

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide: Codes and Standards Updates

The 2023 update to the Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide (HMA Guide) provides expanded guidance on codes and standards activities for the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) and [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire](#).

These fact sheets summarize specific policy changes in the 2023 HMA Guide. For complete policy details, read all relevant sections of the 2023 [HMA Guide](#).

Changes to Codes and Standards Activities

The HMA Guide includes the following changes regarding codes and standards activities for these two programs.

- Expanded Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities codes and standards activity eligibility to Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire and provided a dedicated codes and standards activity section in Part 11.
- Included additional details regarding post-disaster building code enforcement in Part 3 and Part 11.
- Renamed the “Additional 5% Initiative” to “5% Codes and Standards” and revised the eligibility criteria.

Expansion of Eligible Codes and Standards Activities

The HMA Guide has expanded eligible codes and standards activities that were made available under Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities to both Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire. These changes increase the availability and accessibility of these funds for state, local, tribal and territorial governments.



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Codes and standards activities that may be eligible under these programs include:

- Evaluation of the adoption and/or implementation of codes to reduce risk.
- Enhancement of existing adopted codes to incorporate more current requirements or higher standards.
- Development of professional workforce capabilities through technical assistance and training with the use of tools such as available e-permitting software, remote, virtual and drone inspection technologies.
- Evaluation of the adoption and/or implementation of land use and zoning ordinances.
- Post-disaster building code enforcement.

For more detailed information on eligible codes and standards activities, refer to Part 11 of the HMA Guide.

Additional Post-Disaster Code Enforcement Information

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire may provide assistance for code enforcement after a disaster to ensure that disaster-resistant building codes (codes, standards and local ordinances that promote disaster resistance) are adopted and implemented. Eligible costs are “extraordinary” post-disaster code enforcement costs, or the costs that exceed the building department’s normal costs.

Under FEMA Public Assistance, a state, tribe, territory or local applicant may receive assistance for building code enforcement and administration activities up to 180 days after a major disaster declaration. After the 180-day period, these entities may receive assistance to continue these same activities under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program or Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire. More information can be found in Part 3 and Part 11 of the HMA Guide and [FEMA Policy #204-079-01: Building Code and Floodplain Management Administration and Enforcement](#) (Oct. 15, 2020).

5% Codes and Standards

The 2015 HMA Guidance provided additional funding through the Additional 5% Initiative, which was set aside to help communities enhance disaster resilience related to building codes, such as adopting the most current edition of the



International Building Code and improving a community's Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule score.

During the 2023 HMA Guide update, FEMA renamed the "Additional 5% Initiative" to "5% Codes and Standards" and expanded the scope of eligible codes and standards activities. The name and requirements have been updated to provide dedicated funding to strengthen the use of disaster-resistant building codes and standards for these two programs. FEMA has also removed the requirement for a community to improve its Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule score prior to closeout as a condition of award.

COMBINING 5% CODES AND STANDARDS AND THE 5% INITIATIVE

Under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire, 5% Codes and Standards may be paired with the 5% Initiative for a total of up to 10% of the ceiling (or available assistance amount) that recipients can use towards codes and standards activities. For more information about 5% Codes and Standards and the 5% Initiative, refer to Part 10 of the HMA Guide.



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