

# Hazard Mitigation Assistance Division

## Strengthening Medical Lifelines with Hazard Mitigation

Funding from the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) (HMGP)<sup>1</sup> may be used broadly by states, local communities, tribes and territories (SLTTs) for health care, medical, public health, and other critical facilities. Over the last 10 years, FEMA has obligated nearly \$100 million dollars for 84 SLTT projects to support health and medical care facilities with generators, seismic and wind retrofits, and utility and infrastructure improvements. These projects help reduce risk and increase overall resilience against natural hazards, improving the Health and Medical lifelines.<sup>2</sup>



Texas Co. Memorial Hospital, Houston, Missouri

More so now than ever, FEMA wants to ensure that health care, medical, public health, and critical facilities can remain operational if impacted by floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, or other natural hazards.

This fact sheet identifies flexibilities SLTTs should consider for projects that can be implemented in the next six to 36 months to enhance resilience to these important facilities. For its part, FEMA is exploring innovative ways to streamline the eligibility review for Health and Medical Lifeline projects, as well as the [Benefit Cost Analysis \(BCA\)](#) requirement.

## How can FEMA help?

### Application Assistance

To assist with the application process, FEMA developed template applications for some of the most frequently implemented project types, including advance assistance and generators. FEMA also released an enhanced version of its [BCA Toolkit](#) to be used when conducting the BCA for hazard mitigation projects. The new version offers multiple benefits that streamline the user interface and improve the customer experience. Over the next few weeks/months, FEMA will publish the application templates online. Until these are available, contact your [State Hazard Mitigation Officer](#) for additional information.

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of HMGP is to help communities implement hazard mitigation measures following a major disaster declaration under the Stafford Act (42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.*) in the areas of the state, tribe, or territory requested by the Governor or Tribal Executive to enact mitigation measures that reduce the risk of loss of life and property from future disasters.

<sup>2</sup> Visit [Community Lifelines Implementation Toolkit](#) for additional information.



# FEMA

## Advance Assistance (Project Scoping)

SLTTs can apply for Advance Assistance or Project Scoping to develop mitigation strategies and obtain data to prioritize, select, and develop potential projects for future funding. For example, Advance Assistance may be used to identify the vulnerabilities of health care, medical, public health and critical facilities and may be used for potential mitigation measures. FEMA will accept applications from the state, tribe or territory for Advance Assistance. In the application, the state, tribe or territory may reflect its intent to ask local communities to perform some of the eligible activities. Visit [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov) to learn more about Advance Assistance.

## Technical Assistance

FEMA staff can provide Technical Assistance to help SLTTs identify mitigation opportunities, scope potential projects, and perform the required Benefit Cost Analysis. FEMA can also help identify projects that can be implemented quickly such as emergency generators or non-structural retrofits.

## 5 Percent Initiative

The 5 Percent Initiative is a feature of HMGP that can be leveraged for innovative projects. This initiative allows grantees to use up to 5 percent of total HMGP grant funds for projects that are difficult to evaluate using FEMA-approved cost-effectiveness methodologies, but which otherwise meet HMGP eligibility requirements. This initiative can also be increased up to 10 percent for building codes that have been adopted and are being enforced.

## Who is eligible to apply?

When HMGP is authorized following a major disaster declaration, states, territories, and federally recognized tribes are eligible to apply. State-level agencies or local governments are also eligible as subapplicants for HMGP. Any other organization that is interested in applying for grant funding must work through an eligible subapplicant. This includes private sector entities, private non-profit organizations, or homeowners. Federally recognized tribes may also apply as a subapplicant. Contact your [State Hazard Mitigation Officer](#) for more information on applying for HMGP and other HMA programs.



Halifax Health Medical Center, Daytona Beach, Florida

## What activities are available under HMGP?

HMGP enables communities to take critical mitigation measures to reduce the risk of loss of life and property from future disasters. Below are examples of HMGP project types that were prioritized and funded for health care, medical, public health, and critical facilities over the last 10 years.

### Generators for Critical Facilities

A generator that is a stand-alone project can be considered under HMGP if the generator protects a critical facility. Stand-alone generator projects that cannot be determined to be cost effective via standard benefit-cost methodology may be eligible under the 5 Percent Initiative. A generator that is a component of a larger project can also be funded under HMGP, in addition to portable generators and the costs to connect and disconnect them. To learn more about eligibility for generators, visit [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov).

#### *Example:*

In 2017, the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency awarded Texas County Memorial Hospital a grant to replace an existing 40-year-old generator to power critical facilities. This generator assists in providing vital emergency power in the event of disruptions. The project amount was \$60,000.

### Structural Retrofitting of Existing Buildings

This type of modification project reduces or eliminates the risk of future damage and to protect building occupants. The structural elements of a building that are essential to prevent damage include foundations, load-bearing walls, beams, columns, the building envelope, structural floors and roofs, and the connections between these elements. To learn more about structural retrofitting, view FEMA's [Building Codes Toolkit](#) and [earthquake publications](#) at [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov).

#### *Example:*

In the City of Wiggins, Mississippi, a grant was awarded to the Wiggins Police Department to harden its building from an estimated 90-mph to a 140-mph wind load. The city completed the wind retrofit by removing numerous windows and covering the openings with bricks. They protected the remaining windows by installing impact resistant glazing or impact protection panels. They also installed impact resistant panels over two doors and a new metal roof system with load reinforcement. The roof system incorporates a layer of closed cell foam and gable sheeting to provide significantly increased uplift/tear off protection. The project amount was \$250,000.



Good Samaritan Hospital, Los Angeles, California

### Flood Protection Projects

These projects include dry proofing, flood walls and other structural improvements. It also includes protecting building utility systems from flood damage. Visit [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov) for information on [flood protection for property](#) owners.

*Example:*

In New York, a project was awarded to install connection points on the perimeter wall of the Metropolitan Hospital Center above the estimated height that floodwater is anticipated to rise during a flood. This would allow the facility to rent interim, external equipment that can quickly restore essential services to the facility should the existing equipment be rendered inoperable due to the impact of severe weather. The project amount was \$5.2 million.

## Public Education and Outreach

FEMA may fund eligible public education and outreach activities. These activities include public awareness and education programs (brochures, events, workshops, videos, etc.) to meet the needs of specific populations, including individuals with disabilities or individuals with limited English proficiency, or to address natural hazard risks to a community. These approaches can be integrated into almost all existing initiatives. Campaigns, participatory learning, formal and informal education, and communication are a few key approaches.

*Example:*

The Basement Flooding Outreach and Education project in Chicago, Illinois, received HMGP funding for the development of educational outreach materials such as videos, an online photo library, and retrofit 'how-to' guides. The grant also allowed for the creation of an effective community planning process to be a model for other neighborhoods to raise public awareness of basement flooding and to develop neighborhood solutions. The project amount was \$165,000.

## Where to go to get assistance?

Please contact your [State Hazard Mitigation Officer](#) or visit the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) webpage on FEMA.gov.