

Municipalities

Applicant Briefing 12/02/20

Participant	Question	Response
Jricciuto	Cares only goes thru Dec 30	The CARES or Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF) end date is Dec 30th.
Josee Cardinal Young	Muni CARES Act eligible expenditures are through Dec 30 not Dec 31, right?	The CARES or Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF) end date is Dec 30th.
Trish Benoit-Rudden	My reimbursement request went in, i was told I could not get reimbursed for admin costs for preparation and gathering of documentation till declaration is over, how is that handled if disaster is not closed before 12/31/20?	There are no specific requirements for when applicants initiate a Category Z (Management Cost) project. Since applicants are eligible to receive up to 5% of the total amount approved for all Category B (Emergency Protective Measure) projects, applicants can choose to submit the Category Z project towards the end of the disaster.
Matt E.	What is the name of the other source of funding we can speak to our rep about?	CARES or Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF). MEMA Project Coordinators work directly with FEMA Public Assistance.
Jim Wright	A&F is telling my Finance Director to have us submit for PA assistance even if your MEMA Rep says that the items are not likely to be eligible. That is a lot of work when we are given guidance it will be denied???	Please email your assigned MEMA Project Coordinator a list of costs and they can prepare an eligibility evaluation email that typically is sufficient for the Executive Office of Administration & Finance.
Jim Barclay	I believe we can apply the 25% share not covered by Stafford to CARES, correct?	The Executive Office of Administration & Finance confirmed that Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF) covers the 25% local share of eligible FEMA Public Assistance expenses.
Susan Herman	When will we hear what FEMA has accepted on a project filed by October 15th? It ended for us September 14th as requested by MEMA at that time.	Please contact your MEMA Project Coordinator to ask for a project status update or log into Grants Portal for a live update.
Susan Herman	Wasnt that guidance changed for September 15th not October 15th?	The FEMA interim policy released on 9/1/20 applies to work performed on or after 9/15/20.
June Poland	When will we get approval on submitted expenses? We can't correctly apply to the Cares Act until we know what dollar amounts are still unpaid for through FEMA.	MEMA is unable to provide concrete timelines for when applicants will receive a FEMA determination. Please contact your MEMA Project Coordinator to ask for a project status update. Your Project Coordinator can also prepare an eligibility evaluation email that typically is sufficient for the Executive Office of Administration & Finance.
Angus Jennings	The response we've seen from MEMA is that certain costs are likely to be ineligible. But the CARES templates automatically nets out 75% of certain categories of costs even if we know those costs will NOT be eligible for FEMA. These costs tend to relate to cleaning/safety measures (air filters, plexiglas etc) for non-public safety buildings (like town hall and schools).	Email your MEMA project coordinator with a list of those costs and they will draft you a response to say whether it is eligible or ineligible. That email can then be provided to A&F
Sgt. Stephen Louf	What if town hall encompasses the EOC, police, and DPW?	Costs are limited to the specific areas that are performing eligible Covid-19 emergency response activities. So costs eligible for reimbursement will be limited to your EOC and police.
Shad Ahmed	FEMA will allow that one-time exception for city facility cleaning post 9/15 as well or just pre 9/15?	Prior to 9/15/20, FEMA allows a one-time cleaning in eligible public facilities. After 9/15/20, costs related to disinfection/decontamination are only eligible in facilities performing eligible emergency response activities. Note that the cleaning must follow CDC guidance and be "in excess of current operating costs."
Justin Casanova-Davis	If that is the case, then will these costs be covered under CARES funds from the state?	Please contact the Executive Office of Administration & Finance to confirm this for your municipality.
Josh Shanley - Northampton	Will costs related to cleaning of congregate shelters set up to reduce spread of COVID in the community be eligible?	Non-congregate shelters operated by municipalities that are serving first-responders and high-risk individuals (i.e. over 65, underlying health conditions) are eligible for FEMA Public Assistance. Private Non-Profits must enter into agreements with municipalities to submit costs associated with non-congregate sheltering.
Kathy Butters	Are Dept of Public works employees considered essential workers?	The employees must be performing eligible COVID-19 emergency response activities, as detailed in the presentation.
