation that is available for the application, including site surveys, engineer reports, soil tests, or environmental reports should be attached as supporting documentation and used to inform answering application questions.

### SAM Registration or Renewal

Applicant registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) is a requirement prior to any application systems. **Registration in SAM is free** and can be done online at <https://sam.gov/SAM/>. A screenshot of the first page of the website is presented below.



# IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

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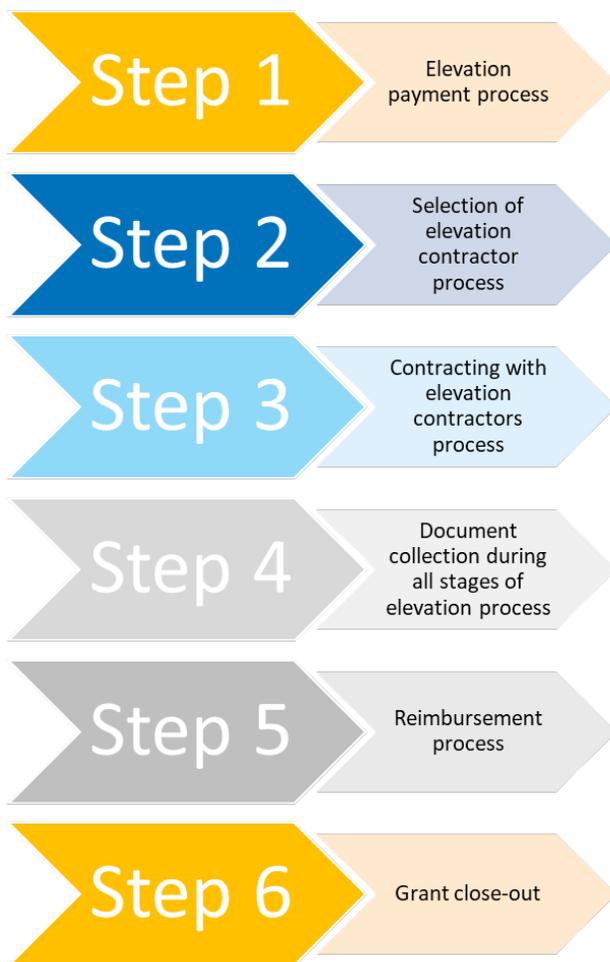
## Introduction

After a community is awarded a home elevation grant, the next step is to determine how best to implement these elevations. The community must determine the procedures for the following:

- Payment of the elevation
- Process for working with homeowners
- Process for selecting the contractor(s)
- Process for interacting with contractor(s)

After establishing its roles during implementation, the community will create processes for the collection of the necessary documents before, during, and at the completion of the elevation, as well as the process for the reimbursement of costs by the property owner. These processes are described at the end of this section. A checklist to help guide the implementation process is included in **Appendix Q** (Implementation Checklist). This section also will discuss what a community needs to do to close out the grant.





## Step 1: Role of the Community in the Payment of Elevation

The State of New Jersey does not advance funds; therefore, a community needs to determine how elevation payments will be made, such as through a bond or operating funds. FEMA provides reimbursement of eligible elevation costs after all grant-eligible elevation work is complete and all necessary documentation is provided, as discussed in Step 5 (Reimbursement process) below. As noted above, the cost of an elevation can vary, and contractors establish draw schedules and payment milestones differently.

While some homeowners can obtain a loan or carry the cost of elevation until reimbursed, others may not have the ability to do so. A community could consider obtaining a bond or other funding mechanism to help homeowners meeting this upfront financial obligation by assisting in the payment to contractors on behalf of homeowners. This is referring to the approved federal share, not the required homeowner local match, if any.

**ANY DEVIATION FROM TYPICAL REIMBURSEMENT OPTIONS DETAILED BELOW MUST BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY NJOEM BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION.**

**Option 1.** The homeowner pays all of the elevation costs during elevation. After the elevation is complete, the owner, with support from the community, provides all required backup documentation (invoices, paid receipts, canceled checks) and the community submits a reimbursement request to the State. The community receives the reimbursement from the State and, in turn, reimburses the homeowner for approved incurred costs.

**FUNDING OPTIONS**

**Nothing in this guidance will prohibit a local community from advancing funds, through bonding or other funding mechanisms initiated outside the grant, to a homeowner prior to the completion of a structural elevation project. However, any deviations from these procedures will be at the sole discretion of NJOEM.**

**Option 2.** The community pays the contractor(s) directly. If choosing this option, the community must submit a request to prove “undue hardship” in order for the NJOEM to evaluate alternative payment options, as any deviations from these procedures will be at the sole discretion of NJOEM. The homeowner signs an agreement that allows community to pay the contractor. In



this option, funds are reimbursed from the State to the Community. Once a homeowner hires a contractor and enters into a contract to elevate the home, the community establishes an escrow account in the homeowner's name. When the homeowner receives an invoice (following the required cost template) from the contractor, the homeowner provides the invoice to the community with an affidavit attesting that the work in the invoice was completed. The community then pays the contractor and submits a reimbursement request with all required backup documentation to the State. When the State issues reimbursement funds to the community, they are kept by the community. If there is a non-federal, local match required, the community typically collects these costs from the homeowner prior to the start of elevation and deposits these homeowner local match funds in the aforementioned escrow account.

## Step 2: Role of the Community in the Selection of Contractor Process

A community has two options for selecting contractors for home elevations that are summarized and detailed further below:

- Option 1: Community Elevation Bid Review of Contractors. The community undertakes a request for qualified elevation contractors in order to select a pool of qualified, experienced, and financial stable contractors.
- Option 2: Homeowner chooses Elevation Contractor. The homeowner selects the elevation contractor. In this case, before any works begins, the homeowner must provide the community, who in turns provides to NJOEM, the selected elevation contractor's proposal and elevation contract for review and approval. The community and NJOEM might choose to provide a recommended contract template, but, at a minimum, will provide the following to homeowners:
  - Contract recommendations for the contract between homeowner and elevation contractor that include performance bond, payment bonds, insurance requirements and warranty requirements.
  - An Acknowledgement of All Risks that must be signed by the homeowner that states that the homeowner understands and acknowledges that he/she is assuming all risk (for any incomplete work/issues) and any work or payments made outside of the eligible items are the homeowner's responsibility. If any of this work causes the project to go beyond the grant's period of performance, the homeowner will not be reimbursed.

These two options will be further discussed below.

### *Option 1: Community Elevation Bid Review of Contractors*

The local community would prepare and advertise a Request for Qualification (RFQ) for professional residential home elevation services. The purpose of this RFQ is to pre-qualify a pool of elevation service contractors from which the homeowners can choose to elevate their homes. The goal is to have multiple contractors identified who will adhere to the following general requirements. It is very important to both homeowners and the community that qualified, experienced, financially stable elevation contractors participate in the FEMA-funded elevation grant program. The community should request each contractor demonstrate these elements in their RFQ responses.

