

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: Purchase and Distribution of Food Eligible for Public Assistance

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it may be necessary as an emergency protective measure to provide food to meet the immediate needs of those who do not have access to food and to protect the public from the spread of the virus. On April 11, 2020, FEMA [issued a new policy](#) that addresses the purchase and distribution of food eligible for Public Assistance funding under emergency and major disaster declarations for the COVID-19 pandemic.

State, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments with the legal responsibility for protecting life, public health and safety are eligible applicants for assistance related to the purchase and distribution of food.

SLTT applicants may enter into formal agreements or contracts with private organizations, including private nonprofit organizations such as food banks, to purchase and distribute food when necessary as an emergency protective measure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In these cases, Public Assistance funding is provided to the legally responsible government entity, which would then reimburse the private organization for services under the agreement or contract.

All costs must be reasonable and are subject to standard Public Assistance program eligibility and other federal requirements, as well as the prevailing cost-share requirement for the respective COVID-19 emergency or major disaster declaration.

This form of assistance is time-limited with additional information outlined in the policy.

FEMA will engage with interagency partners, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, to ensure this assistance does not duplicate other available assistance.

Contact Us

If you have any questions regarding this FEMA Advisory, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs, Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs Division:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
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