Seeking FEMA Reimbursement for COVID-19 Related Costs:

Guidance for Homeless Service Providers in the Ohio BoSCoC

**Updated 5.19.20**

This document provides guidance specific for homeless service providers in the Ohio Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoSCoC) during the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

This document will be updated frequently and the date updated noted above.

# FEMA Overview

In March 2020, President Donald Trump announced a nationwide Declaration of Emergency regarding the coronavirus pandemic, making available critical resources from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help address public health needs in states and localities.

FEMA’s Public Assistance (PA) program provides resources to state, territorial, tribal, and local governments and certain types of nonprofit organizations to allow communities to respond quickly to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. Under Category B of the PA program, state and local governments can receive reimbursement for eligible emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency protective measures are “activities taken to eliminate or reduce an immediate threat to life, public health or safety, or significant damage to improved public or private property in a cost-effective manner. Such measures include “evacuation and sheltering.

**FEMA in Ohio**

**Eligible FEMA Reimbursement Costs and Activities – Isolation and Quarantine**

The [State of Ohio was approved by FEMA](https://ema.ohio.gov/Documents/pdfs/NonCongregateSheltering-ohio20200402.pdf), under the PA program, to request reimbursement for costs associated with the provision of non-congregate sheltering for those who test positive for COVID-19 but do not require hospitalization (isolation), and for those who have been exposed to COVID-19 and must be quarantined. This could include work that local homeless services providers are doing to support local isolation and quarantine units located in hotel/motel units or other non-congregate locations.

**Non-Congregate Sheltering – Not Isolation and Quarantine**

Providing non-congregate shelter options to individuals who are more at risk of complications from COVID-19 *may* be eligible for FEMA reimbursement. This would include putting older and more medically vulnerable households into hotel/motel units in order to remove them from congregate shelter spaces. See the following section that outlines steps to take to seek FEMA reimbursement for eligible costs.

Emergency shelter de-concentration activities not targeted to vulnerable residents is likely not an eligible FEMA reimbursable activity at this time in the state of Ohio.

However, COHHIO and Ohio BoSCoC staff will update providers if things change.

**Seeking FEMA Reimbursement for Eligible Costs**

If your non-profit agency is currently providing FEMA eligible services and you would like to request reimbursement from FEMA for some of those costs, you will need to enter into an agreement with the appropriate local government agency charged with coordinating these non-congregate sheltering activities before you can seek FEMA reimbursement.

Agencies hoping to have costs reimbursed by FEMA also need to coordinate with local Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) and local health districts around the FEMA eligible activities.

You can find a template agreement on the [Ohio BoSCoC COVID-19 webpage](https://cohhio.org/boscoc/covid19/).

Any requests for FEMA reimbursement must not duplicate other federal assistance for the activity.

FEMA will only cover up to 75% of the approved eligible costs. Providers will need to work with their local government authority to identify other local resources to cover remaining costs.

*Summary of Steps to Seek FEMA Reimbursement*

* Establish Agreement with Local Government Authority
* Confirm exactly what non-congregate shelter activities are eligible for reimbursement
* Coordinate with local EMA and public health district around FEMA eligible activities, such as isolation/quarantine
* Identify resources to cover portion of eligible activities FEMA will not reimburse (25% of total cost)

Local health district information can be found here: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/find-local-health-districts>.

Local EMA information can be found here: <https://webeoctraining.dps.ohio.gov/ohiocountyEMADirectorList/countyemalist_web.aspx>

**Additional Resources and Guidance**

You can find additional information about FEMA eligible costs and how other communities are working with FEMA to support their COVID-19 work below:

<https://cohhio.org/covid-19/>

<https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/COVID-19_FEMA-Toolkit.pdf>

<https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Guidance_Working-with-FEMA.pdf>

<https://endhomelessness.org/fema-response-and-homelessness-during-covid-19/>

You can find the presentation and recording from the webinar with the Ohio EMA about accessing and understanding FEMA resources [here](https://cohhio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COHHIO-Presentation.pdf) and [here](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/2233067840793484290).