Clear, evaluation criteria should be outlined to show evaluation requirements, as provided in the following table:



EVALUATION CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE
Qualifications of Firm	30%
Demonstrated experience to perform building elevation services	15%
Ability (staff, equipment) to provide building elevation services	15%
Financial solubility of company	15%
Bonding ability of company	15%
Proof of Non-Debarment and registered in State (NJ Treasury and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs) and federal (SAM) of company	10%

The following is a recommended set of criteria to include in an RFQ.

- Contractor must have been in business for a minimum of 5 years or the principals must have had 5 years of ownership/management experience in a previous company that provided elevation services.
- Contractor must have demonstrated at least 5 years of experience in providing building elevation services and should include in the RFQ response a description of prior completed projects, including size, structure, location, scope of services rendered, proof of job completion, equipment requirement, and staffing/labor force.
- Contractor must include on their team an independent New Jersey certified Professional Engineer (PE).
- Contractor must attest that they understand they are responsible to repair damages caused to the home during the elevation process.
- Contractor must provide at least three references.
- Contractor must disclose any alleged or significant contractual failures, any ongoing civil or criminal litigation or investigation, and any civil or criminal litigation or investigation that has occurred in the past 5 years in which contractor has been judged guilty or liable.
- Contractor must inform if any potential subcontractor is or has ever been listed on the federal debarment list or suspended from work.
- Contractor must show the company's financial stability, as indicated by providing the following:
  - Letter from contractor's bank showing an unused Line of Credit (LOC) or cash on hand of a minimum of \$500,000.
  - Audited financial statements or federal tax forms filed to IRS for past 2 fiscal years, including at a minimum, letter of opinion, balance sheet, schedules and related auditor's notes.
- Contractor must provide a list of all owed/rented equipment and provide the following documentation related to equipment:
  - What use is intended for each piece of equipment during this elevation project.
  - Listed sizes to ensure equipment is sized properly to fit loading and access conditions.
  - Examples to demonstrate equipment capability include:
    - Does the contractor rent or own equipment?
    - Provide a list of the equipment (year/use/mileage).
- Contractor must demonstrate, as part of the debarment check, the following documentation:
  - Active Registration with New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, as required by law to be a Home Elevation Contractor (HEC) in New Jersey. The law requires, that to be registered with the Division:



- HEC has a named person in an ownership, employee, or consultant position who has a minimum of 5 years' experience in home elevation; and
- HEC maintain a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence of cargo, or other insurance that specially covers damages or losses to homeowner, lessee, tenant or other party resulting from home elevation activities. (including the \$500,000 of coverage required for all home improvement contractors) with an aggregate limit of \$2,000,000; (2) Cargo or similar insurance protecting the homeowner's, lessor's, or tenant's personal property in the minimum amount of \$50,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$200,000; (3) Riggers, care, custody or control, or similar insurance protecting the dwelling and other structures being elevated in the minimum amount of \$500,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$2,000,000; (4) Insurance protecting the homeowner, lessor, or tenant from losses not caused through any fault of the contractor in the minimum amount of \$500,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$2,000,000; (5) Commercial auto liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence; (6) Any additional insurance required by law, including, but not limited to, workers compensation insurance.
- Proof of Non-Debarment from NJ Treasury
- Provide demonstration of contractor is following any other elevation contractor requirements per New Jersey laws or regulations.
- Active, Non-Debarment from the System of Awards Management (federal government system – SAM)
- Bonding Capability, Performance and Payment Bonds
- Contractor must provide proof of bonding capacity of at least \$500,000 and outstanding payment and performance bond or bonds in favor of the homeowner, in the minimum amount of the value of the home elevation project, to be maintained for the duration of the project.
- Contractor must include a letter from a Bonding company highlighting Respondent's Bonding capacity. Proof of bonding capacity of at least \$500,000 and outstanding payment and performance bond or bonds in favor of the homeowner, in the minimum amount of the value of the home elevation project, to be maintained for the duration of the project. The surety issuing the performance bond shall be, as of the date of the issuance of the bond, licensed to do business in the State of New Jersey and be a surety or insurance company on the U.S. Department of the Treasury Financial Management Service list of approved bonding companies.
- Contractor must provide proof of current workman's compensation insurance.
- Contractor must provide an acknowledgement that they will be required to provide a post-elevation home warranty. At a minimum this warranty will be a 10/2/1 warranty from third-party warranty provider. This warranty will be 10 years on the structural foundation system, 2 years on the mechanical reconnections, and 1 year on workmanship. Said Warranty shall include the language, "Should the Contractor default on their warranty obligation under the Workmanship/Materials warranty during year one and/or the mechanical reconnections in the Delivery Portion of Systems warranty during years one and two, the Insurer becomes the Warrantor. The Warrantor for Major Structural Defects changes depending on the timeframe in which the Defect occurs and if the Contractor is unable to perform warranty obligations. The



Warrantor is the Contractor in years one and two and then the Warrantor becomes the Insurer for the remaining warranty period (years three through ten).

- Contractor must provide proof they carry:
  - Commercial general liability policy of \$1,000,000 per occurrence of cargo, or other insurance that specifically covers damages or losses to homeowner, lessee, tenant or other party resulting from home elevation activities. (including the \$500,000 of coverage required for all home improvement contractors) with an aggregate limit of \$2,000,000.
  - Cargo or similar insurance protecting the homeowner's, lessor's, or tenant's personal property in the minimum amount of \$50,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$200,000.
  - Riggers, care, custody or control, or similar insurance protecting the dwelling and other structures being elevated in the minimum amount of \$500,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$2,000,000.
  - Insurance protecting the homeowner, lessor, or tenant from losses not caused through any fault of the contractor in the minimum amount of \$500,000 per occurrence, with a minimum aggregate amount of \$2,000,000.
  - Commercial auto liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage to include owned, hired and non-owned vehicles.
  - Any additional insurance required by law, including, but not limited to, workers' compensation insurance and a professional liability policy that covers acts, errors or omissions in the amount of \$1,000,000 per claim with an annual aggregate of at least \$2,000,000 inclusive of all legal defense costs. If the above insurance is written on a Claims Made form, such insurance shall be endorsed to provide an extended reporting period of not less than 2 years following the expiration or termination of this contract.

### *Option 2: Homeowner Chooses Elevation Contractor*

In Option 2, the community opts for the homeowner to make the elevation contractor selection. In this option, there is no community down selection of qualified elevation contractors. However, the homeowner must select a NJDCA-registered contractor. In this case, before any work begins, the homeowner must provide the community, who in turns provides to NJOEM, the selected elevation contractor's proposal and elevation contract. If a community uses this option, the homeowner must follow a Cost Template, as provided in **Appendix R** (Cost Template). The community and NJOEM might choose to provide a recommended contract template, but, at a minimum, will provide:

- Contract recommendations for the contract between homeowner and elevation contractor (that includes performance bond, payment bonds, insurance requirements and warranty requirements).
- An Acknowledgement of All Risks that must be signed by the homeowner that states that the homeowner understands and acknowledges that the homeowner assumes all risk (for any incomplete work/issues) and all responsibility for any work/payments made outside of the eligible items. If any of this work causes the project to go beyond the grant's period of performance, the homeowner will not be reimbursed.



