

FTA and Emergency Preparedness

As the Atlantic hurricane season enters its most active phase, FTA is actively working to keep their recipient emergency contact information up to date. When a storm heads toward the Gulf of Mexico, FTA will send out an email to the recipients most likely in the path of the storm to provide updates related to any **planned or proposed evacuation services**, including steps taken to protect equipment and facilities, requests you may have for FTA assistance, and steps you are taking to ensure social distancing during the pandemic. If no activities are planned, please let FTA know that as well.

If you are activated to provide emergency evacuation services, or your services/ facilities/ equipment are impacted in any way, please provide FTA the following information **on a daily basis**:

- Emergency transportation services being provided, including number of passengers. If number of passengers cannot be provided, please provide the number of trips, and types/capacity of vehicles so that number of passengers can be estimated.
- Status of regular service.
- Damages to vehicles and facilities.
- Impacts to transit employees.

Please send your responses to these requests to Terence Plaskon (terence.plaskon@dot.gov) and Laura Wallace (laura.wallace@dot.gov).

FTA would like to remind recipients that they may assist with evacuations or other movement of people that might otherwise be considered charter transportation when that transportation is in response to an emergency declared by the President, governor, or mayor, or in an emergency requiring immediate action prior to a formal declaration. Please make sure you keep records of transportation services provided to evacuees and the cost of these services as they may be reimbursed by FTA or FEMA.

FTA has posted information for transit agencies on its hurricane and natural disaster response page.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/emergency-relief-program/fta-hurricane-natural-disaster-response>

Additional guidance is provided in the *Federal Register* Notice to Establishment of Emergency Relief Docket for Calendar Year 2020 related to the temporary relief from FTA administrative and statutory requirements. For example, 5307 or 5311 funds awarded to address an emergency could be subject to the waiver of statutory and administrative requirements if the requirements limit the ability of a grantee/ subgrantee to respond to an emergency.

<https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=FTA-2020-0001>

FTA provides guidance on FTA's Emergency Relief (ER) Program and is intended for States and transit agencies that may be affected by a declared emergency or disaster and may seek funding under FTA's ER Program. This document also provides information on other disaster relief resources available through FTA and from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The ER Program guide has an excellent summary of Frequently Asked Questions beginning on Page 59.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/emergency-relief-program/emergency-relief-program>

Also, the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) program reimburses State and local governments, federally recognized tribes and certain private nonprofit organizations in designated counties for eligible expenses incurred before, during and after an event on a cost-share basis. This money helps pay for efforts to protect people and property, restore power, repair roads and clean up neighborhoods. For more information about PA grants and Direct Federal Assistance, visit: <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-policy-and-guidance>

Should your agency be affected by a declared emergency, it is important that all expenses related to disaster response before, during, and after the event be documented so that they can be evaluated for reimbursement eligibility if disaster or emergency relief funding is made available. The major data points that should be tracked include:

- The type of any emergency transportation services being provided, including the number and type of vehicles, the number of trips provided, the number of passengers transported, the dates and hours of service, and any fares collected for emergency transportation services.
- Emergency protective measures put in place to protect transit assets and/or personnel.
- Damages to vehicles, facilities, or equipment.
- Any temporary or permanent repairs made to damaged vehicles, facilities, or equipment.