Mimi Bernardo	Has anyone been reimbursed for school supplies because items such as scissors, markers, crayons can no longer be shared? I was told 'no' by Cares, but I feel like this should be reimbursed. We have 2 elementary schools and they really can't absorb this. Kids used to be able to share supplies. Now they can't. I dont see why these items are not allowable for reimbursement from Cares. Thoughts?	Unfortunately, these are not eligible costs for FEMA Public Assistance. The Executive Office of Administration & Finance will need to provide clarification regarding CARES or Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF)
Jennifer M. Gallant	What is the recommended course of action if cleaning of town hall/school/etc. was included in the first CARES Act application, approved, and paid out with the assumption that it was FEMA eligible? At that time, there was no guidance stating otherwise.	Please contact the Executive Office of Administration & Finance to discuss steps to reconciling these costs.

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Jim Wright	How about municipal self-funded employee health insurance payments for COVID testing and treatment of COVID positive patients?	Health insurance payments are not eligible expenses for FEMA Public Assistance funding.
Lynne Shaw	I did not meet the 300. minimum expense before the Sept 15 deadline...can I add them and do post Sept 15?	Yes you can combine these costs and submit one application in Grants Portal.
Lynne Shaw	Second, I bought items for school needs for increase in emergency GO kits with the additional of cleaning soaps and also coolers and ice packs when the school was mandated to send meals home. Are those reimbursable?	Unfortunately, these are not eligible costs for FEMA Public Assistance. Please explore other available funding sources like USDA.
Eileen Messina	What about overtime costs to backfill Police and Fire for people that have or have been exposed to COVID	Overtime costs associated with backfilling a position are only eligible for FEMA Public Assistance when the employee is performing an eligible COVID-19 emergency response activity. The leave pay for the individual that contracted COVID-19 is ineligible.
david	what about PPE purchase to cover potential shelter operation	PPEs are only eligible for facilities/individuals performing eligible COVID-19 emergency response activities. Non-congregate shelters operated by municipalities that are serving first-responders and high-risk individuals (i.e. over 65, underlying health conditions) are eligible for FEMA Public Assistance.
Kathy Butters	Was the PPE purchased reimbursable for town hall employees & school employees before Sept 15th?	PPEs are only eligible for facilities/individuals performing eligible COVID-19 emergency response activities. PPE provided to individuals not performing eligible emergency work, i.e. town hall employees or school staff will most likely not be eligible for reimbursement.
Lynne Shaw	Is the school nurse considered emergency worker since she is screening students and staff and doing tracing...we are still in school, not 100% virtual?	Contact tracing is ineligible for FEMA Public Assistance. FEMA region plans to provide additional information.
Rebecca Sanderson	Are air purifiers covered?	Air Purifiers will most likely not be eligible for reimbursement if installed in facilities where non-eligible emergency work is being performed, i.e. schools or town halls.
Susan Herman	Law Enforcement and Security? Can you define what is reimbursable?	Overtime costs for law enforcement or security provided for COVID-19 related activities. For example, municipalities can claim overtime costs for law enforcement used to provide security at testing location sites.
Tracy R	Would that include a student w/confirmed case?	For schools, facility cleanings within CDC guidelines are eligible for reimbursement if there is a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case for a staff member or student.
Angel Wills	Are all these items that are now ineligible after 9/15 by FEMA eligible under CARES Act?	Please contact the Executive Office of Administration & Finance to request input.
Susan Herman	So cleaning/disinfecting - if it is a result of a specific incident is reimbursable for schools or other town buildings?	Prior to 9/15/20, FEMA allows a one-time cleaning in eligible public facilities. After 9/15/20, costs related to disinfection/decontamination are only eligible in facilities performing eligible emergency response activities. Note that the cleaning must follow CDC guidance and be "in excess of current operating costs."
jeffrey Peterson	Is routine disinfecting of Fire apparatus and police cruisers eligible after 9/15?	The FEMA 9/1/20 interim policy outlines that disinfection of facilities where emergency work is performed is eligible. Note that the cleaning must follow CDC guidance and be "in excess of current operating costs." In essence, the cleaning of public safety facilities/vehicles is eligible if emergency work is performed there and the costs are "excess" of regular cleanings (prior to covid-19).
Matt E.	My workbook says it is password protected. I can't paste anything... just type in EVERYTHING - which is crazy. How can I fix this??	The MEMA workbook is password protected to maintain the integrity of the integrated formulas. Please do not copy and paste in the document.
Lynne Shaw	As a Town we had an older version of Exell and had to purchase an updated version to even open the worksheets. The older version would read the workbook as a corrupt file. Is it an eligible reimbursable cost?	Yes, the purchase of software to aid in your administration of the FEMA PA program is eligible for reimbursement as a Category Z (management cost). Please keep these costs separate from your Category B (response cost) expenses.
