

FEMA Eligibility Guidance

Purpose

On Jan. 21, 2021 the Biden administration issued a [memorandum to extend federal support](#) and to increase federal Category B funding under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988. This presidential action, among other things, directs FEMA to provide Public Assistance reimbursement "to provide for the safe opening and operation of eligible schools, child-care facilities..."

Recently FEMA released new guidance that extended the "eligibility period" for public and non-profit schools. The following costs are now eligible for FEMA reimbursement at 100% cost share if incurred between January 20, 2020 and December 31, 2021. Essentially, these costs are retroactively eligible since the beginning of the COVID disaster period and until the end of this calendar year. There is no deadline to submit costs to FEMA yet.

Additional information for interested applicants can be found on the AOE's [FEMA webpage](#) and on the [Vermont Emergency Management webpage](#). The Agency of Education and our partners in Vermont Emergency Management are able to provide support to schools, LEAs and other eligible entities seeking FEMA reimbursement.

General Considerations

Time of ordering, time of receipt, or delays in the installation and/or usage due to supply chain issues and labor shortages are not relevant for FEMA eligibility. Ultimately, what matters for FEMA eligibility is **only the dates of use**, which are Jan. 21, 2020, to December 31, 2021.

Please note that the minimum submission threshold for a FEMA application is \$3,300. If you have less than \$3,300 in total expenses, you will not be eligible for FEMA assistance.

Determining Eligibility for FEMA Assistance

To determine whether they are eligible to receive reimbursement from FEMA, an organization (listed below) should first complete the [FEMA Request for Public Assistance](#) (RPA).

To complete this simple, initial application only takes a few minutes and FEMA will usually respond with an eligibility determination within a few days to a few weeks.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact Jill Briggs Campbell at jill.briggscampbell@vermont.gov.

Eligible Entities

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- Approved and recognized independent schools.
- Non-profit childcare centers.
- Non-profit religious schools.
- Summer camps run by state and non-profits.

Entities that are Not Eligible

- For-profit schools.
- For-profit summer camps.
- For profit childcare centers.

Eligible Costs Incurred Between Jan. 20, 2020 and Dec. 31, 2021

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Face masks, face shields, gloves, and gowns.
- Eligible for students, staff, volunteers, and non-contracted school affiliates (including volunteers who are present on school campuses).

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Must be in accordance with CDC or public health guidance.¹
- Only for costs in excess of regular/budgeted cleaning/disinfection costs for services or supplies (if there was no pandemic).
- Hand sanitizers.

COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing

- Eligible for students, staff, volunteers, and non-contracted school affiliates (including volunteers who are present on school campuses).
- Costs for testing kits, any shipping labels or supplies, and bar code scanners that are used only for testing.
- Contracts with testing companies to perform analysis of test kits.
- Contracts with shipping or courier services to deliver test kits to meet delivery window requirements or other shipping costs.
- Costs associated with staffing to conduct COVID-19 testing, either in excess of budget if there were no pandemic or hiring temporary staff to perform only testing-related work.

Screening and Temperature Scanning

- Hand-held devices.
- Eligible for students, staff, volunteers, and non-contracted school affiliates (including volunteers who are present on school campuses).

Temporary Physical Barriers

- Purchase and installation costs (labor).
- Temporary barriers, including portable barriers or those bolted to the ground/wall that will be removed after the pandemic, are eligible. You must include in the item description/narrative in the FEMA application that these barriers are temporary and that they will be dismantled after the pandemic even though they may be bolted now.

Storage/Stockpile of Supplies Listed in this Section (based on projected needs)

- Rental of a storage facility after Jan. 20, 2020.
- Items purchased and stockpiled before Jan. 20, 2020 and used between Jan. 20, 2020 and Dec. 31, 2021.
- Items purchased and stockpiled, but that are not yet in use at the time of application, will need to include calculations that forecast that they will be used before Dec. 31, 2021. If they are forecasted to be used after Dec. 31, 2021, they will not be eligible (see next point).

[¹CDC Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility; CDC Interim Guidance for General Population Disaster Shelters During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Not Eligible Costs

- Software programs to scan for whether students or staff have a temperature
- Permanent barrier installations
- HVAC/air filtration installation or maintenance
- Costs associated with contact tracing
- Costs associated with providing meals to students (regardless of current source of funding)
- Remote learning/remote staff work costs (home internet access, cell phones, purchase of laptops/tablets, home office setup, etc.)
- Any costs incurred prior to Jan. 20, 2020
- Any items purchased and stockpiled and forecasted to be used after Dec. 31, 2021