

FEMA Public Assistance Available to Help Communities Rebuild Stronger After Helene

Release Date: Oct 28, 2024

Communities can access resources to accelerate infrastructure repairs and upgrades to meet the latest requirements for building and flood protection.

Modern building codes and floodplain management standards are two of the most effective tools we have to keep our communities safe and protected. That is why FEMA helps communities achieve these standards when rebuilding after a disaster.

All state, local, tribal and territorial governments eligible for FEMA Public Assistance are encouraged to apply for funding available through the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA), Section 1206. This support provides communities with resources to rebuild and protect against future damage while complying with building and floodplain regulations.

Details on covered activities and eligibility requirements are included below. Additional information is available in the [FEMA DRRA Section 1206 Policy Companion Guide](#). For an example of how a community could use this funding, visit [Disaster Recovery Reform Act \(DRRA\) Section 1206 policy - YouTube](#).

Activities Covered Under DRRA 1206 Public Assistance

FEMA can reimburse communities for expenses related to hiring, training and supervising staff, as well as the purchase of supplies and equipment necessary to administer and enforce building codes and floodplain ordinances.

Example activities include:



- **Building Code Administration:** review and process building applications, collect fees.
- **Code Enforcement:** inspect structures; conduct and process condemnation determinations, etc.
- **Floodplain Management Regulation, Administration, and Enforcement** process permits, etc.
- **Substantial Damage Operations:** conduct field surveys, perform inspections, etc.

Eligibility Requirements for DRRA 1206 Public Assistance

The following counties are eligible for Public Assistance funding after Tropical Storm Helene for:

- Emergency work (debris removal and emergency protective measures): **Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington counties.**
- Permanent work (restoration of roads and bridges, water control facilities, public buildings and equipment, utilities, parks, recreational and other facilities): **Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington counties.**

To be eligible for funding, communities must:

- Apply for reimbursement for activities occurring within **180 days** of the disaster declaration through their state Emergency Management officials.
- Tennessee received a disaster declaration for Tropical Storm Helene on **Oct. 2.**
- Be authorized for assistance under a major disaster declaration.
- Be legally responsible for administering and enforcing building codes and floodplain management regulations.

Additional DRRA 1206 Resources and Information

FEMA is here to work with you to repair and protect your community. Contact FEMA Region 4 at fema-r4-stakeholder-relations@fema.dhs.gov or your local National Flood Insurance Program specialist at [NFIP Contacts \(tn.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov/nfip-contacts) with questions on how to submit a Request for Public Assistance funding, which is



FEMA

available through DRRA 1206. Officials can also visit Tennessee's Floodplain Management Program website for more information: [Statewide Floodplain Administrator Directory \(tn.gov\)](#).

Recent disasters have reminded us of the value of investing in building codes and floodplain management standards. Rebuilding and planning with future disasters in mind are the best ways to prevent further damage in the community and ensure that you are eligible for the maximum support available.

Contact Us

If you have any questions, contact FEMA Region 4 External Affairs at fema-r4-stakeholder-relations@fema.dhs.gov.



FEMA