Sue Bartlett	Is the \$131,100 limit the amount for 100% of the costs? or is it the limit of the 75% reimbursement?	\$131,000 is only the threshold that differentiates between a large and small FEMA project and is dependant on the 100% eligible cost. The cost share reimbursement from FEMA Public Assistance is 75% for both small and large projects.
Angel Wills	I can't possibly complete the CARES Act reconciliation until I know how much FEMA will be reimbursing. I submitted my FEMA reimbursement application by the stated deadline. Any idea when we will receive a response from FEMA?	Please email your assigned MEMA Project Coordinator a list of costs and they can prepare an eligibility evaluation email that typically is sufficient for the Executive Office of Administration & Finance.

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Ifisher@merrimacfire.org	Do items qualify for prior to 9/15, if they were ordered and confirmed for delivery, but ended up delayed due to supply chain issues.?	The FEMA interim policy released on 9/1/20 applies to work performed on or after 9/15/20. If the items were ordered, but not used or even paid for until after 9/15, then the post 9/15 guidance would apply.
Sgt. Stephen Louf	If our DPW owns a fogger to routinely disinfect, and we're keeping a log of their times. Is it only eligible is its Overtime?	Prior to 9/15/20, FEMA allows a one-time cleaning in eligible public facilities. After 9/15/20, costs related to disinfection/decontamination are only eligible in facilities performing eligible emergency response activities. Note that the cleaning must follow CDC guidance and be "in excess of current operating costs."
Chris Webb	If PPE was bought with grant money from DPH is that purchase eligible?	No, this is considered a duplication of benefits.
wwiiks	I agree about the Cares Act reconciliation. If we don't know how much FEMA is reimbursing until next year, we will miss the Cares Act window for ineligible costs through FEMA	Please email your assigned MEMA Project Coordinator a list of costs and they can prepare an eligibility evaluation email that typically is sufficient for the Executive Office of Administration & Finance.
Cathy LaRocca	Will plexiglass for library, town hall and disinfection for town hall (which never fully closed) be eligible for CARES? The town has already spent a significant amount on this.	Please contact the Executive Office of Administration & Finance to request input.
Dustin Hinkel	can we start submitting CAT Z PWs as soon as our first PW is obligated	There are no specific requirements for when applicants initiate a Category Z (Management Cost) project; however, the applicant must have at least one project obligated. Since applicants are eligible to receive up to 5% of the total amount approved for all Category B (Emergency Protective Measure) projects, applicants can choose to submit the Category Z project towards the end of the disaster.
Chris Webb	I have not heard from a Project Coordinator. Who do I reach out to?	If you are not sure who your program coordinator is please email disaster.recovery@mass.gov so that we can look this up for you and provide direct contact information for you. You can also check in FEMA Grants Portal under your State Contacts for this disaster. Only applicants with an approved RPA are assigned a project coordinator.
Chris Bouchard	As DPW was made a first responder (HSPD-8) is ppe, vehicle disinfection covered due to having to handle wastewater (which we have been testing for covid with bio-bot since the beginning and has been detected) trash / recycling, storm damage clearing of roads and normal work that needs to continue operations.	Wastewater, trash, recycling, storm damage clearing of roads are not eligible FEMA COVID-19 emergency response activities, so the supplies (PPEs) for the employees performing those activities are ineligible.
chif Lachance	We hired temporary employees to log entry to several city buildings to facilitate contract tracing. City Hall is one of the building. Can we capture this cost?	Contact tracing is ineligible for FEMA Public Assistance.
Chris Webb	Are expenses paid for by Cares Act eligible?	The Executive Office of Administration & Finance confirmed that Corona Virus Relief Funding (CvRF) covers the 25% local share of eligible FEMA Public Assistance expenses.
Susannah Carey	The Town of Pelham is also waiting to hear back from FEMA about our PA	Please contact your assigned MEMA Project Coordinator to ask for a status update.
Dustin Hinkel	What happens to the PW after it passes FEMA final review?	The project moves to the Recipient (MEMA) final review queue.
Kathleen Barrette	How are questions/issues from MEMA/FEMA communicated to us? Does our rep reach out or another method?	The FEMA or MEMA reviewers contact applicants directly to request any necessary clarification/support.
