Fact Sheet

GRANT LIFE CYCLE

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) non-disaster grant programs are managed by the Grant Programs Directorate (GPD). Within GPD, the Preparedness Grants Division (PGD) manages the programmatic functions for its preparedness grant programs, while the Grant Operations (GO) division supports financial grant management for all FEMA grant programs. Together, they manage the full grant lifecycle. Internal and external stakeholder engagement occurs throughout the lifecycle to support transparency throughout the process. This input, along with findings from program implementation and evaluation, drive future program development. There are six phases of the grant lifecycle, which include the following:

Phase 1: Establish: Program Development and Eligibility Determinations

This phase begins with Congress authorizing funding for GPD grant programs through authorizing statutes. Once Congress appropriates and allocates funding to GPD, the program office develops grant guidance to effectively communicate to applicants the program purpose, priorities and requirements. Once grant guidance is finalized, the program development phase accelerates into the determination of eligible applicants. GPD must publicly identify the candidates eligible to apply for funds. For some programs such as the Urban Areas Security Initiative, Transit Security Grant Program and the Buffer Zone Protection Program, the Department determines eligibility on risk-based criteria. The application release date is determined through the appropriations process.

Phase 2: Apply: Application Submission

Once program guidance and application requirements are released publicly, eligible applicants can submit applications for funding. GPD relies primarily on the grants.gov web site to receive applications and provides technical assistance to assist applicants through the application submission process.

Phase 3: Review: Application Review

The requirements of the review phase are specific to each individual grant program. The application review period is determined through the appropriations process. Some programs, such as the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program, have formula-based allocations and do not require competitive review. Other programs, such as the Homeland Security Grant Program, require a lengthier peer review. In all cases, GPD assesses the application for financial integrity, and performs a formal programmatic review, budget review and assessment of funds available.

Phase 4: Award: Allocations and Award Processing

Department leadership makes the final determination on allocations under the competitive programs. These decisions may involve input from both the application review process and risk analyses. Upon review and approval of the allocations, final funding amounts may be publicly announced to applicants. At that point, the program office can begin the process by which funds are awarded to the grantee. This grant award process involves action of several organizational components (e.g., program staff, grant operations, budget, and legislative affairs).

Phase 5: Manage: Program Implementation

Grantees spend the grant award in accordance with the allowable activities scoped in the program guidance. They submit quarterly financial reports and semi-annual progress reports on implementation. Periods of performance typically range from two to three years, depending on the program. During this phase, GPD is responsible for:

- Conducting programmatic and financial monitoring
- Reviewing performance and financial reports
- Enforcing compliance
- Processing payments
- Processing amendments
- Reviewing audits
- Performing cash analysis

Phase 6: Closeout: Grant Closeout and Program Evaluation

As part of the grant closeout process, GPD must evaluate the final grantee performance reports, conduct a final financial reconciliation, and notify the grantee that their award has been closed.

Integral to the grant life cycle is evaluation. Evaluation is conducted throughout the entire grant cycle. Data and trend analysis of grant reporting and monitoring input is completed annually. Feedback is also obtained on development, application review and allocations from federal, state, local, and private partners through a formal after-action process. Several other meetings and conferences are held throughout the year to gain stakeholder feedback on all phases of the grant process.

"FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."

May 2011