

Exploratory Call Guide & Checklist

Stage 4

Public Assistance Division
Recovery Directorate
Office of Response and Recovery
Federal Emergency Management Agency





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Exploratory Call Guide

General

The Exploratory Call (EC) is the first opportunity to establish a relationship between the Applicant and FEMA. The information gathered during the EC will enable the Program Delivery Manager (PDMG) to create a tailored agenda for the Recovery Scoping Meeting (RSM) and should take place within seven days of Applicant assignment to the PDMG.

Objectives of the Call

1. Introduce role of a PDMG and explain the Public Assistance grant program
2. Discuss the disaster damages the Applicant has identified
3. Introduce the Damage Inventory and emphasize its importance
 - a. Applicant needs to draft the Damage Inventory prior to the RSM
4. Discuss documentation needed to support the Applicant's claims
5. Discuss and schedule the RSM
 - a. Allow enough time for the Applicant to draft the Damage Inventory
 - b. Start early in the day and plan for the meeting to last several hours

Preparing for the Exploratory Call

- Review Applicant information in the PA Grants Manager**
 - Disaster Operating Profile
 - Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA), if Applicant participated.
 - This will give you an idea of the damages and any special circumstances
 - See if the Applicant submitted t
 - Coordinate with Recipient POC to discuss applicants previous disaster experience
- Reserve a conference room or identify a quiet location to hold the call**
- Invite the Recipient to participate in the call**
- Record the time, date, and conference call phone number in the Grants Manager**
- Review EC Guide and Checklist**
 - Clearly understand objectives
 - Have a copy of your 30 day calendar



Tips to Conduct the Call

The EC is the first introduction of the PDMG to the Applicant; the PDMG should be kind, courteous, and respectful. Ample time should be taken to start developing a relationship with the Applicant representatives, but be aware of the time you spend on the call. Let the Applicant introduce themselves, provide some background information about the government/organization, explain the structure of the government/organization, provide any important historical information, discuss previous disaster experience and discuss overall impacts of the current disaster to the Applicant.

Things that the PDMG should consider when conducting the EC are that:

- The FEMA PA grant process may be overwhelming to a first time Applicant;
- The Applicant's previous experience(s) with FEMA may not have been positive and;
- The Applicant may still be in response mode.

The length of the EC is dependent on the discussion with the Applicant. The call should be concise yet long enough to meet the EC objectives. If the Applicant shows an interest in an in-depth discussion regarding their damages, steer them away from those details, but ensure them that the RSM will give them ample opportunity for that discussion. Focus their attention on the development of their Damage Inventory in advance of the RSM.

The PDMG should take comprehensive notes during the discussion. The EC notes are critical in planning and preparing for the RSM. For example, when discussing the types of damages sustained by the Applicant, listen for triggers to potential Special Considerations, eligibility issues, or other red flags (especially for work they may be actively completing). These notes will be uploaded into the Grants Manager and inform the Recovery Scoping Meeting, including whether EHP and Mitigation will participate in the RSM.



Exploratory Call Checklist

Introductions

- Introduce yourself as the Program Delivery Manager (PDMG)
 - Explain what a PDMG is
 - Explain why you are calling
- Confirm that the Applicant's point of contact information (phone number and email address) is correct
 - Did the Applicant attend the Applicant briefing?
 - Does the applicant have access to the Grants Portal?

****NOTE: If the information in the Grants Manager is not correct, the Applicant will have to update it. The PDMG does not have rights to change this information for the Applicant.****

- Ask some questions about the Applicant, how the community is doing
- Ask if Applicant's staff participated in the Federally declared disaster in the past
 - Yes: When? (year, disaster number, etc.)
 - No
 - Unsure
- Ask if the Applicant has any schedule limitations (such as part-time staff, upcoming leave). Will the Applicant be using a consultant?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

Discuss the disaster damages the Applicant has identified (see Category-Specific Appendices)

Discuss special considerations questions (see Appendix)

Introduce the Damage Inventory and emphasize its importance

The Damage Inventory captures all disaster-related damages identified by the Applicant.

