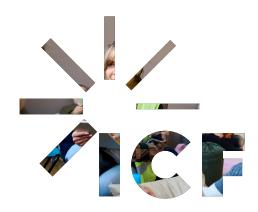# → Checklist: Best practices to accelerate disaster recovery grant disbursement

The checklist below provides recommendations to help you quickly disburse recovery funding to those in need. Keep in mind that every funding type has its own specifications for program design and documentation, and this document is meant to provide general guidance for most disaster recovery grants.

Data-driven decision making

☐ Look to data sources such as the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP).

☐ When using data, review areas of race and ethnic concentrations of poverty to ensure programs are designed to assist the most vulnerable individuals.

Building capacity

☐ Determine whether grantee staff has capacity to manage the program by outlining staffing requirements including roles and responsibilities.

☐ Request support for relevant and appropriate roles.

☐ Develop and document staff trainings that support the program.

Financial management

☐ Identify and/or appoint finance managers to oversee the cash flow, financial accounting, records management, and audits for the jurisdiction.

☐ Identify and/or appoint grants managers and legal counsel to help navigate legal and programmatic requirements of funding programs. Individuals with experience managing annual programs similar to disaster recovery funding programs are particularly valuable.

☐ Ensure financial policies, procedures, and systems are in place.

☐ Train staff on proper recording, submission, and/or reporting of awards.

Program design

☐ Develop policies that conform to grant and state law requirements. Then you can meet with vendors, municipalities of each region, and other governing agencies in order to understand their requirements.

☐ Give citizens and stakeholders enough information and opportunities to comment.

☐ Maintain a written citizen participation plan.

☐ Develop step-by-step job aides and standard operating procedures for conformity and standardization. These tools will assist the implementers with how to do each job consistently.

☐ Develop thresholds for construction (e.g., 65k cap for rehabilitation, 150k for reconstruction, etc.) to help grantees not only manage the budget, but also plan and prepare for potential risks.

☐ Get independent cost estimates that incorporate all known requirements. This can help cut down on costly change orders and is also a HUD requirement.

☐ Adopt quality construction standards. This includes basic housing quality standards, plus green building standards like ENERGY STAR® and resilience standards such as FORTIFIED Home™.

☐ Fraud mitigation: Progress inspections, as well as submitting drawings for consideration and review, should be part of grantees' QA/QC process. Mechanisms should also be put in place to hold vendors and builders accountable, such as liquidated damages and recovery of funds.

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