



**Bureau of Economic Self-Sufficiency
Information Memorandum**

**IM-18-03A
Supersedes IM-18-03**

PROGRAM(S):	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)
SUBJECT:	Policy on Use of Disaster Related CSBG Funds for Hurricane Michael Assistance
EFFECTIVE:	November 2, 2018

CSBG IM-18-03A is intended to supersede IM-18-03

Purpose and Objective:

Helping in times of crisis, meeting emergency needs and assisting with subsequent recovery are key missions of community action tradition. This Memorandum provides guidance and response to questions discussed on the recent teleconference calls covering Hurricane Michael Response within the disaster declared counties. The Hurricane Michael disaster response is a fluid situation and we appreciate your involvement and patience throughout this process as we work together to resolve issues for those affected by Michael. Clarification is provided on the topics listed below.

Each Subrecipient must:

1. Assess the unmet needs of households within your affected service area.
2. Target the top identified needs for which your funds will be used.
3. Determine that all households receiving services are program eligible.
4. Keep track of services provided and amount per service.

Client Eligibility

Because of the nature of the natural disaster, many affected low-income individuals and families will not have in their possession customary documentation of their economic status to substantiate eligibility for CSBG supported assistance. Also, many individuals or families that may not have been eligible for assistance prior to the hurricane, due to the devastation may be now eligible. In either case, Subrecipients are encouraged to use the following three possible approaches:

1. "Presumptive eligibility" determinations are based on all residents affected by Hurricane Michael;
2. The use of short, signed declarations or affidavits of eligibility;
3. Accepting eligibility certification paperwork from another Federal or State program.
4. Live in one of the 12 counties (*Bay, Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Franklin, Jackson, Liberty, Taylor, Wakulla, Washington, Leon*).

If individuals from an eligible household that was affected by Michael have evacuated and or temporarily moved in with another household because their original residence is not habitable (regardless of the service area of their temporary habitation), the temporarily housed household should be considered a separate household. The

households are not considered to be one household (i.e. each household's eligibility should be determined only on their own original family size and income and should exclude the other family).

Client Relocation

If a client/household who was affected by the disaster wishes to relocate to another service area, the current provider may pay for transportation fees to the new service area as well as the first month's rent and setup costs (such as deposits, utility deposits, etc.) in the new service area. The client/household should then apply with the new service provider for possible further assistance.

HVAC Replacement

HVAC repair/replacement is allowable under CSBG; however, we recommend referrals to LIHEAP and/or WAP. If you choose to provide HVAC services, always ensure that clients/households are served equitably by including criteria for determining what standards a household must meet to qualify for the HVAC repair/replacement in your benefit matrix or other local policy before implementation.

Generator Purchase

The purchase of generators to maintain power during and immediately after a disaster is allowable. However, we strongly recommend that safety guidance be provided along with the generators to avoid loss of life due to inappropriate operations of the generators. Additionally, subrecipients should secure a liability waiver signature from the client prior to placement of generators.

Generator Safety Outreach

Generators have hazards ranging from shock and electrocution to carbon monoxide poisoning, fire hazards, and noise and vibration hazards. Some key reminders about using generators safely include:

- When using portable generators, use them only outdoors in well ventilated areas.
- Do not use generators in garages, near doors, windows or vents. Fatal fumes from generators can build up, that neither a fan nor open doors and windows can provide enough fresh air.
- Use a battery-powered carbon monoxide detector in the area you're running a generator. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless byproduct of combustion engines that can cause illness and death. If you or others show symptoms of CO poisoning, such as dizziness, headaches, nausea, and tiredness, immediately get to fresh air and seek medical attention.
- Never add fuel to a running or hot generator. Let it cool at least 2 minutes before you add fuel. Gasoline and its vapors are extremely flammable.
- If you do not plan to use your generator in 30 days, don't forget to stabilize the gas with fuel stabilizer.
- Gasoline and other generator fuels should be stored and transported in approved containers that are properly designed and marked for their contents, and vented.
- Keep fuel containers away from flame producing and heat generating devices (such as the generator itself, water heaters, cigarettes, lighters, and matches). Do not smoke around fuel containers.
- Never operate the generator near combustible materials.
- If you have to use extension cords, be sure they are of the grounded type and are rated for the application. Coiled cords can get extremely hot; always uncoil cords and lay them in flat open locations.
- Never plug your generator directly into your home outlet. If you are connecting a generator into your home electrical system, have a qualified electrician install a Power Transfer Switch.
- Generators produce powerful voltage - Never operate under wet conditions. Take precautions to protect your generator from exposure to inclement weather.
- Wear hearing protection (such as ear plugs or headphones) while operating a generator. Generator engines vibrate and create noise. Excessive noise and vibration could cause hearing loss and fatigue.
- Maintain your generator according to the manufacturer's maintenance schedule and read the user manual thoroughly.

