

Fire Management Assistance Grant Program

General

- The Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FMAG) is authorized under Section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act, 42 U.S.C. 5187, as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.
- FMAG allows for the “mitigation, management, and control” of fires burning on publicly or privately owned forest or grasslands which threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster.
- FMAG allows for the provision of assistance under Section 403, Essential Assistance of the Stafford Act (also considered to be Public Assistance Category B (Emergency Work)).
- FMAG allows states, local, tribal, and territorial governments to apply to the grant recipient as a subrecipient.

Declaration Process

Declarations operate on a real-time basis and are frequently conducted over the telephone with written follow-up. The declarations process is as follows:

- The Governor of a State (or the Governor’s Authorized Representative) submits a request for a fire management assistance declaration to the Regional Administrator or designee while the fire is burning uncontrolled.
- Regional Administrator or designee gathers state, local, or tribal’s information and calls upon a designated Principal Advisor (a professional forester) for a fire threat assessment.
- The Regional Administrator approves or denies a state’s request based on the following:
 - The conditions that existed at the time of State’s request.
 - Whether or not the fire or fire complex threatens such destruction as would constitute a major disaster.
- The Regional Administrator uses four criteria to evaluate the threat posed by a fire or a fire complex:
 - Threat to lives and improved property, including threats to critical facilities/infrastructure, and critical watershed areas.
 - Availability of State and local firefighting resources.



FEMA

- High fire danger conditions, as indicated by nationally accepted indices such as the National Fire Danger Ratings System.
- Potential major economic impact.
- After rendering a determination, the Regional Administrator notifies the state, tribal, or local government.

Eligibility

Eligible costs include:

- Costs for equipment and supplies (less insurance proceeds).
- Costs for emergency work (evacuations and sheltering, police barricading and traffic control, arson investigation).
- Costs for State Emergency Operations Center (when used as a Unified Command Center).
- Costs for the pre-positioning of Federal, out-of-State, and international resources for up to 21 days.
- Cost of personal comfort and safety items for firefighter health and safety.
- Costs for field camps and meals in lieu of per diem.
- Costs for mobilization and demobilization costs.
- Costs for the temporary repair of damage caused by firefighting activities.
- Costs for the mitigation, management, and control of declared fires burning on co-mingled Federal land, when such costs are not reimbursable by another Federal agency.

Appeals

- A State may submit a one-time appeal if a declaration request is denied. The process is found in Chapter 44 §204.26. In addition, a Subrecipient, or Recipient may appeal any decision made by FEMA related to the FMAG Program. The procedures are found in Chapter 44 §204.54.

Grants Management

Fire Cost Threshold

- Before a grant award to a state, tribal, or local government under a FMAG declaration is approved, the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) must demonstrate that total eligible costs for the declared fire meet or exceed either the individual fire cost threshold, which is applied to each and every fire, or the cumulative fire cost threshold, which recognizes numerous smaller fires burning throughout a state.

- The individual fire cost threshold for a State is the greater of the following:
 - \$100,000; or
 - Five percent x \$1.89*1 x the State population.
- The cumulative fire cost threshold for a State is the greater of the following:
 - \$500,000; or
 - Three times the five percent x \$1.89* x the State population.
- Under the cumulative fire cost threshold, assistance will only be provided for the declared fire responsible for meeting or exceeding the cumulative fire cost threshold and any future declared fires for that calendar year.

Cost Share

- 75 percent Federal cost share is available for all fire management assistance grants.

*\$1.89 is the FY 2025 statewide per capita indicator. It is adjusted annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published annually by the Department of Labor.