

INTERNAL DRAFT

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
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**PROGRAM INSTRUCTION**

**TO:** Head Start and Early Head Start Programs Impacted by Disasters in Calendar Years 2018 or 2019

**SUBJECT:** Disaster Recovery Funding for 2018 and 2019 Disasters

**INSTRUCTION:**

This Program Instruction (PI) outlines the process to request disaster recovery funds for Head Start and Early Head Start program recovery, including replacement of damaged or destroyed property and facilities following hurricanes, typhoons, wildfires, and earthquakes occurring in calendar year 2018 and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019. The PI is also intended to assist governing bodies and key management staff in determining the types of assistance and amount of recovery funds that are needed.

President Trump signed the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019 (the Act) on June 6, 2019. The Act provides \$55,000,000 in emergency funding "for necessary expenses directly related to the consequences of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, and wildfires and earthquakes occurring in calendar year 2018 and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 in those areas for which a major disaster or emergency has been declared under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 5170](#) and [5191](#))."

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has the authority to award funds through Sept. 30, 2021 and is restricted to [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)-declared disaster areas](#).

The extent of service interruption and damage to properties as a consequence of these disasters varies dramatically. The Office of Head Start (OHS) recognizes this PI cannot capture all of the circumstances in which disaster funds may be needed to ensure services are restored and align with the current needs of the communities impacted by the wide range of disasters occurring calendar years 2018 and 2019. Disaster recovery needs may not fully reflect how services were delivered prior to the disasters but will be responsive to the current community needs.

Grantees are not limited to a single application. Funding can be awarded incrementally based on the complexity of recovery projects. Funding decisions will be made based on an identified connection to the consequences of covered disasters, documented need, and availability of funding.

## **Funding Requests**

Grantees should engage in a comprehensive assessment of programmatic and community needs that considers the immediate, interim, and long-term impacts and associated costs resulting from these disasters. Application narratives must clearly delineate which of the following categories of funding are included in the request:

1. Facilities
2. Materials, Supplies, and Equipment
3. Program Operations
4. Additional Health, Mental Health, Dental, and Nutrition Services
5. Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)
6. Disaster Recovery Expenses Incurred Prior to Availability of Funds Under the Act

Each proposed grant activity should have clear timelines for execution and completion. Project completion timelines, including major activities within each phase, need to be clearly stated in the application. We have provided a brief description of each area to assist programs in preparing funding requests.

### *1. Facilities*

Disaster recovery funds may be requested to cover costs associated with repairs, renovations, purchase, and construction of facilities. Requests for funds to cover planning costs, including assessments, architectural and engineering services, and requests for bids, may also be submitted. Grantees are encouraged to make a thorough assessment of their temporary and long-term facility needs, including outdoor play areas. Structural damage and environmental problems not properly identified and addressed can create hazards and health risks months after initial damage occurs. We encourage programs to consider obtaining the services of a structural engineer, architect, and environmental consultant during the assessment phase so all costs necessary to ensure full restoration are identified.

Programs should take into account the costs of meeting current building codes. Facilities activities within the scope of Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) at [45 CFR § 1303 Subpart E—Facilities](#) must be supported by an application, as required, and all projects must comply with applicable building regulations, requirements, and codes. Grantees must not use requested funds for costs reimbursed by FEMA, under a contract for insurance, or by self-insurance.

**Please note:** ACF grantees that purchase, construct, or renovate facilities with Head Start funds are required to submit the SF-429 Real Property Status Report and attachments. As such, in addition to the 1303 application for the disaster recovery fund request, the SF-429-B Request to Acquire, Improve, or Furnish must be submitted in the Online Data Collection (OLDC) system.

See [Discretionary Post-Award Requirements, ACF-PI-HS-17-03 Electronic Submission of Real Property Standard Form \(SF\)-429 and Attachments](#), and the applicable administrative requirements at 45 CFR [§75.318](#) and [§75.343](#) for additional information. Also, as per [45 CFR §1303.42\(a\)\(1\) and \(b\)](#), before a grantee can apply for funds to purchase, construct, or renovate a facility under [§1303.44](#), it must establish, among other things, that the proposed purchase, construction, or major renovation is necessary because of a lack of suitable facilities in the grantee's service area will inhibit the operation of the program.

### *2. Materials, Supplies, and Equipment*

Some grantees have reported significant losses in materials, supplies, furnishings, and equipment. Programs should conduct a thorough review of each impacted center to ensure funding requests cover all costs necessary to replace lost or damaged vehicles, equipment, materials, furnishings, and supplies. Reviews of program losses should include outdoor play areas, kitchens, program and administrative offices, and any other service areas. Programs may also request vehicles, equipment, materials, furnishings, and supplies needed to support the delivery of temporary services or facilities activities until program services can be fully restored. Equipment purchases as defined in [45 CFR §75.2](#) require prior written approval under [45 CFR §75.308\(c\)\(1\)\(xi\)](#).

### *3. Program Operations*

Some families may have relocated as a consequence of the 2018 and 2019 disasters. Others remained in their community, but may be displaced from their homes. Many more families may be experiencing homelessness than before the hurricanes. Programs should make every effort to assess the immediate and ongoing service needs of communities in their service area.

Programs may consider home-based services, double sessions, and increasing hours per day or days per year to meet community needs. For example, offering double sessions can serve more children on a temporary basis, but longer days and summer services may better meet the continuity needs of children who are experiencing homelessness or in temporary housing. Lowering teacher-child ratios to temporarily increase the number of teachers per classroom may also be needed to safely support evolving program schedules, transitions in services, or to more adequately respond to the needs of struggling children and families. Programs should consider the full range of services and supports for families that are necessary to support or supplement program operations until full services can be restored.