Electrical Power Cable Connection

The cost to repair the electrical wiring necessary from the utility's service point to a home is allowable. Flooding can damage electrical systems, and inspection and repairs by a licensed electrician may be required before a home can receive power. Some income-eligible clients may not be able to receive power to their homes after it's restored because of damage. Subrecipients may hire a licensed electrician to make the necessary repairs on behalf of the client.

Debris Removal

The costs associated for the removal of debris in order to carry out the purposes of the CSBG program in a disaster circumstance is allowable. While CSBG funds may not be used for the repair or permanent improvements to property, debris removal is not considered a permanent improvement and due to the circumstances is considered an acceptable CSBG cost. Subrecipients should include the following steps in the procurement process for engaging a debris removal contractor:

- Subrecipient must take before and after photographs of the debris and subsequent repairs. Photos should clearly show obvious debris obstacle that must be removed to enable the electrical work to be completed...Trees/branches cannot be removed just to clean up the person's yard, it must be related to the area where electrical work needs to occur.
- Subrecipient must submit contractor proposal with photos to DEO for approval of the proposed work. Send documents via email to Rick.Campbell@deo.myflorida.com. Upon approval by DEO, the Subrecipient may issue a work order to contractor.

Note: Subrecipients must submit a contractor proposal only. Estimate prices can change without notice. A contractor proposal guarantees that the contractor will complete the job for the proposed amount regardless if they run into any issues.

Hotel Stays

Hotel occupancy is not limited to any cumulative period, however, assistance for hotel stays cannot be issued in increments greater than 7 days and shall not exceed \$150.00 per night. The need for a renewal of such assistance must be re-evaluated every 7 days. Subrecipients are encouraged to proactively search for options that can assist in alleviating a client/household's need for housing. Ensure that clients/households are served equitably by including criteria for determining what standards a household must meet to qualify for more than 7 days of hotel assistance in accordance with your local policy and available funding.

Building Permit Fees

Permit fees for construction to rebuild homes destroyed by Michael are permissible; however, the client request must be closely scrutinized. The client must provide the local government fee invoice or other similar documentation in order for the fee to be paid using disaster related CSBG funds. Clients must be program eligible, the unit for which the fee is requested must be their residence, and the repairs to the unit for which the permit is requested must be directly related to damages created by Michael.

Benefit Limits

Maximum of **\$2,000** in emergency related benefits per household for expenses incurred as a result of the storm between October 7, 2018 and January 7, 2019.

Eligible Services

Eligible services include, but are not limited to:

CSBG
Food Assistance.
Medical Supplies (Prescriptions, etc.).
Personal Documentation (Driver's License, Birth Certificate, ID Cards).
Transportation; fuel.
Clothing.
Emergency and Permanent Housing Deposit.
Utility Assistance.
Utility reconnection costs; utility box replacement.
Utility Box Replacement.
Contractor cost to repair electrical wiring or gas lines.
Fees required to assure resumption of services.
Purchase of generators.
Debris Removal
Continuing Education and Certification.
Enrollment in Family Self-Sufficiency Program.
Work Related Items (Tools, etc.).

Reporting

Subrecipients are required to complete the monthly Disaster Services Report (**Attachment 'A'**), which needs to be submitted to your Grant Manager no later than the twenty-first day of each month. In the event the twenty-first day of the month falls on a weekend day or holiday, the Disaster Services Report shall be due the next business day.

Inquiries

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