- Information captured in the Damage Inventory includes
 - Damage description
 - Percent work complete
 - Location (GPS coordinate in decimal degrees or address)
 - Actual and estimated costs
 - Recovery priority level



- Need a good draft of the Damage Inventory before the Recovery Scoping Meeting
 - Applicant should update the Damage Inventory in the Grants Portal as additional damage is identified.
 - Contact the PDMG if Applicant has problems with the PA Grants Portal

Discuss Documentation

- The FEMA PA program requires Applicants to provide documentation to support damage claims
- Supporting documentation generally includes:
 - Complete insurance policies and claims
 - Permits
 - Use of Force Account (in-house) Labor
 - Pay Policy
 - Time sheets and equipment logs
 - Materials
 - Use of contract labor
 - Procurement policy
 - Bid documents
 - Contract(s)
 - Invoice(s)
 - Documentation that demonstrates the Applicant's legal responsibility to perform the work/repair to the facility
- Applicant should begin collecting general documentation after the EC so the following documents will be ready by the RSM:
 - Pay Policy
 - Procurement Policy
 - Complete insurance policies including submitted claims
- Specific documentation requirements for the Applicant will be discussed during the RSM

Discuss objectives of Recovery Scoping Meeting and schedule meeting

- The RSM initiates the regulatory requirement that the Applicant must identify and report all declared disaster related damages within 60 days of the RSM
- Objectives of the Meeting
 - Discuss the Damage Inventory
 - Identify documentation needed to support damage claims
 - Available time(s) to conduct site inspections
 - Develop Program Delivery Plan
- Attendees



- Applicant POCs/SMEs identified during the disaster damages discussion. These generally include an Applicant representative from Finance/Accounting, Operations (Roads and Public Works, Risk Management/Insurance).
 - Obtain the contact information for the Applicant POCs/SMEs
- Applicant representatives who can schedule site inspections (i.e., staff knowledgeable about the damages to be assessed, additional resources who can participate in the site inspection, and length of time necessary to conduct the site inspection)
 - Obtain the contact information for these Applicant representatives
- PDMG
- Other FEMA (EHP, Mitigation, etc.) and Recipient Representatives
- Scheduling
 - Ask the Applicant how long it will take them to develop the Damage Inventory
 - Propose that the meeting occur in the morning to ensure sufficient time to accomplish the objectives, including scheduling site inspections, and discuss documentation needed to support the damage claims.
 - Explain that the PDMG will be available to meet individually with Applicant representative to discuss any questions about documentation.

RSM Date		RSM Time	
RSM Meeting Location/Address:			

□ Conclusion

- Ensure objectives are accomplished:
 - Introduce the role of a PDMG and explain the PA grant program
 - Discuss disaster damages
 - Introduce the Damage Inventory and emphasize its importance
 - Discuss documentation
 - Discuss and schedule the RSM
 - Repeat RSM date, time, and location back to Applicant to confirm
- Next steps for Applicant
 - Draft the Damage Inventory
 - Invite the Applicant representatives identified to attend RSM. Obtain contact information for the identified points of contact
 - Upload general documentation to the PA Grants Portal
 - Pay policy, Procurement policy, Complete insurance policies
- Ensure the Applicant has the PDMG contact information
- Any Questions?



Post EC Actions – Performance Expectation: Complete within 1 day

Update the PA Grants Manager

- Update EC notes section with detailed comments
- Insert RSM information
- Mark EC call as complete

Reminder: When the Recovery Scoping Meeting is scheduled in the PA Grants Manager, an automated email will be sent to the Applicant and Recipient with the date, time, and location of the meeting. The email will also include a link to the Applicant’s Damage Inventory, a reminder of the objectives of the meeting, and a list of other Applicant representatives that should participate in the RSM.