## Step 3: Role of Community in the Contracting Process with Contractors

After the community decides to move forward with the RFQ process for down selecting elevation contractors, the agreements, documents, and processes needed to be obtained and established include the following:

- An agreement between the homeowner and community for homeowner to take on the terms and conditions of the elevation grant.
- If the community has decided to establish funds to help the homeowner be reimbursed at stages of the elevation, an agreement between the homeowner and community detailing the terms, conditions, and the payment process.
- Documentation for how the contractors are going to provide homeowners with bids after the bid templates are established by the community and homeowner.
- Documents needed at the time of signed agreement include:
  - Model Acknowledgement of Conditions
  - HOA Acknowledgement, if necessary
  - Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgement
  - Primary Residence Acknowledgement
  - Completed W9
  - Copy of current flood declaration page

### *Meeting with Selected Contractors*

With either contracting process a community chooses (community down-selects contractors or homeowner selects contractors), the community, homeowner, and contractor need to hold a kick-off meeting. The project management team should discuss the bid process, the selection process, the elevation process, the funding /reimbursement process, and the closeout process. The team should provide the reimbursement template (**Appendix R**, Cost Template), so all parties fully understand how the proposals, contracts, and invoices must use this template with only eligible line item categories. NJOEM will only accept this template with defined cost categories. It must be made very clear that all ineligible work must be invoiced and paid separately.

At this meeting, the community should make the following clear to homeowners and contractors the list of grant eligible and ineligible cost elements found in **Appendix S** (Eligible Elevation Costs) and **Appendix T** (Ineligible Elevation Costs). Homeowners should be reminded that this is not a program to improve or enhance the aesthetics of elevated structure, rather to raise the living area at or above BFE. All non-grant work should be kept to a minimum and will be reviewed and approved by the community prior to any agreements between the homeowner and the contractor. Also, homeowners should turn in agreements between the community and homeowner for the program, as provided in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Information). The agreement needs to include a cost template, as provided in **Appendix R** (Cost Template).

At this meeting, the contractors should be given an opportunity to provide a brief summary of their company's experience and qualifications.



It should be explained to homeowners and contractors that the local community's Project Management (PM) team will hold a pre-bid meeting at each home. The contractors will not be present at this pre-bid meeting, and contractors will not be allowed to meet directly with homeowners until after the pre-bid meeting is held. The PM team will need to develop high-level home specifications to provide to contractors, and the PM team receives, reviews, and approves contractor bids for release to homeowners.

At this pre-bid meeting the PM team will:

- Document the following:
  - Current home elevation (obtain EC from homeowner).
  - Using the engineer's report, Foundation Type (Slab on Grade, Slab separation, combo)
  - Vertical footprint (measured and drawn).
  - Ancillary structures such as garages, patios, carports with an indication as to whether they will be elevated or left at their current elevation.
  - Any unique lift requirements that might affect bids.
  - Potential ADA requirements.
- Discuss with homeowners any potential desired extras (non-grant eligible items), stressing that few will be allowed – any and all extras that can wait, must wait.
- Discuss with homeowners that complications and delays to the bidding and implementation process increase the cost (to the grant) for performance and payment bonds.
- Review extras currently being considered for approval (at 100-percent owner expense), including the following additions. Refer to owner's disclosure (**Appendix U**, Homeowner Implementation Information) during the application process.
  - Increasing the size of ingress and egress points (landings, decks).
  - Where there is an approved ADA lift on a two-story home, adding a third stop to reach the elevated second floor.
  - Addressing unique homeowner association requirements that cannot wait until after the grant eligible portion is complete on a case by case basis. Homeowners should work with homeowner associations early in the process to determine any requirements.
- During this meeting, the PM team will walk the interior and exterior of each home, giving homeowners a chance to highlight any items of concern and fill out an environmental risk assessment (e.g., homes built before 1978 may have lead or asbestos).
- After this meeting, the PM team will develop a bid specification sheet that includes the following:
  - Elevation height
  - Foundation type (slab on grade, slab separation, combo)
  - Vertical footprint
  - Whether or not ancillary structures (garages, patios, carports) will be lifted
  - Any other unique lift requirements that must be bid
  - Whether or not ADA access should be quoted
  - Photos of concerned areas (if any)
  - Agreed upon extras
  - Homeowner association requirements



- ALL bids will go to the PM team for thorough review prior to presentation to homeowner and must include the cost template, as provided in **Appendix R** (Cost Template).
- The PM team will:
  - Address any inconsistencies.
  - Ensure the cost categories have follow the template.
  - Normalize pricing of extras.
  - Compare to grant budget. If pricing cannot not be reconciled back to budget (lift height, foundation type, one or two story, vertical footprint) bid will either need to be adjusted or deemed invalid.
  - All discussion of compliance and bids will occur between PM team and contractors.
- The PM team will get finalized bids for ALL homes prior to releasing any bids to homeowners.

If a contractor provides a bid directly to homeowner, that bid will be disqualified, and the contractor may be removed from the program. All approved bids will be sent to homeowners by the PM team.

### *Selection of an Elevation Contractor By Homeowner*

Once the homeowners receive the bids, contractors will be given a chance to meet with homeowners to discuss the specifics of their bid and their specific approach to the home's elevation. The homeowners will be given a set time to meet with contractors and make their selections. The homeowner will inform the PM team, in writing, of their selection.

### *Contract Vehicles - Homeowner and Local Community*

While the homeowner is working on selecting the elevation contractor, the community will require the homeowner to submit the following:

- Elevation project agreement between the community and the homeowner. This agreement is used to extend the terms of the grant from the community to the homeowner, as provided in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Information).
- Acknowledgment of conditions form. This is the form whereby the homeowner acknowledges the post-elevation deed restriction requirement, as provided in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Information).
- Homeowner Association Acknowledgement, if applicable, as provided in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Information). This form informs the homeowners, the grant is not required to elevate to meet homeowner association requirements, as that is the homeowner's responsibility
- Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgement. This is the form that homeowners acknowledge they cannot ask for nor accept any work for free from the chosen elevation contractor, as provided in **Appendix V** (Homeowner Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgement). Once chosen, elevation contractors must sign a similar form.
- Primary Residence Acknowledgment. On this form, the homeowner certifies the property is his/her primary residence, thus allowing access to temporary living.
- Completed W9.
- Copy of the current flood declaration page (if FMA funded).



## *Homeowner and Contractor*

Prior to elevation beginning, the homeowner and the contractor must enter into a contract. A fully executed contract must be provided to the PM team for review and concurrence.

An example of a contract between the homeowner and contractor can be found in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Information). Each contractor has his/her own contract, but there are standard clauses that are required to be included in all homeowner/contractor contracts to ensure the inclusion of clauses, such as:

- Bond requirements
- Insurance requirement
- Warranty requirements

Typical contracts must include, at a minimum:

- The cost template with the breakdown of costs
- Acknowledgement of how payment to contractor will occur
- Work schedule
- Certification that contractor has provided a payment bond and insurance information to the jurisdiction
- Estimated days of homeowner displacement

Regardless of the path chosen there are some general items both paths must consider.