NANCY JOHNSON	All of my documents were sent in as requested by MEMA and still I haven't heard anything. Our rep suggested she would try to expedite the process but I never heard back from her. Knowing how much FEMA will reimburse is key to knowing how much to request in the final CARES act round	Please follow-up with your assigned MEMA Project Coordinator to ask for a status update.
claviolette	Sorry if I missed discussion on this matter already. Is there a time limit on submission of a second project request to FEMA if I believe that our 2nd round of funding through CvRF has FEMA eligible expenses?	This disaster is ongoing and FEMA has not established a deadline to incur expenses. FEMA will provide 30 day notification once this date is set.
Richard Ferreira	What about the cleaning of police and fire vehicles?	Routine cleanings of such vehicles will not be eligible for reimbursement; however, cleanings that go beyond the routine cleaning due to COVID-19 will most likely be eligible. If the disinfecting (not cleaning) is due to exposure to a confirmed or suspected COVID case then the work will most likely be eligible. This will primarily apply to police cars and ambulances not so much fire trucks due to minimal citizen contact.
Jennifer M. Gallant	Are election expenses over and above the norm (based on set up and disinfection solely related to Covid) an eligible expense?	Elections and Town Meetings are not eligible emergency response activities, so expenses are ineligible for FEMA Public Assistance.

Participant		Question	Response
Deputy Dan Keane		Overtime for covering Covid positive vacancies??	Overtime costs associated with backfilling a position are only eligible for FEMA Public Assistance when the employee is performing an eligible COVID-19 emergency response activity. The leave pay for the individual that contracted COVID-19 is ineligible.
Shad Ahmed		So to be clear, EOC, PD, and FD cleaning is now only for a confirmed positive, and not just regular disinfection (not just cleaning, but specifically sanitization)? City facilities can also be cleaned for a confirmed positive?	EOC, PD, and FD are more likely performing eligible emergency work. Prior to 9/15/20, FEMA allows a one-time cleaning in eligible public facilities. After 9/15/20, costs related to disinfection/decontamination are only eligible in facilities performing eligible emergency response activities. Note that the cleaning must follow CDC guidance and be "in excess of current operating costs."
Josh Shanley - Northampton		Homeless in a church	Please email your project coordinator and provide more information on this question.
Shad Ahmed		Would also like some clarification regarding non-congregate sheltering policy	Please see the FEMA FAQ detailing non-congregate sheltering: https://www.fema.gov/news-release/20200722/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-non-congregate-sheltering
neal aspesi		RE: Board of Health activities. Are board of health directors and nurses considered emergency employees? What activities are and are not reimbursible? Are their facilities considered eligible for disinfecting? Thank you.	Please see the FEMA Eligibility Policy released on 9/1/20 (https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/fema_policy_104-009-19_PA-eligibility-policy-covid.pdf) for a full list of eligible Emergency Protective Measures. As examples, reasonable expenses related to information dissemination are eligible, but cost for contact tracing are ineligible.
Laurie Giardella		Are you allowed to provide testing to all employees of the municipality, administered at the Municipal sites?	Expenses related to Community-Based testing sites operated by municipalities are eligible for FEMA Public Assistance.
Anne Spillane		Our town is considering purchasing a service in which the town sends in COVID test kits to the service to get a test result overnight, since in our area testing is not easily found quickly and this puts police out of work longer while they are waiting to be tested. Do you think this service would be covered?	Costs associated with community based testing is eligible for FEMA PA Reimbursement.
John Danizio		Did Amanda just say that OT costs for covering covid positive fire and police shifts is not covered?????	Overtime costs associated with backfilling a position are only eligible for FEMA Public Assistance when the employee is performing an eligible COVID-19 emergency response activity. The leave pay for the individual that contracted COVID-19 is ineligible.
Laurie Giardella		What if Fire Dept opens an additional temporary house to limit COVID transmission of first responders? Are those hours allowed?	Overtime hours for full-time budgeted employees performing COVID-19 emergency response activities are eligible for FEMA Public Assistance.
chif Lachance		So if a FF/paramedic becomes sick with COVID from a call, the costs to backfill are not eligible?	Correct. It is not eligible for reimbursement from FEMA PA.
Shad Ahmed		Contact Tracing is NOT eligible. I thought fema policy allowed if HHS funding was exhausted?	Per the FEMA Eligibility Policy released on 9/1/20, contact tracing is not eligible for Public Assistance funding.
Tracy R		We specifically asked ...Can we claim back fill for first responders who contracted COVID-19? Yes, I have attached a Cat B Labor	Overtime costs associated with backfilling a position are only eligible for FEMA Public Assistance when the employee is performing an eligible COVID-19 emergency response activity. The leave pay for the individual that contracted COVID-19 is ineligible.