Tips for Nonprofits Recovering from Disasters

DISASTER RELIEF STRATEGIES

Public Assistance Overview

FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides supplemental grants so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. Eligible entities include states, territories, tribes, local governments, and nonprofits. All entities must request for PA through the Grants Portal System after a declared disaster.

PA Funding Tips: What You Need to Know



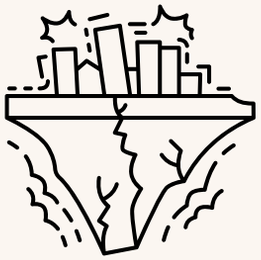
Initial Response

You may be ready to get to work immediately after a disaster, but before anything happens, it is critical that you take detailed photos of any damaged property. This will help determine the cost to repair the damage. In addition to property, be sure to maintain detailed records of all staff and volunteers that work on the recovery project. FEMA may be able to reimburse the cost of staff time and credit you for volunteer labor contributions, but only if you have records to back it up.



Pre-Damage Records

FEMA often asks organizations to provide maintenance records showing that the facility was well-cared for before a disaster. Can you show that critical systems, like HVAC, were maintained properly? Records of inspections, preventative maintenance, and regular monitoring make a difference. FEMA will not pay for damage caused by delayed maintenance or old damage.



Maintaining Inventory

FEMA only pays to restore facilities back to their pre-disaster condition with opportunities for additional resilience funding. After a disaster, could you prove what was destroyed? Up-to-date pictures, inventories, and descriptions could expedite the grant process.



Financing

Once PA funding is approved, it is available on a reimbursement basis. Often, nonprofits have to complete the work and then wait for reimbursement weeks and months after the bills are due. For entities who need funding immediately, it is important to consider financing options available that will provide funding to begin disaster recovery projects. Disaster Relief Strategies bridges this gap between federal reimbursement and recovery by offering financing to maximize cost recovery. Financing costs may be eligible for FEMA reimbursement too!