



FEMA

Intergovernmental Advisory

FEMA ANNOUNCES FINAL RULE ON ASSISTANCE TO EVACUEE HOST STATES

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today announced a final rule enabling host states that shelter residents evacuated from presidentially declared disaster areas to receive reimbursements from FEMA more quickly and efficiently. The rule takes effect December 21, 2009.

FEMA provides financial assistance to Tribal, State and local governments, as well as certain private non-profit organizations, for response and recovery activities required as a result of a presidentially-declared major disaster or emergency. Assistance may include reimbursement for sheltering and evacuation costs incurred to assist individuals displaced by a declared major disaster or emergency.

This rule finalizes the July 2006 interim rule which amended FEMA's Public Assistance eligibility regulations to:

- Allow grantees to seek reimbursement for sheltering and evacuation costs incurred outside of the area designated under a presidential emergency or major disaster declaration, if such costs are otherwise eligible for FEMA Public Assistance.
- Further clarifies regulations and procedures implemented under the interim rule - including making key language more consistent and precise, better defining which entities are eligible for the reimbursement and addressing the responsibility of the non-federal cost-share portion of assistance.
- Allows for host-states to be directly reimbursed by FEMA for the base salary costs for state and local employees providing assistance as part of the host-state sheltering grant from FEMA. This applies when a host-state receives direct reimbursement from FEMA through a grant, pursuant to FEMA policy. Establishes the terms "impact-State" and "host-State" to differentiate between the State for which the President has issued a declaration and that requests evacuation and/or sheltering assistance, and the State (or Tribe) that provides the sheltering and/or evacuation assistance, respectively.



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Historically, costs incurred outside of the disaster declared area were not reimbursable unless a state requested and was approved for its own presidential emergency declaration. In addition, in the exceptional cases of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, forty-five states requested and received emergency declarations to recover sheltering costs for tens of thousands of evacuees from the Gulf Coast. Mutual aid remains the appropriate option in most disaster situations. FEMA issued the interim rule in July 2006 to create a more efficient way to provide assistance to these host-states.

A copy of the rule is attached, and can be read at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-27883.pdf>

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