



Climate Resilience and Disaster Recovery at HUD

The United States faces a profound climate crisis. From severe storms and flooding, to wildfires, drought, and extreme heat, Americans are already experiencing the increasing impacts of climate change. We have a narrow moment to pursue action to avoid the most catastrophic climate impacts and seize the opportunity to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. Climate impacts and associated natural disasters disproportionately harm low-income communities and communities of color who already suffer the burdens of disinvestment and historic discrimination. These communities are less able to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

One of President Biden's first actions in office was Executive Order (EO) 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. It lays out a broad vision for how the Federal government can address climate change while creating economic opportunity. HUD is deeply committed to tackling the climate crisis and has significant influence over how the nation's households and communities will respond to the climate crisis and address environmental injustice.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DISASTER RECOVERY

Building resilient communities that can withstand more intense natural disasters is critical to the future health of our nation. HUD's disaster recovery portfolio is one of the federal government's largest investments in disaster recovery and resilience in low-to-moderate-income communities.

HUD seeks to improve long-term community resilience for disaster-stricken communities via its Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR). HUD's Consolidated Notice will require CDBG-DR grantees to incorporate disaster mitigation measures into all recovery activities involving construction. By incorporating resilience planning into recovery activities, CDBG-DR grantees can strengthen their community's resilience to future climate impacts.

Resilience is defined for CDBG-DR grantees as a "community's ability to minimize damage and recover quickly from extreme events and changing conditions, including natural hazard risks." When implementing recovery efforts, CDBG-DR grantees are required to spend 70% of the funds on activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

The Consolidated Notice supports the Biden Administration's goals by:

- increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change;
- protecting public health;
- conserving lands, waters, and biodiversity;
- addressing environmental injustice; and
- spurring economic growth and creating jobs.





INCORPORATING CLIMATE ACTION AND RESILIENCE

1. THE CONSOLIDATED NOTICE.

HUD developed the Consolidated Notice which combines and updates requirements from several different Federal Register notices and CPD Notices that have governed CDBG-DR funds in the past. The notice describes each phase of the grant process, including developing the CDBG-DR action plan and implementing recovery programs.

2. THE ACTION PLAN.

The grantee will develop an action plan to advance equitable distribution of assistance, including planning for targeted assistance to residents of underserved communities, members of protected classes under fair housing and civil rights laws, and vulnerable populations who have been historically marginalized and can be adversely affected by disasters that often exacerbate existing inequities.

3. RECOVERY ACTIVITIES.

When grantees carry out disaster recovery activities to construct, reconstruct, or rehabilitate residential or non-residential structures, they must demonstrate that they have incorporated resilience and hazard mitigation measures into the CDBG-DR funded activities.

RESILIENCE PLANNING

The action plan will estimate the costs of incorporating hazard mitigation measures. Planning will be informed by a post-disaster evaluation of hazard risk, including climate-related natural hazards. This information should be based on the history of FEMA and other federally-funded hazard mitigation efforts. The grantee’s action plan will describe how the grantee will:

- support adoption and enforcement of modern and/or resilient building codes;
- emphasize high-quality design, durability, energy efficiency, sustainability, and mold resistance;
- fund feasible, cost-effective activities;
- make informed land-use decisions; and
- increase awareness of climate impacts and natural disasters in their communities through outreach.

RESILIENCE PERFORMANCE METRICS

Before carrying out CDBG-DR funded activities to construct, reconstruct, or rehabilitate residential or non-residential structures, the grantee must establish resilience performance metrics for the activity. To meet this requirement, the grantee must estimate the projected risk to the completed activity from natural hazards, including those hazards that are influenced by climate change; describe how the mitigation measure will be address the projected risk; and describe the benefit of the grantee’s measures to reduce the risk through verifiable data.

Examples of Climate Resilience in CDBG-DR

Sea Level Rise & Flooding

CDBG-DR grantees can create buyout programs to acquire properties in high-risk areas and provide assistance to relocate residents or businesses to lower-risk areas. Funds can also be used to elevate structures.

Severe Storms

CDBG-DR grantees can use building materials that are wind-resistant. Examples include installing shutters, hurricane glass, concrete cores, and reinforcing roofs.

Heat Stress

CDBG-DR grantees can reduce the urban heat island effect by adopting cool roofs through building and energy ordinances. Examples include reflective roofs, vegetated roofs, permeable pavements, and shaded trees.

Wild Fire Risk

CDBG-DR grantees can use fire-resistant building materials and prioritize low-and moderate-income persons when constructing, reconstructing, or rehabilitating buildings in the impacted areas.