## *American Disabilities Act Requirement and Grant Eligibility*

The grant allows for construction of ADA-compliant access facilities or ramps when an owner or a member of the owner's family has a permanent disability using a physician's written certification. An ADA-compliant access to ingress/egress is allowable for funding unless specified otherwise in applicable State or local codes (for more information on ADA, see <http://www.ada.gov>). If ramps are not technically feasible, a mechanical chair lift may be installed. FEMA has a form that should be used by the jurisdiction and the homeowner who is seeking ADA access facilities under a FEMA-funded mitigation grant program for the elevation or mitigation/reconstruction of a home. The signature of the homeowner with the disability (or authorized caretaker) is required below prior to submitting this request to the jurisdiction and the State and review and processing.

The homeowner must provide a physician's written certification that meets the following requirement per FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance dated February 27, 2015, as detailed in **Appendix W** (ADA Concurrence Letter with State and Local Community).

In accordance with FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance addendum, dated February 27, 2015, in a case where an owner or member of the owner's family has a permanent physical disability, a physician's written certification is required before ADA access facilities can be allowed as an eligible cost. An ADA-compliant access to ingress/egress is allowable for funding unless specified otherwise in applicable state or local codes (for more information on ADA, see <http://www.ada.gov>). If ramps are not technically feasible, a mechanical chair lift may be installed.

The physician's written certification should be on the physician's letterhead and should contain, at least the following information:



- Name of person requiring access facilities and relation to the homeowner.
- The type of ADA access facilities required for a medical disability.
- ADA form, as provided in **Appendix W** (ADA Concurrence Letter with State and Local Community).

The homeowner must provide a cost breakdown for the ADA access facilities that meets the minimum industry standards, as described in the physician's written certification and the applicable community's codes. Any costs above the minimum requirements are the responsibility of the homeowner and are not subject to reimbursement by the grant program.

After the required physician certification and other documents are received, the community should work with the State to review the request and obtain written concurrence from the State before permission is given to the homeowner and contractor to proceed.

### *Pre-Elevation Home Inspection*

One area that tends to cause issues during implementation and the closeout of a home elevation is a dispute between homeowner and contractor as to condition and working order of the homes mechanical systems and finishes. To reduce these disputes, it is strongly recommended each contractor include in his/her bids a full pre-elevation home inspection report with pictures. This inspection will document the condition and working order of items such as HVAC, hot water heaters, sprinkler systems, pools and pool equipment, driveways, and interior flooring (such as ceramic tile). This inspection documentation should be signed by both the homeowner and contractor.

### *Homeowner Relocation (Primary Residence Only) During Elevation*

Before the elevation begins, the contractor must provide a schedule with an estimate of the time a homeowner must be vacated from the property. This will be used to set a budget for temporary living. It is recommended the jurisdiction set this budget using the current federal government lodging per diem schedule in effect for the days the homeowner is displaced. Temporary living costs are typically borne by the homeowner and then reimbursed at the approved federal share for said home. Temporary living covers lodging only, not food, utilities, or transportation. The homeowner should be informed that the following documents will be required for reimbursement:

- Rental Agreement
- Invoice for each month's payment or receipt of payment certified by landlord
- Cancelled check for paid rent by month

### *Clear Articulation of Eligible and Ineligible Cost*

Another area that tends to be one of the biggest implementation challenges is eligible and ineligible costs, so it is critical to make this information known, understood, written, signed, and concurred in advance of the elevation. To do that, the State recommends the homeowner and the contractor sign a detailed document that expressly states the Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgment, as provided in **Appendix X** (Contractor Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgement) or **Appendix V** (Homeowner Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgment), and that includes the list of ineligible documents and notice if there is a question about eligibility. This document must be reviewed by the community and state before assuming costs are eligible.



## *Landscaping*

FEMA does not reimburse for any ornamental landscaping. The homeowner should remove anything it does not want damaged, including lighting, pavers, bushes, plants, rock walls, gardens, and ponds. It should be stipulated in the contract that if items are damaged during the elevation, repair, or replacement would be incurred by the contractor. If, something that cannot be removed and in order to elevate is damaged (e.g., concrete pad or walkway that is close to the house), a determination can be made if this work can be covered. The contractor will need to prepare a separate change order, following a change order approval process established in the beginning of the program with the State. The change order must include the rationale and pictures and then must be reviewed and concurred with the State before the additional work can be completed.

## *Utility Notification, Disconnection, and Reconnection*

Due to issues with elevations and electric lines, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA) requires design plans to have an approval letter from the electric utility company supporting that proposed elevation will not affect safety clearances. To initiate service notification prior to issuance of building permits, homeowners must contact their electrical provider.

**Appendix AC** provides information regarding this requirement. Contact information for the primary electric suppliers in New Jersey are as follows:

- Atlantic City Electric - <https://www.atlanticcityelectric.com/MyAccount/MyService/Pages/MyService.aspx>
- JCP&L - (800) 662-3115 or [https://www.firstenergycorp.com/service\\_requests/request-electrical-work.html](https://www.firstenergycorp.com/service_requests/request-electrical-work.html)
- Orange and Rockland Electric - <https://www.oru.com/en/services-and-outages/service-management-page>
- PSE&G – 1-800-436-7734 or <https://nj.pseq.com/>

Utilities must be disconnected before the elevation work can begin. The homeowner should work closely with the contractor on when the utilities need to be tuned off and back on. Contractors should use portable generators for their electrical needs during elevation so they are not using homeowner electricity.

## *Existing Decks, Porches, Stairs*

If existing decks, porches and stairs are properly attached to the home and can be elevated with the home, the grant can cover these as eligible costs. However, the grant will only pay for contractor grade materials (e.g., pressure-treated wood). If these elements cannot be lifted, replacement of these items (other than to allow for ingress and egress to the elevated structure) is not grant eligible. The grant will not pay to replace ground level decks, porches, or patios that must be abandoned to elevate the home.

## *Sidewalks, Driveways, Siding*

If driveways and/or sidewalks are damaged to access the home for elevation, the cost of repair to these damaged areas is a grant reimbursable cost. However, the grant is not responsible for replacing an entire driveway or sidewalk if only a portion was damaged. Documenting pre-elevation conditions of sidewalks, driveways, (porches, and patios) is one of the many reasons for the completion of a pre-elevation home inspection. Similarly, if part of the siding had to be



removed due to the elevation and cannot be salvaged or replaced, the cost for replacing this portion of siding is a grant reimbursable cost. However, the grant will not cover the cost to replace all siding caused by inability to match existing siding.

## Step 4: Document Collection Throughout Elevation Process

Before, during, and at the conclusion of an elevation project, documentation must be provided to the community and to the State.

### *Before*

Refer to Steps 1 and 2 above for the required information needed from the community, homeowners, and contractors before any project can begin.

### *During*

The community will need to provide quarterly status reports to NJOEM, providing information on the project, including percentage complete and other information, as documented in **Appendix Y** (Quarterly Report Example).

