

Preparing for Financial Recovery from Hurricanes

US Forensic & Integrity Services
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As we have entered the 2025 hurricane season amid uncertainties surrounding federal funding programs, it is crucial to remain prepared and adaptable for what lies ahead. With meteorological predictions indicating an above-average hurricane season, the risks for communities susceptible to severe weather are greater than ever. The unpredictability of funding and storm impacts highlight the need for proactive planning. Established processes in place in connection with disaster response are vital for optimizing and expediting eligible reimbursements through federal funding programs and insurance.

Key challenges for local governments and private-not for profits:

1 Staffing and Training

Staffing shortages and turnover of personnel involved in emergency response and grants management pose unique challenges for organizations. It is important to fill vacant positions and train team members in order to adequately prepare and respond effectively during an event.

2 Emergency Planning and Contacts

It is critical for emergency response and continuity plans to be up to date and accurate. Regular updates and coordination assist with clarifying roles and responsibilities for when a crisis occurs. Similarly, active communication with federal, state, and local stakeholders supports alignment on expectations and processes.

3 Asset Protection and Documentation

Establishing a pre-disaster baseline and inventory listing for applicant-owned assets is significant to maximize recovery. Subrecipients are required to show the pre-disaster condition and ownership records to submit damages for project formulation and reimbursement.

4 Documenting Response and Recovery Efforts

Significant documentation is required to obtain reimbursement for disaster related costs, whether through federal programs or insurance. Having efficient processes in place prior to disasters to record damages and document response and recovery activity and costs can help significantly expedite funding.

5 Risk Assessments

Regular inspections and risk assessments of infrastructure help identify vulnerabilities and areas needing improvement. This anticipatory approach confirms that organizations are prepared to respond effectively to potential disasters.

6 Procurement and Contracting

Proactively reviewing procurement compliance and engaging standby contractors is essential for an effective response to emergencies. Procurement compliance mitigates risk related to legal and regulatory standards while standby contractors can provide immediate resources and services at a reasonable cost, minimizing disruption, and enhancing public safety.

Actions You Can Take Now

Staffing and Training

- Review staffing structure & responsibilities
- Conduct training sessions on disaster response protocols and documentation requirements

Emergency Planning and Contacts

- Review and update plans in place
- Verify contact information for all personnel

Asset Protection and Documentation

- Maintain updated inventories of facilities, equipment, and supplies
- Take time-stamped photographs of buildings and infrastructure as pre-disaster documentation
- Store and backup records securely

Risk Assessments

- Identify and assess the condition of critical infrastructure
- Implement routine maintenance programs as needed
- Create or update hazard mitigation plans based on risk assessment findings

Procurement and Contracting

- Review procurement policies to comply with federal regulations and consider adding
 - Sections on emergency, exigent and sole source procurement options
- Establish standby contracts where needed
- Establish cost reasonableness in connection with all procurements

By implementing these measures, subrecipients can significantly enhance their readiness for the 2025 hurricane season. The commitment to proactive planning, thorough documentation, adherence to cost reasonableness and effective communication will facilitate a more efficient recovery process and better outcomes in the aftermath of a disaster.

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