

Frequently Asked Questions About Cook County Flooding

For Residents

What does the state disaster proclamation mean for me?

The state disaster proclamation ensures all available state resources are available to help municipal and county officials respond to and recover from the disaster. The proclamation also is necessary for the state to seek federal assistance.

Assistance available to residents at this point includes services from the **American Red Cross, Salvation Army and other non-profit organizations, including shelters, food and flood clean-up kits**. Cook County residents should contact the County's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) with additional questions.

My home was flooded. What should I do now?

- Contact DHSEM to report damage to your home. For a list of county EMAs, visit www.Ready.Illinois.gov.
- If you have flood insurance, contact your insurance company to report your damage.
- Even if you don't have flood insurance, you should still contact your insurance company to ensure all potential assistance has been sought.
- Take pictures of the damage and make a list of any damaged or destroyed possessions.
- Keep receipts for costs incurred during the flood, such as for hotels, clean-up, replacement and repair.
- Be safe when cleaning your home or making repairs.

Can I apply for federal assistance right now?

Federal assistance is not available at this time. However, county and state officials are working together to gather information needed to determine if the state may be eligible for federal assistance.

Are there state assistance programs available?

The state of Illinois does not have disaster assistance programs. Such assistance is only available under a federal disaster declaration.

What is the state doing to get assistance for people affected by flooding?

As waters recede, county emergency management officials will begin collecting initial damage information from affected residents. For that reason, it's important for you to make DHSEM aware of any damage.

Once IEMA receives that information, a determination will be made on whether a more formal damage assessment should be conducted that could support a state request for federal assistance.

What would a federal disaster declaration mean to me?

Federal approval of the Individuals and Households Program would enable residents affected by flooding to apply for:

- Grants from FEMA
- Low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

For Governments

What does the state disaster proclamation mean for units of governments?

The state disaster proclamation ensures state resources are available to help government officials respond to and recover from a disaster. State assistance includes resources such as sandbags, inmate labor for sandbagging or debris removal, law enforcement support and more. If you need assistance from the state, please submit your request through your county emergency management agency.

What is Public Assistance?

The Public Assistance (PA) Program is a federal program that may provide disaster assistance to states, units of government and certain private non-profit organizations for debris removal, emergency protective measures and the permanent restoration of public facilities, as a result of a major disaster or emergency declaration made by the President.

How can we qualify for Public Assistance?

There are two thresholds that must be met for federal Public Assistance:

- First, the total statewide eligible disaster-related expenses (expenses from all impacted counties and all state agency expenses) must exceed \$18.3 million.
- Second, a county's eligible disaster-related expenses must meet a threshold determined by its population multiplied by \$3.61.

Both thresholds must be met in order for a county to receive federal Public Assistance.

Do we include home and business damage costs in our county threshold?

No. Federal assistance for households and businesses affected by flooding is a separate program known as the Individual Assistance (IA) Program.

What is the state doing to get federal Public Assistance for impacted government bodies?

There is a standard process for assessing the damages, costs and impacts for each disaster event. The first step in the process is an Initial Damage Assessment (IDA), where each county government reports their initial damages, costs and impacts to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. Based on the results of the IDA, a Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) may be conducted with FEMA to validate the information reported during the IDA. The results of the PDA may then be used to support a request by the Governor for a declaration that includes Public Assistance Program funding.

What should we do to be prepared for a Public Assistance Initial Damage Assessment (IDA)?

- Identify and document damages and costs
- Mark damage locations on a map
- Take photographs of damages
- Estimate costs for work to be completed by location and category of work
 - Categories of Work
 - Category A – Debris Removal
 - Category B – Emergency Protective Measures
 - Category C – Road and Bridge Systems
 - Category D – Water Control Facilities

- Category E – Buildings and Equipment
- Category F – Utility Systems
- Category G – Parks, Recreational and Other
- FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates
 - <http://www.fema.gov/schedule-equipment-rates>
- Obtain bills, invoices and receipts for eligible work completed
- Review insurance policies and deduct any anticipated insurance proceeds from costs
- Review contracting/procurement policies to ensure they meet federal requirements
- Complete and submit the PA Initial Damage Assessment Cost Tabulation form (https://www.illinois.gov/iema/LocalEMA/Documents/PAforms/PA_DamageAssessment.pdf) to IEMA when directed.

For more information, visit www.Ready.Illinois.gov or [contact DHSEM](#).