- **Scope of Work Changes.** If a homeowner chooses to complete additional work not identified during the grant application process, the homeowner must notify the community and the community must prepare a scope of work change request for NJOEM, no later than 90 days before the period of performance end date that includes the following information:
  - Reason for the delay in implementing the project.
  - Percentage of work completed.
  - Description of all work completed.
  - Revised timeline for the project.
  - Provide a description of any specific performance measures necessary to complete the project.
  - Current period of performance (POP) dates and Requested POP date.
  - Outline of remaining funds available to support scope of work change and an explanation of how funds will be used.
  - Total project cost, including federal share approved and non-federal share.
  - Revised budget information (whether or not the budget has changed).
  - Copies of any contracts entered into between the sub-grantee and its vendors.
- **Change Order.** If work needs to be completed in addition to the work outlined in the homeowner/contractor contract, a separate change order needs to be prepared by the contractor and the community will follow the change order approval process established in the beginning of the program. The change order must include the rationale and pictures and then must be reviewed and concurred with the State before the additional work can be completed.
- **Period of Performance Extension.** If a community feels they need to extend their initial period of performance end date, a project extension request must be submitted to NJOEM at least 90 days before the period of performance ends. The request must include the following:

### **NO ADDITIONS! NO FOOTPRINT INCREASE!**

The grant does not authorize homeowners to increase the footprint of their structure or build an addition. If a project requires footprint expansion, the municipality must submit a change order request to NJOEM and FEMA for approval from both agencies.



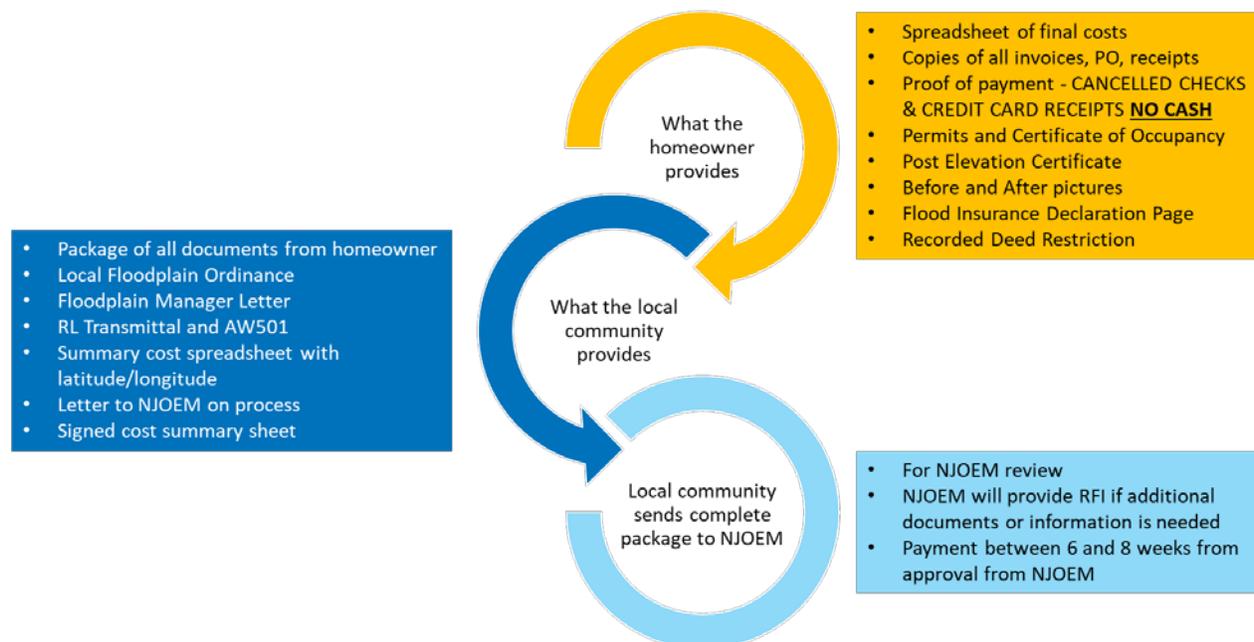
- Reason for the delay in implementing the project.
- Percentage of work completed.
- Description of all work completed.
- Revised timeline for the project.
- A description of any specific performance measures necessary to complete the project.
- Current POP dates and requested POP date.
- Outline of remaining funds available to support scope of work change and an explanation of how funds will be used.
- Total project cost, including federal share approved and non-federal share.
- Revised Budget information (whether or not the budget has changed).
- Copies of any contracts entered into between the sub-grantee and its vendors.

### After

Refer to Step 5, Reimbursement Process, for documentation needed after the elevation has been completed.

## Step 5: Reimbursement Process

The State has prepared a reimbursement package for community officials, as presented in **Appendix P** (Community Elevation Package). Before any elevation starts, the local community meets with the owners and the contractor and provides the homeowner with a reimbursement package, as presented in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Package). The contractor must bill according to the items in the budget provided to the homeowner. The process for reimbursement is illustrated below:



### Reimbursement

Once a home has completed the elevation and all of the required documents have been completed, the community may request reimbursement on a completed property basis (refer to



Implementation Process starting on page 32). The request should include supporting documentation establishing that all program requirements have been met, as documented in **Appendix U** (Homeowner Implementation Package).

### *Cost Template*

NJOEM requires that when the community submits their application, it will include the specific Cost Template provided in **Appendix R** (Cost Template), with the budget estimate explaining that it will require the homeowner and contractor to use this template for the proposals, contracts, and invoices. The community must make very clear that NJOEM will only accept these defined cost categories, and all work outside of this template is ineligible for grant work and must be invoiced and paid separately.

### *Notice to Proceed*

Prior to Notice to Proceed being given for a home elevation, the Project Management (PM) team must receive from the contractor/homeowner the following information:

- Fully executed contract between homeowner and contractor (must include cost template, as presented in **Appendix R**, Cost Template).
- Performance Bonds and Payment Bonds.
- Proof of Insurance (with homeowner and community listed as additionally insured as appropriate).
- Permit for the elevation.
- Separate contract for any approved homeowner extras outside of the elevation of the home.
- Request from homeowner for Notice to Proceed that acknowledges budget, conditions, and elevation contractor insurances and NJDCA registration.

Once these documents have been reviewed and approved, the PM team should provide to the homeowner and contractor a formal notice to proceed letter with the approved budget amount, a requirement the contractor to use the cost template in the invoice, an example of the invoice, and a request for a schedule. If the homeowners are paying for the grant, the PM team should document a requirement that only cancelled checks or credit card receipts are allowed and that no cash payments will be accepted as a form of payment.

An example of an invoice is provided below.



