

The Virgin Islands Consortium

FEMA Announces Covid-19 Operational Guidance for 2020 Hurricane Season

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To address the challenges of managing disaster response and recovery efforts during this year's hurricane season, FEMA said this week it's releasing the ["COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance for the 2020 Hurricane Season"](#) to help emergency managers and public health officials best prepare for disasters, while continuing to respond to and recover from coronavirus (COVID-19).

The guidance can also be used by private sector and non-governmental organizations to gain an understanding of the government's posture, planning and readiness efforts, the agency said.

The guide provides actions emergency managers and public officials can take to prepare for response and recovery operations during ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response efforts.

Specifically, the guidance:

- Describes anticipated challenges to disaster operations posed by COVID-19;
- Highlights planning considerations for emergency managers based on current challenges;
- Outlines how FEMA plans to adapt response and recovery operations;
- Creates a shared understanding of expectations between FEMA and emergency managers; and,
- Includes guidance, checklists and resources to support emergency managers response and recovery planning.

Although some aspects of FEMA's program delivery are different this year, others remain the same. FEMA does not anticipate major changes in program eligibility, timeliness of grant awards, or level of assistance provided under the Individual and Households Program, according to the release.

While the guide focuses on FEMA's program delivery during the 2020 hurricane season, most planning considerations can be applied to any disaster operation during the COVID-19 pandemic, including no-notice incidents.

FEMA said it will continue to operate under the framework of locally executed, state managed, and federal supported incident response. By creating a shared understanding of expectations among FEMA and state, local, tribal and territorial partners prior to hurricane season, the nation will be better positioned to achieve operational outcomes in disaster response and recovery efforts.