

Section 11 – Emergency Management

Overview

As provided in Sections [252.31](#) – [252.90](#), F.S., each County in Florida is tasked with establishing an Emergency Management (EM) Department and receives funding through the Emergency Management, Preparedness and Assistance Trust Fund as well as grant money from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) annually to fulfill this task. The Emergency Management (EM) Department is responsible for reducing loss of life and property and protecting the people within their jurisdiction during an emergency resulting from manmade, technological, or natural causes which could include hurricanes, wildfires, flooding, severe weather, hazardous material incidents, homeland security issues or any other event that affects a large portion of the community.

To complement County EM Departments, legally constituted municipalities are authorized to create municipal EM programs, per Section [252.38\(2\)](#), F.S. Municipalities without EM programs shall be served by their respective county agencies. However, if a municipality elects to establish an emergency management program, it must comply with all laws, rules, and requirements applicable to county emergency management agencies. Each municipal emergency management plan must be consistent with and subject to the applicable county emergency management plan. EM develops and implements plans to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters including but not limited to:

- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Local Mitigation Strategy Plan (LMS)
- Floodplain Management Plan

In addition, each municipality must coordinate requests for state or federal emergency response assistance through its county, regardless if they have an established EM program. *This requirement does not apply to requests for reimbursement under federal public disaster assistance programs.*

Community Support

EM manages the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), with support from local, state, and federal partners. The EOC is the central point where disaster recovery efforts are coordinated. Each jurisdiction within a County should have representation at the EOC during activation to help share information and coordinate use of resources as needed. One or more Finance Department members are especially helpful.

Preparation

Planning and preparedness for a disaster is important for every community. There should be policies and procedures in place before a disaster and they should be reviewed at least annually. Examples of preparedness activities that should be completed at least annually:

- Staff that will be requested to operate in the EOC should be identified in advance to allow for integration in preparation, planning and training to which include the annual mock hurricane or other table top exercise.
- Evaluate cash flow needs prior to an event and plan for delayed FEMA reimbursement.
- May require governing authority to authorize reserve funding, a line of credit, or both.
- Update equipment rates if utilizing your own employees and equipment.
- These rates must be less than or equal to FEMA rates (see resources below) in order for the reimbursement requests to be approved and paid.
- Ensure employee policies and procedures are updated and in place.
- Review Procurement contracts for FEMA compliance:
<https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/nonstate-nonprofit/procurement-checklist>
- Update Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan.
- Review latest FEMA Policy guide:
<https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/policy-guidance-fact-sheets>
- Maintain paper copies of forms that may be needed (time sheet, equipment usage, travel logs, vendor payment forms, etc.) in the event of power outages and/or system unavailability.

Training and preparedness are imperative to ensure your government receives the maximum reimbursement allowed from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Stay abreast of new developments in the emergency management community. If your government receives federal grants, there are training requirements for ALL employees.

Reimbursement

In the event of a disaster, your jurisdiction will be responsible for your community's response, recovery, and mitigation as well as all of the FEMA required reporting to facilitate the reimbursement process. Generally, the responsibility for the reimbursement process is with the Finance Departments. Retention of the reimbursement related records should be longer than current retention policy states as FEMA can take a few years to close out their projects. *Training and preparedness are imperative to understand the reimbursement process requirements and ensure your government receives the maximum reimbursement allowed from FEMA.*

As required by Chapter [119](#), F.S., and by 2 C.F.R. §200.333, reimbursement records should be retained for a period of five (5) years from the date of submission of the final

expenditure report, however, it is recommended that the records be retained longer as *FEMA rules have been clarified to indicate that shelter costs borne by local school boards are to be paid by the County and the County shall seek reimbursement from FEMA.*

State Sponsored Resource - Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation (F-ROC)

The Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation (F-ROC) program, sponsored by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (“FDEM”), promotes a proactive and streamlined approach to recovery, reducing risk, and implementing measures that enhance applicants’ ability to successfully navigate the Public Assistance process for Category A (Debris Removal) and Category B (Emergency Protective Measures) disaster related work.

The F-ROC program functions around four (4) key pillars:

- 1- **Standardization:** Standardizes and simplifies forms, making it easier to submit accurate documentation for Public Assistance and receive funding timely.
- 2- **Procurement:** Helps ensure contractors and vendors are in place and procurement plans meet federal regulations.
- 3- **Procedures:** Helps prepare for events by ensuring policies and procedures are accurate, up-to-date, and follow FEMA guidelines.
- 4- **Assessment:** The Disaster Readiness Assessment provides the insights needed to be successful. Applicants who employ all four pillars of the program can receive up to 85% of funding upon obligation.

Participation in the F-ROC program is optional. Local governments must Opt-In the program to participate. Information on the F-ROC program can be found on the program’s website at <https://www.floridadisaster.org/froc/>.

References

Chapter 252, F.S.; Emergency Management:

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0200-0299/0252/0252.html

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

www.fema.gov

FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (effective June 2020):

<https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public/policy-guidance-fact-sheets>

Florida has a website that is used for FEMA reimbursement reporting:

<http://floridapa.org/>

Helpful guides:

<http://floridapa.org/site/guidelines.cfm>

State of Florida Division of Emergency Management website:

<https://www.floridadisaster.org/>

Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation (F-ROC) program:

<https://www.floridadisaster.org/froc/>

State of Florida training classes:

<http://trac.floridadisaster.org/trac/trainingcalendar.aspx>

If you have never used this website, slides are provided for your use:

http://trac.floridadisaster.org/trac/ser_t_trac_orientation.pdf