## Your Company Name

Street Address  
 Address 2  
 City, ST ZIP Code

Phone:  
 Fax:  
 E-mail: someone@example.com

### Statement

Invoice/Statement #:  
 Date:  
 Customer ID:

Bill To: Name  
 Company Name  
 Street Address  
 Address 2  
 City, ST ZIP Code

Date	Description	Amount	Payment	Balance
	Engineering/Design			\$ -
	Site Preparation			\$ -
	Surveying			\$ -
	Lifting, Elevation of Structure			\$ -
	Utility Disconnection			\$ -
	Concrete Block, Pilings, Beams Foundation			\$ -
	Construction of Floor System			\$ -
	Ingress-Egress			\$ -
	Smart Vents			\$ -
	Filling Basement, clean fill			\$ -
	Demolition			\$ -
	Debris Disposal			\$ -
	Lawn Repair			\$ -
				\$ -
			<b>Total</b>	\$ -

Reminder: Please include the statement number on your check.

Terms: Balance due in # days.

REMITTANCE
Customer Name:
Customer ID:
Statement #:
Date:
Amount Due:
Amount Enclosed:

### Required Documentation

To request reimbursement, the State must have the documents to demonstrate work was completed. The checklist below was prepared by NJOEM to assist in providing the requirements for the reimbursement process.





- The source of the matching funds being paid (non-federal share – e.g., local funds, in-kind).
  - Details of any prior reimbursements.
  - Details of any irregularities or complications associated with the request.
2. **Signed Cost Summary Sheet.** Reference the grant, project number, amount approved by FEMA, and final amount being requested.
  3. **Concise Spreadsheet.** List all of the items being requested for reimbursement. Provide invoice #, vendor name, description of invoice, amount of Invoice, amount actually paid. Reference the check number or payment transaction number.
  4. Copies of **ALL Invoices, Contracts, and POs** relevant to the reimbursement request. List in the same order as listed on the concise spreadsheet.
  5. **Proof of Payment.** (e.g., cancelled checks, bank statements)
  6. **Documentation of the Procurement Process.** (e.g., signed resolutions, bids, contracts)
  7. Copies of **ALL Applicable Federal, State, and Local Permits** (e.g., General Construction, Electrical, Plumbing, NJDEP Land Use, Floodplain Development) and any **Inspection Reports.**
  8. Photographs of the Property Site(s) post mitigation.
  9. **Latitude and Longitude Coordinates** (in decimal form) of the project. Coordinates can be listed in the cover letter.
  10. A signed **Statement of Voluntary Participation** from the owner of each property identified in the SOW.
  11. Signed Model Acknowledgement of Conditions
  12. **Declaration and Release Form** identifying citizenship or qualified alien status.
  13. **Affidavit** signed statement from the homeowner stating they have (or have not) received structural repair assistance.
  14. Engineer/Floodplain/Code Official Verification Letter that Property Meets NFIP/Floodplain Regulations.
  15. Certificate of Occupancy/Approval.
  16. Post-Mitigation Elevation Certificate.
  17. A copy of the Recorded Deed and Attached Deed Amendment for the property.
  18. Verification of Flood Insurance for each property.
  19. **NFIP Repetitive Loss Update Worksheet** documenting the completion of mitigation on the repetitive loss property, as provided in **Appendix Z** (AW501 and RL Transmittal Example).
  20. Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act Information Form (FFATA)

To help the State with the request, the jurisdiction should provide a spreadsheet of costs, as shown in the example below. The cost template provided in **Appendix R** (Cost Template) must be used in the proposal, contract, invoice, and reimbursement.



Address	Last	First	Elevation Contractor	Contract Amount	Homeowner Responsible not part of grant	Actual Elevation Amount	Surveying services	Rent reimb.	Legal fees Deed Rcd	Permits	Site Restore	Grant Mgt	A/C Disconnect / Re-connect	Total	FEMA 75%	Local 25%
Elevation address	Homeowner		Contractor	\$ 100,000.00										\$ 100,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
LATITUDE																
LONGITUDE																
GRANT POP DATE																
	<b>Contract</b>		<b>Invoice 1/ Draw 1</b>		<b>Invoice 1/ Draw 1</b>		<b>Invoice 1/ Draw 1</b>								<b>TOTAL</b>	
Site Pre-lift and demolition																
Permits put under site demo line																
Elevation																
Helical																
Plumbing																
Electric																
Foundation																
Fill Dirt/Grade																
Carpentry																
Exterior finishes																
Portable sanitation																
Ineligible costs																
Eligible costs in 111755/11821																
Change order for elev platform and other requirements of A/C																
TOTAL																
Check number																
Eligible Expenses: Permits, Engineering, Survey, legal support																
<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Invoice Date</b>	<b>Invoice Amount</b>	<b>Invoice No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Check No.</b>	<b>Paid</b>	<b>FEMA</b>	<b>Local</b>								
X						\$ 150.00	\$ 112.50	\$ 37.50								
Y						\$ 150.00	\$ 112.50	\$ 37.50								
Z						\$ 150.00	\$ 112.50	\$ 37.50								
<b>Total</b>						<b>\$ 450.00</b>	<b>\$ 337.50</b>	<b>\$ 112.50</b>								
<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Rental</b>	<b>Address of Elevated Structure</b>	<b>Rental Address</b>	<b>Rental Agreement</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>FEMA</b>	<b>Local</b>									
	Jun-18				\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 250.00									
	Jul-18				\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 250.00									
	Aug-18				\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 250.00									
	Sep-18				\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 250.00									
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,000.00</b>									
AMOUNT TO BE REQUESTED:	\$	104,450.00														
FEMA (75%)	\$	78,337.50														
LOCAL (25%)	\$	26,112.50														



## *Verification That All Permits Have Been Closed Out, and a Floodplain Administrator Letter*

The contractor or the homeowner must provide to the jurisdiction the final Certificate of Occupancy, as well as any other closed out permits, such as electrical or plumbing. In addition, the jurisdiction's Floodplain Administrator also must inspect and submit a letter to the jurisdiction that the project has been successfully completed to local, state and federal standards of the floodplain regulations, as provided in **Appendix AA** (Floodplain Administrator Letter).

## *Deed Records*

Once the home is elevated, the owner is required to legally record with the county or appropriate jurisdiction's land records a notice that includes the name of the current homeowner (including book/page reference to record of current title, if readily available), a legal description of the property, and the following notice of flood insurance requirements:

*"This property has received federal hazard mitigation assistance. Federal law requires that flood insurance coverage on this property must be maintained during the life of the property regardless of transfer of ownership of such property. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §5154a, failure to maintain flood insurance on this property may prohibit the owner from receiving federal disaster assistance with respect to this property in the event of a flood disaster. The Homeowner also is required to maintain this property in accordance with the flood plain management criteria of Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.3 and CITY/County Ordinance." FEMA Model Deed Restriction Exhibit A*

## *Local Community to Submit AW501s if RL or SRL Property*

Once a home is elevated, it is considered mitigated, and FEMA's repetitive loss repository must be notified. Not only is notification a requirement, it also helps the local community in the CRS Score. In addition to including the documents in the reimbursement request, the local community must submit two forms, a filled out and signed RL Transmittal Sheet by the community's floodplain official and an AW501 form on the specific elevated property, examples of which are provided in **Appendix Z** (AW501 and RL Transmittal Example). The filing can be sent electronically and should include proof of the mitigation (in this case), a post-elevation certificate, and pictures.

