
Tribal Consultation on FEMA Grant Programs

Framing Paper

March 6, 2025, 2 p.m. ET

Overarching Consultation Questions

What courses of action can the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) take to ensure FEMA grant programs are accessible and meet the needs of Tribal Nations to the maximum extent possible? What additional barriers and challenges do Tribal Nations face in accessing and leveraging FEMA grant programs?

Background

. Over the past few decades, FEMA has received tribal feedback about the lack of access to FEMA grant funding, including the [Emergency Management Performance Grant \(EMPG\)](#) and the [Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program \(THSGP\)](#). This lack of access compounds pre-existing and historical inequities for Tribal Nations.

The Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition (ITEMC) sent a letter requesting formal consultation on all FEMA grant programs to the Acting Assistant Administrator of the Grant Programs Directorate (GPD), Pamela Williams. To answer this call for consultation, FEMA leadership hosted a tribal consultation on Aug. 22, 2024, at the ITEMC Summit to gather feedback on how FEMA can increase tribal access to its grant programs. FEMA will host another tribal consultation virtually as a follow up to the one in August to continue gathering vital feedback on its grant programs.

FEMA remains committed to its responsibility outlined in [FEMA's Tribal Consultation Policy](#), to engage in meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials. In addition, [FEMA's Tribal Policy](#) outlines a framework for Nation-to-Nation relations between FEMA and Tribal Nations that recognizes tribal sovereignty, self-governance, and FEMA's responsibilities, consistent with applicable authorities.

Tribal Feedback

FEMA has received feedback from Tribal Nations about their experiences and needs as applicants and recipients of FEMA grant programs.

- Provide direct access to grant funding for all Tribal Nations;
- Eliminate cost-share requirements for Tribal Nations;
- Ensure full access to funding for emergency management personnel and disaster emergency management infrastructure (e.g., Emergency Operations Centers);
- Streamline the grant application and management processes to eliminate unnecessary or burdensome requirements;
- Increase grant funding to support tribal emergency management capacity-building;
- Eliminate any mandates to work through states or comply with state processes when working directly with FEMA for assistance;
- Ensure funding addresses all hazards and/or removes the terrorism nexus from the THSGP; and
- Provide greater flexibility for recipients to meet grant requirements (e.g., additional time)

Discussion Questions

FEMA seeks tribal input on how FEMA grants can better serve your needs. Below are questions for your consideration, not in order of priority and not exclusive. FEMA welcomes broader input on our activities in support of Tribal Nations.

1. What are some of the biggest hurdles your Tribal Nation has faced in applying for FEMA grants?
2. What challenges do you encounter when navigating FEMA grant portals?
3. What additional challenges do tribal governments face in requesting, receiving, and managing FEMA grant funding?
4. What would tribal leaders like to see in the future in terms of using FEMA grants to help build resilience?

All consultation materials may be found at: www.fema.gov/about/tribes/consultations. The consultation record will remain open for 60 days after the last session for tribal leaders to submit feedback or comments to gpd-comms@fema.dhs.gov. Final feedback and comments are due by May 9, 2025, at 5 p.m. ET.