

PUBLIC NOTICE
FEMA-4336-DR-PR & FEMA 4339-DR-PR
Individual Assistance

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hereby gives notice to the public of its intent to assist eligible applicants for eligible costs to repair, replace, and mitigate future damage to private property, including homes and access routes damaged by the September 2017 hurricanes. Hurricane Irma affected Puerto Rico from Sept. 5-7, 2017, and Hurricane Maria occurred Sept. 17, 2017, to Nov. 15, 2018. This notice supplements the initial public notices published on Dec. 12, 2017, and Dec. 17, 2017. This notice applies to the Individual Assistance (IA) program implemented under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207.

Under a major disaster declaration (FEMA-4336-DR-PR) signed by President Trump on Sept. 10, 2017, Canóvanas, Cataño, Culebra, Dorado, Fajardo, Loiza, Luquillo, Toa Baja, Vega Baja, and Vieques Municipalities have been designated adversely affected by the disaster and eligible for IA. Under a major disaster declaration (FEMA-4339-DR-PR) signed by the President on Sept. 20, 2017, all 78 Municipalities of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have been designated adversely affected by the disaster and eligible for IA.

This public notice concerns activities that are located in or otherwise affected wetland areas or the 100-year floodplain. Such activities may adversely affect floodplains or wetlands, or may result in continuing vulnerability to flood damage.

Presidential Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 require that all federal actions in or affecting the floodplain or wetlands be reviewed for opportunities to relocate and be evaluated for social, economic, historical, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. Where there is no opportunity to relocate, FEMA is required to undertake a detailed review to determine what measures can be taken to minimize potential future flood damages. The public is invited to participate in the process of identifying alternatives and analyzing their impacts.

FEMA intends to provide IA program assistance for the restoration of disaster-damaged housing and associated infrastructure (private roads, bridges, culverts and embankments) to pre-disaster condition. FEMA may provide assistance for the mitigation, demolition and/or replacement of disaster-damaged housing and access routes requiring new construction. The full requirements of Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 are required, including evaluating alternatives and implementing flood-hazard-minimization measures if the proposed action exceeds limited/minimal home repairs or entails restoring, repairing, or building private bridges, purchase of mobile homes, or provision of structures as minimum protective measures. Alternatives may include relocation and minimization measures such as elevation or flood-proofing.

In many cases, an applicant may have started repair work before federal involvement. In such cases, FEMA must also examine the possible effects of not restoring the facility, minimize floodplain/wetland impacts, and determine both that an overriding public need for the facility clearly outweighs the Executive Order requirements to avoid the floodplain/wetland and that the site is the only practical alternative. The government of Puerto Rico and local officials will confirm to FEMA that proposed actions comply with all applicable floodplain management and wetland-protection requirements.

This may be the only public notice regarding the above-described actions under the IA program. Interested persons may obtain information about these actions or a specific project by writing to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region II, Caribbean

Area Division, P.O. Box 70105, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936-8105, or via e-mail to FEMAR2COMMENT@fema.dhs.gov. Comments should be sent in writing to the attention of Federal Coordinating Officer Michael Byrne at the above address within 15 days of the date of this notice.