## *Grant Management*

Grant Management are expenses incurred by the community in the management and administration of the awarded grant. If a community decides to include this budget line item in the application, it, can either be as a part of the budget for each property in the application or a standalone budget line item. If awarded and included, NJOEM will only allow one reimbursement per property and grant management can be requested as part of the per parcel reimbursement request. If a standalone line item, (if contracted or using community employee time), it can all be requested at the end of a program after all of the elevations are completed.. If contracted, the community should provide the procurement vehicle, signed contract, demonstration of SAMs, invoices, and payments.



If the community requests reimbursement for employee time working on the grant, the form below should be completed and should include a demonstration of payment (payroll sheets) and a certification from the payroll or finance department of the employee's hourly rate per year if employees receives an annual raise or if raise occurs within same year, a certification from the payroll or finance department of the within year change in hourly rate. Communities can request the Excel spreadsheet shown below from NJOEM.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY EMPLOYEE PAYROLL DATA																	
APPLICANT		PW REF NO.	CATEGORY	FIPS NO.			DISASTER #										
							FEMA										
EMPLOYEE NAME LAST NAME, FIRST NAME	TITLE OR JOB DESCRIPTION	STATUS * SEE BELOW	HOURLY RATE	BENEFITS											FRINGE BENEFITS REGOT		
			REG \$	VAC	SICK	HOL	RET	SS	MEDC	UNEMP	HEALTH	LIFE	WC	OTHER			
			DAYS / YEAR	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	\$ / MONTH	%	%				
Example: Doe, John	Example: Policeman	FT	\$18.00	10	5	12			6.20%	1.45%		\$300.00	\$5.00			7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%
																7.65%	7.65%

## Step 6: Grant Closeout Process

When all properties in the application have been elevated and all reimbursement requests have been completed, the State requires a closeout letter. The closeout letter must include verification of the following:

- The approved SOW was fully implemented.
- All obligated funds were liquidated in a manner consistent with the approved SOW.
- All EHF compliance grant conditions were implemented and documented as required.
- The project was implemented in a manner consistent with the federal award or subaward agreement.
- The community submitted the required quarterly financial and performance reports verifying that all the work was completed following local, state and federal requirements, and the spreadsheet that shows the final costs, the latitude and longitude, and the AW501 demonstration.
- Completion Certificate signed by the jurisdiction.
- Final Cost Summary by property spreadsheet with geospatial coordinates.

## Additional Grant Information

The following provides details on any additional information that might need to be developed throughout the grant program.



### *Subgrantee Quarterly Reporting to the State*

An example of a quarterly report can be found in **Appendix Y** (Quarterly Report Example). FEMA and the State require that the community submits reports quarterly providing the status of the project; if the project is meeting its schedule, scope, and budget; and any areas of concerns that need to be brought to the State's attention. This report is completed through the NJOEM mitigation website NJOEMgrants.org and is the responsibility of the PM team. Immediately upon accepting an award, the community should verify they can access the system, as discussed in Part I, How to Apply above, or request assistance from the State for such access.

### *Changes During Grant Implementation*

During project implementation, the scope, budget, and schedule are likely to change. If this is the case for a community's grant, the community will need to prepare a scope modification request, a budget increase request, or a time extension request to determine whether additional funds, time, or change in scope will be allowed by FEMA. Each request made has certain information required for review, as detailed below:

- **Appendix AB** (Sample SOW Modification letter) outlines the information needed in a scope modification.
- The budget modification should include the new budget, the reason for the change, and a revised BCA.
- Time extension should explain the rationale for the extension and an updated schedule.

The SOW Modification letter, budget modification, or time extension request should be placed on community letterhead, signed by a community official, and submitted to NJOEM, who will review it with FEMA.

### *Requesting an Alternate Home be Added to an Approved Application*

In the application, a community may have included alternate properties in the event a homeowner in the primary awarded list could not move forward with an elevation. The list of alternates should be prioritized based on a transparent and methodical process (e.g., highest BCA ratio, as an example). In the event a primary property declines to advance with the project, the first alternate property can request to be included in the award. In a letter to the NJOEM on community letterhead, the community should provide the following information:

- Identify the property withdrawing from program with a signed withdrawal form and the alternate property identified to replace the withdrawing property.
- Cost for each property that is removed or added with notation if there is a change in (increase or decrease).
- A spreadsheet that outlines these changes.

NJOEM will review the letter for completeness and then submit a request to FEMA for approval. Once a determination is made, NJOEM will formally notify the community of the outcome.

## SUMMARY

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This guidebook outlines procedures to help communities apply for and implement an elevation project grant. While the guidebook has attempted to answer many of the questions and issues



that arise in the elevation grant process, there will always be unique circumstances that will require specialized attention. Local communities should work closely with NJOEM to standardize the processes, but for those unique situations, a process for expeditious review of these issues should be memorialized.



# SECTION 4. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

The following provides some frequently asked questions communities might ask when thinking about home elevation.

Our community just submitted an application. How long before we learn if we have been awarded the grant and how will we hear?

Grant awards can take approximately 9-24 months to be awarded from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Once awarded, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) will send correspondence to the community informing them of the award decision and then will establish a State and local agreement that must be in place before work is to commence.

Our community has many limited resources but several homeowners who would like for the community to apply. What kind of technical resources are available from the State and FEMA to assist with the application?

NJOEM and FEMA have training courses. Please check their websites for more information. NJOEM personnel conduct workshops and participate in public meetings with the goal of successfully completing the grant application process. Additional workshops are held around the State with presentations given to explain the various programs and their benefits to potential participants. In addition, FEMA has help desks for benefit/cost tool support and FEMA GO support, and holds teleconferences after an application cycle is announced to provide support and answer questions for prospective applicants. Before considering an application, it is very important to confirm that your community has a current hazard mitigation plan (HMP).

What if one house does not meet a benefit cost ratio one or greater, must it be removed from the application?

A Benefit Cost Analysis is conducted for the entire project and an aggregate Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) is calculated. Therefore, individual homes that have a BCR of less than 1 may be included within a project application with an aggregate BCR greater than 1 (the combined BCR of all homes on an application).



Do all costs (e.g., temporary living for displaced homeowners) have to be included in a budget?

Yes. Information is provided in the guidebook for communities. Section 3 (For Communities) provides a list of the most common budget line items for home elevations.

After a cost estimate is provided for a house in an application, during implementation, if the contractor's actual elevation cost is more than the estimate, can we request more funds after award, or must the homeowner comply with the budget estimate, and be responsible for costs over those included in the project budget?

The homeowner's federal amount is based on the estimate provided in the grant application. If the actual cost to elevate the home is above the federal amount requested in the grant application, the homeowner is responsible for the difference between the federal amount and the actual cost. No additional funds will be made available.

The community would like to competitively hire a consultant to manage the grant, if awarded. What should be included in the application regarding grant management?

