

FEMA REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOLS

1. *How do I get my expenses incurred reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)?* Last updated 3/31/20

On March 13, 2020, the President issued a nationwide emergency declaration for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The FEMA designation for this is DR-4485. This opens up funding through FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program for reimbursement for emergency protective measures. FEMA has simplified the [process](#) to support eligible entities. You will need to take the following steps to start this process:

1. Participate in a virtual applicant briefing that will provide vital information on this process.
 - Applicant briefings started in the week of March 23, 2020 and are ongoing.
 - Visit this link for the schedule of applicant briefings: <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/#1584998707036-c4e58f25-6498>
2. Submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) – You can complete this step prior to participating in the applicant briefing.
 - **If you DO have an existing FEMA account** (from a previous disaster) in the [FEMA Grants Portal](#) (<https://grantee.fema.gov/>), please login, and you will be asked if you want to submit an RPA for DR-4485.
 - **If you DO NOT have an account in the FEMA Grants Portal**, please send an [email](mailto:TDEMRecovery.RPA@tdem.texas.gov) to TDEMRecovery.RPA@tdem.texas.gov to request an account. You will need to provide the primary contact name, name of jurisdiction/potential applicant, phone number and email address. You will then receive an automated email invitation from the FEMA Grants Portal, and, after the account creation is completed, you will be asked if you would like to submit an RPA for COVID-19 (DR-4485)

2. *How do I know which expenses will be reimbursed?* Last updated 3/31/20

FEMA has launched a [website](#) that lists the eligible expenses for this disaster. The costs to deliver online classes for school districts, charter schools, and colleges are not eligible.

3. *When can I apply for funding?* Last updated 3/31/20

You can apply for funding as soon as FEMA has approved your application in the FEMA Portal. You can use the FEMA [Job Aid](#) (to start collecting the information FEMA will require so it can be transferred to the portal once your RPA is approved.

4. How much of my incurred eligible expenses will FEMA cover? Last updated 3/31/20

The federal cost share is 75%, and the share for a district or charter school is 25%.

5. Do I need to document my expenses? Last updated 3/31/20

Yes! Applicants must maintain records sufficient to detail the history of a procurement. While FEMA approval is not required for noncompetitive procurement under the emergency or exigency exception, you must document and provide justification for the use of the exigent or emergency exception. Document everything you spend time and money on, including:

- Force account labor
- Force account equipment
- Force account materials
- Rentals
- Contracts
- Procurement documentation
- Donated resources

6. What is the deadline for applying for FEMA reimbursement? Last updated 3/31/20

The deadline is 30 days after the major disaster declaration is declared over. Since that has not happened yet, we recommend that you complete the application steps as soon as possible.

7. Where else can I find information about the FEMA reimbursement process? Last updated 3/31/20

- Send an email to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) at TDEMRecovery.RPA@tdem.texas.gov with questions
- FEMA COVID-19 Fact Sheet: <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2020/03/23/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-public-assistance-simplified-application>
- TDEM's website: <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY TO SUPPORT FEMA REIMBURSEMENT

1. If a district has a DEA(LOCAL) policy that lacks a premium pay provision, will it qualify for FEMA reimbursement for overtime expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19? Last updated 3/31/20

FEMA requires that a premium pay (overtime) policy be in place before a disaster, per page 23 of the most recent version of its [Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide](#).

2. *Would a district be eligible for FEMA reimbursement for premium/overtime expenses incurred post-policy adoption, if the policy was adopted after the disaster was declared?* Last updated 3/31/20

No, not under current FEMA requirements. However, this requirement is potentially subject to change, based on the severity and geographic scope of the pandemic. As a result, TEA's guidance is that every district should adopt the policy, if it has not already done so, as soon as possible. A policy adopted in this instance by board resolution should explicitly amend any existing pay and premium pay policies in effect to reflect the revised DEA(LOCAL) policy. Districts should ensure that any retroactive application of a revised DEA(LOCAL) policy applies only to premium pay payments previously made during the current disaster and is not used to pay district employees retroactively for work performed during the disaster prior to amending the DEA(LOCAL) policy. Districts should consult with legal counsel regarding premium pay payment timing issues.

Additionally, there may be other sources of federal reimbursement beyond FEMA, that aren't subject to the same constraints requiring pre-adoption.

3. *If my district wants to adopt a DEA(LOCAL) policy that addresses premium pay, are there examples to model from?* Last updated 3/31/20

Yes. TASB has created and has agreed to share with TEA and the education field a [template policy version](#) that addresses pay during closures and premium pay during disasters.