

# Elevation: Instructions

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*\*The following information is intended for guidance only and is not a request for information. The following template is only intended to help the reader understand the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) application process.*

This document provides instructions on how to complete the application for an elevation project under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). This application is intended to be used only for elevation projects applications.

The user can provide the requested information by adding text or comments to the form, or by including the information in a separate document with their subapplication.

Additional technical guidance is provided in the attached Elevation Technical Review Job Aid (Technical Job Aid) and the Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) Elevation: Information Required for Environmental Review Job Aid (EHP Job Aid), which are referenced throughout these instructions.

## A. Applicant/Subapplicant Information

1. **Applicant/Subapplicant Legal Name:** Enter your organization's legal name.
2. **Organizational Unit:** Enter the name of the department or agency within your organization that is pursuing the grant.
3. **Project Title:** Enter the name of the project title. The title should be short but descriptive (e.g., Everytown Residential Elevation Project).
4. **Applicant/Subapplicant Type:** Enter the type of applicant or subapplicant; refer to Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Guidance (Part III, Sections A and B) for information on Eligible Applicants and Subapplicants.
5. **Proposed Project Total Cost:** Enter the total cost of the project in the first field provided. In the fields beneath that, indicate the percentage and dollar amount of both the federal and nonfederal shares for the project.
6. **Certifications:** Read the statement provided and enter the requested information to certify the Applicant/Subapplicant reviewed and concurred with the HMA program requirements.
7. **Mitigation Plan:** Mark the appropriate box—Yes or No. If Yes was marked, provide the specified information for the Local and State/Territorial/Tribal Mitigation Plan. Refer to HMA Guidance (Part III, Section E.5) for information on hazard mitigation plan requirements.
8. **National Flood Insurance Program:** Mark the appropriate box—Yes or No. HMGP mitigation project subapplications for projects sites within the Special Flood Hazard Area are eligible only if the jurisdiction in which the project is located is participating in the program.
9. Enter the **Tax ID Number**, five-digit Federal Information Processing Standards (**FIPS**) code, six-digit **Community Identification Number**, and Data Universal Numbering System (**DUNS**) number for the Applicant/Subapplicant.
10. Enter the **U.S. Congressional District** for your jurisdiction, if applicable.
11. Enter the **State Legislative District** for your jurisdiction, if applicable.



12. **Primary Point of Contact:** Enter the contact information for the person coordinating the implementation of this grant throughout the application process.
13. **Alternate Point of Contact:** Enter the name and contact information for the alternate point of contact who can coordinate the implementation of this grant when the primary point of contact is not available.
14. **Authorized Applicant/Subapplicant Agent:** Enter the name and contact information for the authorized agent for your organization. The Authorized Applicant/Subapplicant Agent **MUST** be the chief executive officer, mayor, or person of comparable status who is authorized to sign contracts, authorize funding allocations or payments, etc.

## B. Project Narrative and Scope of Work

Mitigation projects funded by HMA must be both technically feasible and effective at mitigating the risks of the hazard(s) for which the project was designed. Effective mitigation measures funded with an HMA grant provide a long-term or permanent solution to a risk from a natural hazard. It is recommended that the applicant consult a licensed qualified professional to assist in preparing the application as many of the documentation requirements are technical in nature.

