



Illinois to Seek Disaster Declaration from Small Business Administration to Aid 1.4 M Illinois Residents

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SPRINGFIELD – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today denied the state’s appeal for federal assistance to help residents in 22 counties recover from 2019’s severe storms and historic flooding along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. In light of these new developments, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency will seek a disaster declaration from the U.S. Small Business Administration. If approved, an SBA disaster declaration would enable residents and business owners in the approved counties, and its contiguous counties, to apply for grants as well as low-interest, long-term loans.

To date, the federal government has approved public assistance funding for 28 counties in Illinois. The federal public assistance program provides grants to assist state and local governments, nonprofits and houses of worship with the response and recovery costs associated with the declared disaster. Under the guidelines of the PA program, local jurisdictions can be reimbursed for up to 75 percent of eligible costs. Based on the \$61M in losses identified during the joint preliminary damage assessment, Illinois stands to receive an estimated \$45.7M. Of that, FEMA has already obligated \$1.3M to launch the public assistance program in Illinois.

“While we are extremely disappointed that Illinois did not qualify for Individual Assistance funding, we will not give up fighting to provide resources to the citizens of Illinois,” said Alicia Tate-Nadeau, Acting IEMA Director. “We are committed to working with our federal delegation to encourage FEMA to change the eligibility requirements of the Individual Assistance program that hurts states like Illinois, and in the meantime, we will work with our state and federal partners to identify any other available resources.”

The state will work with the federal delegation to encourage changes to FEMA's rules for determining Individual Assistance grants. These rules outline [six factors](#) for funding consideration: uninsured home and personal property loss; disaster impacted population profile; impact to community infrastructure; fatalities; disaster unemployment and the state's fiscal capacity to recover from this devastating event. However, the practical effect of these rules is that states with large urban population centers struggle to reach FEMA thresholds, particularly when disasters are confined to rural or sparsely populated areas of the state.

Public assistance is available in the following counties: Adams, Alexander, Bureau, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Fulton, Greene, Hancock, Henderson, Henry, Jackson, Jersey, Knox, Lee, Madison, Mercer, Monroe, Morgan, Pike, Randolph, Rock Island, Schuyler, Scott, St. Clair, Stephenson, Union and Whiteside.

For individuals and homeowners who still need immediate assistance in the wake of these devastating floods, the State of Illinois has a comprehensive flood recovery website dedicated to assisting flood survivors. From mortgage assistance, emergency housing and debris removal, available resources can be found online at www.illinois.gov/2019floods.