**Emergency Response CDBG Funding Guide**

This guide is designed to assist communities in preparing to be potentially eligible for funding costs associated with recovery and cleanup after a natural disaster. While not comprehensive, it outlines basic steps, including paperwork and documentation, which will maximize your community’s chance for recouping some of these costs through CDBG’s emergency grant program.

Time is of the essence in responding to events that affect critical facilities and impact citizens’ health and safety. This guide should be consulted as early as possible to maximize potential reimbursement.

# Step 1: ONLY act on the most immediate threats

While it’s difficult to justify delaying emergency response times, it’s important to understand that any work done prior to the submission of CDBG’s Finding of Exemption (FOE) form will not be eligible for reimbursement, but may count as in-kind match.

**REMEMBER: Delaying activities by a few hours has the potential to make thousands more dollars eligible for reimbursement through this program.**

# Step 2: Send SMCOG documentation to complete Finding of Exemption

CDBG has streamlined the environmental review process to be completed in a few hours, based on the immediate nature of emergencies. SMCOG can provide the service of completing the FOE form for your jurisdiction, provided the following information:

* **Project Description:** This should clearly explain all cleanup/recovery activities that are expected to be involved with the project, which may include debris removal, re-hanging utility lines, backfill/seeding, etc.
* **Project Location:** A map should be provided to indicate where each type of recovery activity is going to occur. The more details that can be provided, the faster your FOE form may be submitted. These maps may be as simple as Google screenshots with hand-drawn notes on them indicating the location(s) of each activity.

**NOTE: This form is NOT an application for funding and does NOT guaranty any or all of your costs will be reimbursed.**

# Step 3: Receive Notice of Submission from SMCOG and begin activities

Once the FOE form has been submitted, SMCOG will send you a notice that activities may begin. Make sure to maintain documentation of all activities and expenses associated with cleanup. The attachments in this packet will help to track these items, including:

* The Event Expenses spreadsheet should be used to document all invoices received from third-party companies. Your jurisdiction should only complete the date of invoice, invoice number, firm name, and invoice amount columns.
* The In-Kind timesheet should be used to document any time volunteers contribute to the cleanup

# Step 4: Understand eligible versus ineligible expenses

The CDBG program is not set up to reimburse communities with every expense they incur. It’s important to understand what may or may not be considered eligible expenses, which is ultimately up to CDBG staff’s discretion. The table below identifies a non-comprehensive list of some expenses that typically are or are not eligible.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Activity | Eligible Expenses | Ineligible Expenses | Documentation |
| Personnel | * Third-party employees
* PT staff hired specifically for the event
 | * Salaried or FT staff
 | * Timesheets, hourly rates, & invoices
 |
| Equipment | * Equipment rental
 | * Vehicle purchases
 | * Hourly rental rates & invoice
 |
| Food & Lodging | **All food and lodging costs are considered ineligible for reimbursement.** |
| Materials | * Materials necessary for repair or equivalent replacement necessary to restore services
 | * Materials that result in an upgrade to capacity of services
 | * Itemized receipts and/or invoices
 |

# Step 5: Schedule a meeting with SMCOG to begin the grant application

Once sufficient documentation has been acquired, SMCOG staff will confirm the projects eligibility with CDBG then set up a meeting with your jurisdiction to apply for CDBG’s emergency grant program. Please come to this meeting prepared with the following documents:

* Jurisdiction’s latest financial statement
* Copy of adopted Fair Housing and Excessive Force ordinances (templates for adoption may be obtained by contacting SMCOG)
* Letters of support from state senator and representative
* All documentation related to expenses for cleanup and recovery
* City Council/Board of Aldermen meeting dates for the next two months