1. Insert the name and applicant/subapplicant type for your organization and indicate the quantity of existing buildings included in the project.
2. Provide a detailed description of the project purpose and flood hazard being mitigated. Describe past flooding events that have affected the proposed properties. Include information on past damages and the federal disaster declaration number, if applicable. See **Steps 1** and **10** of the **Technical Job Aid**.
3. Provide a project narrative clearly outlining the existing conditions of the structure(s) to be elevated, including building use, building type, number of stories, presence of basement, lowest floor elevation (LFE), foundation type, and square footage.
4. Provide a detailed scope of work. Identify the tasks required to complete the proposed activity and define the tasks to be accomplished in clear, concise, and meaningful terms. See **Steps 1** and **8** of the **Technical Job Aid** and **Sections 1** and **2** of the **EHP Job Aid** for additional guidance. The scope of work should include the following:
  - Define the level of protection (i.e., the number of feet the LFE of the structure is being raised over the base flood elevation).
  - Describe the mechanism for elevation.
  - Would the footprint of the building be enlarged? Describe any new elements that would be constructed on the site. Would any stairs or porches be added to the structure?
  - Describe the activities needed to elevate utilities, if known.
  - Describe debris disposal and erosion control methods.
  - If the project would disturb the ground for any reason, describe the activities, both temporary and permanent, that would require ground disturbance.
  - Provide the design criteria to which the project will comply, including relevant building codes and standards (e.g., Federal Flood Risk Management Standards [FFRMS], International Residential Building Code [IRC] or International Existing Building Code [IEBC], American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 24 *Flood Resistant Design and Construction*). Include the relevant edition(s) of the code(s) and standard(s).

- Describe any additional mitigation that would be accomplished with the elevation.
5. Describe how the scope of work solves a problem independently or is a functional portion of a solution where there is verification that the overall project is being completed.
  6. Provide technical data to support the scope of work. See **Step 3** of the **Technical Job Aid** for additional guidance.

## C. Building Information

Fill out the Elevation Application – Building Information spreadsheet and attach it to application. The data requested on the spreadsheet helps support technical feasibility and provides documentation for inputs used in the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) toolkit. See **Steps 2 and 7** of the **Technical Job Aid** for additional guidance.

## D. Alternatives Considered

Mitigation project alternatives are required as part of application development. Indicate at least three alternative actions that were considered in the planning process:

1. No Action Alternative and its consequences.
2. Alternative that was considered but not selected, and why.
3. Additional alternative actions considered but not selected (not required).
4. The Proposed Action alternative is the project you are proposing in the application; explain why it is the most practical, effective and environmentally sound alternative.

See **Step 1** of the **Technical Job Aid** and **Step 1** of the **EHP Job Aid** for additional guidance.

## E. Compliance Requirements

1. Subapplicants should confirm that the project meets the compliance requirements by checking the following boxes:
  - The project follows the most recent versions of FFRMS, ASCE 24, IEBC, or IRC; other local codes, standards, and ordinances as applicable; and federal requirements.
  - For structures located in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), the subapplicant must verify if the proposed project triggers a substantial improvement and confirm that the project will be in compliance with the current local floodplain management ordinance.
  - For structures that remain in the SFHA after the implementation of the mitigation project, flood insurance must be maintained for the life of the structure to an amount at least equal to the project cost or to the maximum limit of coverage made available with respect to the particular property, whichever is less. The maximum limit of coverage made available is defined as the replacement cost value of the structure up to \$250,000 for residential and \$500,000 for nonresidential. Insurance coverage on the property must be maintained during the life of the property regardless of transfer of ownership of such property.

## F. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Considerations

Projects potentially could impact nearby physical, cultural (historic and archaeological), biological, and/or social resources. Below are questions about potential impacts the project may have on these resources. Please note that some of these may not be applicable to your project. See the **EHP Job Aid** for more details.