Follow-up on any unresolved items from the EC

NOTE: If the Applicant reports damages that trigger potentially significant EHP concerns (e.g., ground disturbances, root balls in historic areas, damage to cemeteries, and work within 200 feet of water), contact EHP prior to participating in the Recovery Scoping Meeting. EHP will be notified when the Recovery Scoping Meeting is scheduled, and the PDMG will coordinate with both EHP and Mitigation before the Recovery Scoping Meeting – even if there are not significant EHP or mitigation issues. However, when there are potentially significant EHP concerns, it is important that PDMGs engage EHP early to ensure the Applicant is informed about actions that could trigger extensive EHP-related reviews.

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category A – Debris Removal

Has the Applicant removed or plans to remove disaster-related debris?	<i>If yes, does the Applicant know where the debris has been or will be removed from?</i>
Has work started?	<i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i>
Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?	<i>Get contact information for this person. Request POC attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i>
Additional Information	<i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category B – Emergency Protective Measures (EPM)

<p>Has the Applicant conducted emergency protective measures such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Flood-fighting- Opened an Emergency Operations Center for the disaster- Evacuation and sheltering- Security, such as barricades, fencing, or law enforcement- Temporary repairs- Extracting water or clearing mud, silt or other debris- Used generators	<p><i>Describe the EPMs conducted</i></p>
<p>Has work started?</p>	<p><i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i></p>
<p>Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?</p>	<p><i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i></p>
<p>Additional Information</p>	<p><i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i></p>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category C – Roads and Bridges

Has the Applicant sustained damage to roads, culverts, or bridges?	<i>Describe the damage</i>
Are any of the facilities under the authority of another Federal or Recipient entity? (e.g., FHWA, USACE, U.S. Forest Service)	
Has work started?	<i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i>
Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?	<i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i>
Additional Information	<i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category D – Water Control Facilities

<p>Has the Applicant sustained damage to water control facilities such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dams or reservoirs- Levees or floodwalls- Drainage channels- Canals- sediment or debris basins- Storm water retention or detention basins- Irrigation facilities- Pumping facilities- Navigational waterways	<p><i>Describe the damage</i></p>
<p>Are any of the facilities under the authority of another Federal or Recipient entity? (e.g., FHWA, USACE, U.S. Forest Service)</p>	
<p>Has work started?</p>	<p><i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i></p>
<p>Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?</p>	<p><i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i></p>
<p>Additional Information</p>	<p><i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i></p>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category E – Buildings and Equipment

Has the Applicant sustained damage buildings, contents or equipment?	<i>Describe the damage</i>
Has work started?	<i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i>
Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?	<i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i>
Additional Information	<i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category F – Utilities

Has the Applicant sustained damage to utilities that are the jurisdiction of the Applicant?	<i>Describe the damage</i>
Has work started?	<i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i>
Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?	<i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i>
Additional Information	<i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Category G – Parks, Recreational, Other

Has the Applicant sustained damage to parks or recreational facilities?	<i>Describe the damage</i>
Has work started?	<i>If yes, ask what % complete?</i>
Who is the point of contact/subject matter expert for this work?	<i>Get contact information for this person. Ask the POC to attend the Recovery Scoping Meeting</i>
Additional Information	<i>Additional information discussed with the Applicant</i>

Applicant:

Date:

Appendix: Special Considerations

Environmental and Historic Preservation

Questions for Applicant	Applicant Response
Will any proposed work change the pre-disaster condition of the facility, cause any additional ground disturbance, or impact any pristine or undisturbed area?	
Will any proposed work occur in a floodplain or in close proximity to waterways or waterbodies?	
Are any damaged facilities 45 years old or older?	

Mitigation

Questions for Applicant	Applicant Response
Is there a history of damage at a particular facility?	
Does the Applicant have plans to prevent similar damage in the future?	
Does the Applicant have a mitigation plan or FEMA-funded mitigation project(s) under development?	
Would the Applicant like technical assistance to explore mitigation opportunities?	

Applicant:

Date:

Insurance

Questions for Applicant	Applicant Response
Does the Applicant have insurance coverage on any facility damaged or emergency work performed as a result of this disaster?	<i>If Applicant says "no", Applicant why they do not have insurance coverage.</i>