### *4. Additional Health, Mental Health, Dental, and Nutrition Services*

Children, families, and staff have endured significant disruption and stress as a result of the 2018 and 2019 disasters. In some areas, homes may still be without power or safe drinking water. Families may not be able to fully meet their health and nutritional needs under such circumstances. Post-disaster conditions also enhance the risk of infection and the spread of diseases. Programs must consider actions they can take in collaboration with community partners to address health, mental health, dental, and nutritional needs resulting from the disasters. This could include hiring or contracting with qualified practitioners who can work in centers directly with children, families, and staff. Programs may also determine they need to hire additional family workers or other staff to deliver specialized health, mental health, dental, and nutrition services to support recovery post-disaster.

#### *5. Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)*

OHS will develop strategies and resources, including through the T/TA system, to support programs impacted by the 2018 and 2019 disasters. We recognize that each program has learned a lot as a result of experiencing these disasters. Programs have identified actions and strategies needed to strengthen and build emergency response procedures, staff capacity, facilities, and professional development. This is also an opportunity for local programs to collaborate with relief organizations and other early childhood programs in their communities. If requesting T/TA funding in accordance with the Head Start Act [Sec. 648\(d\)](#), grantees should clearly state the activities for which this funding will be used.

#### *6. Disaster Recovery Expenses Incurred Prior to Availability of Funds Under the Act*

OHS provides flexibility for grantees to modify their operating budgets to utilize operating funds to initiate disaster recovery activities. Grantees may apply for disaster recovery funds to reimburse the cost of necessary expenses directly related to the consequences of the disasters that were previously paid with operating funds, if those funds are needed for current year program operations. Disaster recovery funds paid as reimbursements are not unrestricted funds and must be used for allowable program or disaster recovery expenditures.

When submitting requests for disaster recovery funding, grantees must explain how the funds relate to a consequence of the disaster. They also must provide assurance that requested funds will not be used for costs reimbursed by FEMA, under a contract for insurance, or by self-insurance.

### **Award Information and Restrictions**

Eligible grantees will receive disaster recovery funds as a separate grant award from their base Head Start and Early Head Start operations grants. Disaster recovery awards shall not be included in the calculation of a grantee's base grant for the subsequent fiscal year. Disaster recovery funds must be awarded by OHS by Sept. 30, 2021. During the period of funding availability, grantees may request needed disaster recovery funds all at once or make subsequent requests for needed funds.

Unless a class waiver has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and a longer project period is issued for a specific grant by OHS, all disaster recovery funds must be expended by recipient grantees within 24 months of their award date. Any funds not expended must be returned to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

None of the disaster recovery funds awarded to grantees will be included in the calculation of the grantee's base grant in subsequent fiscal years. Disaster recovery funds are not subject to the allocation requirement of [Sec. 640\(a\)](#) of the Head Start Act.

If OHS disaster recovery funds are used to fund an eligible expense subsequently paid by FEMA, commercial insurance, or self-insurance, the receipt of proceeds must be reported to OHS and the payment received must be repaid to OHS.

OHS will closely monitor disaster recovery grant awards. Reporting content and frequency requirements will be established by OHS, and on-site visits may be required prior to expenditure of certain funded activities. Financial and programmatic reporting of disaster recovery-funded activities and expenses will be required of all recipient grantees.

In addition to all the information included in this PI, grantees must also comply with all award terms and conditions.

### **Submission of Funding Applications**

All requests for disaster recovery funding will be made through the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES). First, grantees that intend to apply for disaster recovery funding should make a request under the Correspondence tab of their regular grant in HSES for their Program Specialist to create a temporary grant number. Grantees will be notified by the HSES Help Desk when their temporary grant number has been created. Grantees will then submit their requests for disaster recovery funding through the Application tab under this new temporary grant number. Once awarded, the temporary grant will convert to a permanent grant in HSES. Grantees are not limited to a single application, and may request additional temporary grant numbers if needed.

Disaster recovery funding requests require the following **standard forms** and backup documents:

- **SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance**
- **SF-424A Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs**
- A narrative that describes the proposed use of funds. All activities and projects must identify the relationship to a covered disaster and include a timeline clearly indicating when significant project milestones or activities will be executed or occur and when the overall project or activity will be completed
- Governing body and Policy Council decisions
- Non-federal share waiver request, if necessary
- If you are requesting funds for major renovation, construction, or purchase of facilities, you must also submit:
  - **SF-429 Real Property Status Report—Cover Page with Attachment B**
    - Submission instructions can be found at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/pi/acf-pi-hs-17-03>
  - An application fully compliant with the requirements under HSPPS **45 CFR §1303 Subpart E—Facilities**

Additional project or activity information may be required depending on the proposed use of funds.

When you are ready to begin your disaster recovery funding application or if you have questions about the process for submitting a funding application, please contact [OHSDisasterRecovery@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:OHSDisasterRecovery@acf.hhs.gov) along with your program and grant specialists. We are committed to supporting your program throughout this rebuilding and restoration period.

Thank you for your work on behalf of children and families.

/ Dr. Deborah Bergeron /

Dr. Deborah Bergeron  
Director  
Office of Head Start

See also:

[\*\*ACF-IM-HS-19-01 General Disaster Recovery Flexibilities\*\*](#)