1. Has the public been notified or provided input? If so, provide dates and methods of outreach. If not, describe any planned public engagement activities for the project. (See **Section 3A** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
2. Describe any agency coordination and permits obtained from federal, state, or local agencies to implement the project. Include copies of any coordination materials, permit applications, or approvals. (See **Section 3B** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
3. Describe any studies that have been conducted for the project or for projects that were recently built nearby. Studies could include evaluations of cultural resources (e.g., historic, archaeological) or environmental resources (e.g., threatened and endangered species, wetlands, hydrology). Provide copies if these are available. (See **Section 3C** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
4. If the project is in a floodplain, describe the project activities that would occur or be located in the floodplain, if applicable. Show on a map where project activities would overlap with floodplains. (See **Section 3D** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
5. Describe any surface waters in or near the project area (e.g., ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, other waterbodies). Describe any measures that would be used to avoid waterbodies or avoid impacting water (e.g., setbacks, silt fence). Show where project activities would overlap with wetlands or other waterbodies on a map. (See **Section 3E** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
6. Describe any known hazardous or contaminated materials at the project site including underground tanks (e.g., fuel, septic). Describe how underground tanks would be removed or decommissioned in place. If the project requires the use of hazardous materials (including herbicides), describe their use and best management practices to minimize environmental exposure. (See **Section 3F** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
7. Would the project involve the use of imported fill? If yes, describe the type and source of the fill material. (See **Section 3G** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
8. If the project would remove vegetation for any reason, describe the type and amount or area of vegetation (e.g., two oak trees, one-quarter acre of turf grass). Describe how vegetation would be removed, if applicable (e.g., root ball removal, flush cut, dug up, chemical weed killer). If using herbicides, describe best management practices for their use. Estimate during which months or seasons vegetation removal would occur. Will the project replant or restore vegetation when construction is complete? Describe the plants that would be installed and the equipment and methods to be used. Would any special techniques be used to ensure survival of the plants/ seeds (e.g., mulch, irrigation, protective fencing)? (See **Section 3H** of the **EHP Job Aid**)
9. List any best management practices that would be used during project construction. (See **Section 3I** of the **EHP Job Aid**)

## **G. Estimated Work Schedule**

Specify the duration of each process component required to complete the project. Although the components' occurrences are not necessarily sequential and activities may be carried out concurrently, the total project timeline cannot exceed the period of performance for HMGP, which is 36 months. For additional guidance, see **Step 4** of the **Technical Job Aid**.

## H. Budget Estimating

1. **Costing Methodology:** Indicate which method(s) was used to determine the project costs. Choose whether the estimates were obtained from construction contractors and similar vendors, historical data from previous projects/activities (with an inflation factor, as needed), property appraiser, local property tax assessment data, online real estate websites, or other national cost estimating reference. If none of these were used, choose “Other” and describe the methodology used to develop the cost estimate. For additional guidance, see **Step 5** of the **Technical Job Aid**
2. **Cost Estimate:** Enter the costs associated with all tasks/activities necessary to complete the project, as applicable. Ensure all tasks/activities match the information included in all other documentation provided with the application. All costs should be detailed and not contain any lump sums. The cost estimate should include a line-item breakdown of costs consistent with all elements described in the Project Narrative and Scope of Work and Budget Estimating sections of the application. For additional guidance, see **Step 5** of the **Technical Job Aid**. Common cost categories may include:
  - Pre-award costs (must have occurred after the declaration date of the relevant disaster)
  - EHP-related Costs
  - Engineering/Design Fees
  - Permit Fees
  - Surveying Costs
  - Site Preparation
  - Building Demolition and Material/Debris Disposal Costs
  - Construction Costs (building of foundation, physical elevation of structures, elevating and reconnecting utilities, elevation of existing decks or porches, constructing stairs and railings, etc.); refer to HMA Guidance Section E.4.2 for a list of eligible structure elevation costs.
  - Inspection Costs
  - Elevation Certificate, Title Search, and Deed Recording Fees
3. **Budget Narrative:** Provide a budget narrative with explanations, justifications, and line-item details of the project costs. If needed, indicate in box that the narrative is in an attachment to the application and provide with application submittal.

The budget narrative should explain how costs were derived, including any details not in the line items. For additional guidance, see **Step 5** of the **Technical Job Aid**.

## I. Nonfederal Funding Share (25% of Total Planning Grant Costs)

List all sources and amounts used in the nonfederal share, including all in-kind services. In-kind services may not exceed the 25% nonfederal share. For each source, indicate the name of the source agency, describe the type of funding, and the amount.