Grant Management are expenses incurred by the community in the management and administration of the awarded grant. If a community decides to include this budget line item in the application, it, can either be as a part of the budget for each property in the application or a standalone budget line item. If awarded and included, NJOEM will only allow one reimbursement per property and grant management can be requested as part of the per parcel reimbursement request. If a standalone line item, (if contracted or using community employee time), it can all be requested at the end of a program after all of the elevations are completed. If contracted, the community should provide the procurement vehicle, signed contract, demonstration of SAMs, invoices, and payments.

If the community requests reimbursement for employee time working on the grant, the community must complete the NJOEM form (found on page 55 of this guidebook) and include a demonstration of payment (payroll sheets) as well as a certification from the payroll or finance department of the employees' hourly rate per year. Communities can request FEMA's Employee Payroll Data Excel spreadsheet from NJOEM.



A homeowner had FEMA-backed flood insurance during the application but then switched to private flood insurance before award, can the homeowner still be included in award?

If a homeowner switches to private flood insurance before grant award, the homeowner will no longer be eligible to be included in the grant program.

If one homeowner decides not to participate, can I include another home of an interested homeowner?

All homes must be vetted through the application process. Therefore, it is recommended to include an alternate list of properties in the grant application. Alternate properties are not fully vetted during the application review process like the primary homes. However, in the event a home on the primary application decides not to move forward after the grant is awarded, an alternate can be considered if they were part of the original application. The review and approval process of approval to include one of the pre-approved alternates can be requested by the community which will require approval by NJOEM and FEMA. However, If a home is not on an approved primary or alternate list, it cannot be included in the awarded program.

The community would like to have elevation certificates and engineering reports prepared on each home to include in the application to ensure the feasibility and height requirements of elevation of the homes in the program. Does the State have any financial or technical means to assist, or is this the homeowner's responsibility to provide?

The State does not have any financial or technical means to fund elevation certificates or engineering reports to determine the best method and feasibility of elevating a specific structure. The community may require the homeowner to provide the elevation certificates and engineering reports to support the application. Other acceptable methods to determine estimated elevations and methods to support the application are provided in Section 2 of the "Is Elevation Right For You? An Elevation Guidebook for Local Communities".

What are eligible items for reimbursement?

Only expenses necessary for elevation of the home are eligible. "Is Elevation Right For You? An Elevation Guidebook for Homeowners" provides FEMA and NJOEM guidance for a list of eligible and ineligible structure elevation costs. A community can contact NJOEM for further clarification of any questions or concerns.



## What are ineligible items for reimbursement?

Examples of ineligible costs include, but are not limited to elevating masonry chimneys, increasing capacity of HVAC systems, repairs or improvements to utilities that are inadequate or have preexisting damage, improvements to existing inadequate floor systems, construction work begun prior to approval by FEMA, landscaping, decks/porches not impacted by the elevation. A list of eligible and ineligible structure elevation costs are included in **Appendix S** (Eligible Elevation Costs) and **Appendix T** (Ineligible Elevation Costs). If any questions or concerns arise, a community can contact NJOEM for further clarification.

## What if there are change orders to the homeowners contract with the elevation contractor?

If work needs to be completed in addition to that which is outlined in the homeowner/contractor contract, a separate change order needs to be prepared by the contractor. The community will follow the change order approval process established in the beginning of the program. The change order must include the rationale and pictures, and then must be reviewed and concurred with the State before the additional work can be completed.

## What if a home gets damaged during the elevation?

The chosen elevation contractor should carry the proper insurances to cover a home and the contents during elevation.

## What happens if the elevation is delayed?

The grant has a period of performance (POP) which is the timeframe when expenditures can begin and must be completed and paid. A community should coordinate very closely with homeowners and contractors to establish timeframes within the POP, however, there are circumstances that may cause a house elevation to be delayed. A community can request a 1-year extension from the POP. A request must be submitted approximately 6 months prior to the end of the POP or at the very latest 90 days before the end of the POP. **Appendix AB** (Sample SOW Modification Letter) provides information to help communities request an extension.

## Will the grant pay for homes to be elevated higher than the local ordinance?

If a home is to be elevated higher than the requirements as noted in the community's Floodplain Damage Prevention Ordinance, a community must determine whether the project is "necessary, reasonable and justifiable" with respect FEMA standards. For example, if the project area has historically experienced flooding greater than the 1-percent annual chance flood, it is "necessary, reasonable and justifiable" to build higher than the required BFE plus freeboard. Currently FEMA's Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) looks to build on Executive Order 11988 proposing higher vertical elevation standards to address current and future flood risks utilizing varying approaches due to uncertainties associated with sea-level rise and climate change. The general idea is to mitigate close to the 0.2-percent annual chance level to avoid future losses due to flooding conditions. However, a community should request approval and



concurrence from the State and FEMA before allowing an elevation higher than the requirements of the prevailing floodplain ordinance.

During the application, the homeowner did not indicate any additions to the footprint or additional work, yet during implementation, they now request it, what do we do?

For additional work within the footprint (e.g., water or sewer connections), a community should request approval and concurrence from the State and FEMA before given notice to proceed to a homeowner to begin elevation and the additional work. While additions and footprint increases are typically not allowable, under extraordinary circumstances, a community must submit a scope of work change at the design portion of the project to NJOEM and FEMA. The community must receive written approval from both NJOEM and FEMA in order to move forward with the project.

From application to implementation, the house ownership transferred. Is this house disqualified from the grant?

Not necessarily. The new homeowner must meet all of that particular grant's requirements (FEMA National Flood Insurance Program [NFIP]-backed flood insurance, as an example) and provide all of the necessary documents. The community must fully document the request to include the new homeowner by forwarding all backup documents to NJOEM and FEMA for concurrence or approval.



# APPENDICES

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# Appendix A

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Flood Insurance Premium Comparisons



# Appendix B

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Insurance Impacts as Premiums Move to Actuarial



# Appendix C

Insurance Premium Savings by BFE

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# Appendix D

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FHA-203



# Appendix E

New Jersey UCC Codes

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# Appendix F

FEMA Homeowner Guidance

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# Appendix G

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FEMA Fact Sheet – Second-Story Conversion





# Appendix H

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Homeowner Application Package



# Appendix I

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FEMA Blank Application for FMA/BRIC



# Appendix J

NJOEM HMGP Blank Application

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# Appendix K

FEMA GO Sign-Up Instructions

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# Appendix L

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FEMA GO Sub-application Development User Manual



# Appendix M

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## Eligibility and Completeness Checklist



# Appendix N

Scope of Work Example

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# Appendix O

EHP Forms

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# Appendix P

Community Elevation Package

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# Appendix Q

## Implementation Checklist

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# Appendix R

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Cost Template



# Appendix S

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Eligible Elevation Costs



# Appendix T

---

Ineligible Elevation Costs





# Appendix U

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Homeowner Implementation Information



# Appendix V

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Homeowner Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgment



# Appendix W

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ADA Concurrence Letter with State and Local Community



# Appendix X

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## Contractor Non-Eligible Work Acknowledgement



# Appendix Y

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Quarterly Report Example



# Appendix Z

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AW501 and RL Transmittal Example



# Appendix AA

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Floodplain Administrator Letter Example



# Appendix AB

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Sample SOW Modification Letter



# Appendix AC

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DCA Letter

