

FEMA Extends Due Date to Request Public Assistance

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As local educational agencies (LEAs) across the state struggle to meet the instructional demands of students and work to keep staff healthy and safe, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deadline to submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA), originally Friday, April 17, 2020, has been extended. An RPA can now be completed up to thirty days after the incident period for the disaster event closes. As the current COVID-19 incident remains open, School Services of California Inc., will publish the effective deadline once it is known.

In accordance with section 502 of the Stafford Act, eligible emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency at the direction or guidance of public health officials may be reimbursed under Category B of FEMA's Public Assistance program. Before agencies can submit expenses for reimbursement, agencies first need to submit the RPA. With the application period extended, agencies have more time to prepare, train, respond, and collect data to file claims. LEAs need to complete the following steps in order to Request Public Assistance:

1. Board approval of Cal OES 130 (form) Designation of Applicant's Agent Resolution for Non-State Agencies found [here](#). This board-approved form must be submitted with the request through the grants portal. This can be accomplished at a normally scheduled board meeting, or at a special board meeting. Ensure this is done before the new deadline—once it is published.
2. LEAs need to create a FEMA Grants Portal Account. The information requested is straight forward, basic, and readily accessible. Details for completing this step are available on the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) [website](#). Ensure this is done before the new deadline—once it is published.

What we have learned regarding the FEMA reimbursement process is that the sheer volume of work that goes into submitting a final claim is staggering. However, the extension of this initial deadline provides LEAs more time for the preliminary steps, which are considered relatively easy. Agencies will not have the opportunity to submit claims for federal FEMA funds unless the RPA is completed. We advise all LEAs to file the RPA so they can consider seeking federal funds for COVID-related expenses later. The Cal OES is advising LEAs to submit sooner rather than later, and avoid waiting until the last minute.