Attach letters of funding commitment for each source. FEMA administers cost-sharing requirements consistent with 2 CFR Sections 200.29, 200.306 and 200.434.

## J. Cost-Effectiveness

The BCA should be developed in accordance with **Step 11** of the **Technical Job Aid**. The Technical Job Aid will provide additional guidance for developing the BCA, including what supporting documentation is required for the BCA.

1. **Cost-effectiveness Methodology:** Indicate which methodology was used to evaluate cost-effectiveness for the project. Select the appropriate BCA approach for your project.

If pre-calculated benefits are used, the structure(s) must be in the SFHA and the average cost of all structures in the project must meet the stated criterion in the FEMA memorandum, *Update to “Cost Effectiveness Determinations for Acquisitions and Elevations in Special Flood Hazard Areas Using Pre-Calculated Benefits”* (dated September 29, 2021). Refer to **Step 11A** of the **Technical Job Aid**.

If BCA software was used, indicate the benefit-cost ratio. Refer to **Steps 10** and **11b** and **Table 2** of the **Technical Job Aid**. BCA software can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/benefit-cost-analysis>, including explanation of how to use the tool. It is a best practice to provide a BCA narrative as supporting documentation. The BCA narrative should describe the methodology, assumptions, and justifications for all inputs to the subapplication documentation. All inputs for the BCA must be documented unless a FEMA standard or default value is used

## K. Required Documentation Attached

Indicate all attachments to be included with this form. Provide other comments, information or explanations in the box provided after the required documentation checklist in the form. The checklist includes:

- Photographs of each property: Photographs should represent the appearance of each property site at the time of application. Ensure that photographs are clearly labeled. See **Step 9** of the **Technical Job Aid** and **Step 2** of the **EHP Job Aid**.
- Project site map(s): Provide a map(s) showing the project location(s). If the project includes multiple structures, show the project boundaries. See **Step 6** of the **Technical Job Aid**.
- Flood hazard data: FIRMette with property locations clearly marked. FIRMettes can be accessed in the FEMA Flood Map Service Center (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>). Alternatively, the flood risk may be demonstrated by providing copies of data from an applicable FEMA FIS, independent engineering study used to assess flood risk for the project or historical flood event data. See **Step 10** of the **Technical Job Aid**.
- Completed Elevation Application – “Building Information” spreadsheet.
- Building information supporting documentation, including tax cards for each property.
- Technical data, as available
- Detailed schedule, if necessary
- Consultation documentation
  - State Historic Preservation Officers Consultation, required if any of the following applies:
    - Structure is 45 years or older at the time of FEMA review
    - New ground is being disturbed
    - Project is located in a Historic District

- Appropriate BCA documentation, including an export of the BCA Tool and .pdf of the BCA Report from the toolkit (if applicable) and all supporting documentation
- Funds commitment letter, which lists the sources and amounts used in the nonfederal share requirement, including all in-kind services. Fund commitment letters are also required from nonapplicant sources.
- Assurances (FEMA Form 112-0-3C or 20-16c (Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements), and SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Programs) if applicable)
- Completed SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance), signed by the authorized representative of the jurisdiction
- Completed SF-424d (Construction Programs) and SF-424c (Budget Information for Construction Programs)
- Detailed budget, with additional budget narrative if the box provided in the form is not sufficient
- Documentation to support annual maintenance costs and a signed assurance letter, if applicable
- Designated Authorized Agent documentation designating authority for the signatory to sign contracts, authorize funding allocations or payments, or apply for grant funding that is signed by the ruling body of the applicant
- Statement from the subapplicant or licensed qualified professional stipulating the project will be designed to comply with federal requirements and the latest versions of ASCE 24, IEBC or IRC, and other local codes, standards and ordinances as applicable.
- If there will be additional items not listed, please indicate those items in the comment box below this section.