FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO)

Grants Management Modernization (GMM) is a FEMA-wide initiative that began in 2015 to modernize and consolidate existing FEMA grants management systems, business processes, and manual workarounds into one single information technology (IT) platform—FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO)—and one common grants management lifecycle.

Background

What is FEMA GO? What is its purpose?

FEMA developed the new platform, FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO), to promote uniformity across all core grant management processes. FEMA GO eliminates reliance on multiple systems, many of which operate on multiple platforms and use different types of grant applications and reporting technologies. The capabilities and data elements used by prior systems were inconsistent and duplicative. Previous grants management processes and systems did not provide data transparency and required users to create spreadsheets and other ad hoc tools or workarounds to get the information required to manage FEMA grant programs.

The FEMA GO electronic signature capability provides increased security, reduces risks, enhances conveniences, increases mobility, saves resources, and ensures compliance. Security is one of the biggest advantages versus paper signatures. For example, the electronic signing feature within FEMA GO provides a higher degree of security by reducing vulnerabilities to alter a signature on a grant application or on an award document. Additionally, the electronic signature streamlines the application and awarding process by eliminating the need for users to print, sign and mail documents. Compliance safeguards are built into FEMA GO to ensure a signature is provided by the authorized representative of an agency.

FEMA GO automates data collection through on-line forms, which allows application submission and required reporting to be completed faster and more efficiently. FEMA GO integrates with the SAM.gov system which eliminates the need for applicants to create new organizational entities when they apply. Less manual input reduces errors both in the creation and completion of an application or report as illegible or incorrect data entry is less likely to occur. For example, users can complete and submit the SF-425 within FEMA GO. The form is prepopulated with prior and aggregated data which allows users to complete the form faster and more efficiently and reduces the potential for errors. Additionally, the prepopulated SF-425 data streamlines workflow and process forms much more quickly, freeing up time for users to focus on other aspects of grant management.

FEMA GO provides users with one system to house quarterly progress reporting data. Programmatic information that was previously spread across silos including emails, spreadsheets, and paper files, can now be easily shared,

submitted to one centralized location within FEMA GO and collaboratively reviewed by FEMA GO internal and external users.

FEMA GO is targeted toward the entire grants community of users, including FEMA personnel and grant recipients and subrecipients across all FEMA grant programs, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery grant programs.

Grant Program Categories:	
▪ Mitigation: Hazards	▪ Preparedness: Emergency Management
▪ Mitigation: Risk Analysis	▪ Preparedness: Infrastructure Security
▪ Mitigation: Community Assistance	▪ Preparedness: Training
▪ Mitigation: Earthquake	▪ Preparedness: Other
▪ Preparedness: Fire & Life Safety	▪ Response: Urban Search and Rescue
▪ Preparedness: Community Security	▪ Recovery: Public Assistance
▪ Preparedness: Chemical	▪ Recovery: Individual Assistance

What are the expected outcomes of FEMA GO?

FEMA GO transforms the way FEMA manages grants and strengthens FEMA's ability to execute its mission through a user-centered, business-driven approach, consistent with the following key objectives:

- Simplify grants management lifecycle processes;
- Improve timeliness of funding to support survivors and facilitate community resilience;
- Improve allocation of grant funds across the emergency management and homeland security communities;
- Enhance FEMA's ability to achieve equitable outcomes for our grant recipient communities;
- Streamline and improve business performance through business process and decision-making improvements;
- Improve business intelligence and decision-making by increasing access to data related to grant program performance and grant project status;
- Facilitate compliance with regulations and statutes;
- Reduce sustainment costs by consolidating legacy systems into a single Information Technology platform; and
- Execute a user-centric, business-driven approach to grants transformation founded on active engagement with all grant stakeholders.

How will FEMA GO impact state, local, tribal, and territorial applicants?

Providing a single grants management system for FEMA grant recipients will simplify the experience of FEMA's state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) government and nonprofit entities who currently use a variety of FEMA legacy grant management systems. FEMA GO is being built to support the full grant life cycle that is sustainable in a virtual environment. With respect to application submission, FEMA GO is designed to:

- Accept applications for FEMA grant programs through easy-to-use web-based forms.

- Enable multiple sub-applicant submissions supporting a variety of project types.
- Facilitate applicants to collect and review subapplications.
- Enable collaboration within the applicant organization or with FEMA on an application.
- Near real-time view for FEMA users to provide enhanced technical assistance to applicant.
- Rapidly open new funding opportunities for supported programs.
- Extend reusable budget component to expand the ability of FEMA GO to handle a variety of cost data structures which reduce complexity.

FEMA continues to work with stakeholders to ensure that their requirements and needs are considered throughout FEMA GO's development, with the intention of users only having to access one system in the future - FEMA GO

What additional information is available about FEMA GO?

FEMA GO has a public-facing site containing more information and training materials. You can also follow @FemaGrants on Twitter and FEMA | LinkedIn to learn about important grant-related information.

Development

Why did FEMA start development with the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program?

FEMA identified the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program (AFGP) as a good program to start development for FEMA GO for the following reasons:

- The legacy grants management system for AFGP supported three grant programs, Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response, and Fire Prevention & Safety, which provide funding directly to grant recipients who manage the project funded.
- The AFGP system was one of oldest FEMA grants management systems and expensive to maintain;
- The program used multiple cross-cutting business functions and laid the foundation for other FEMA grant programs; and
- These three grant programs required system business functions to cover all phases of the grants management lifecycle: pre-award, award, post-award, closeout, and post-closeout, helping to lay a foundation of reusable and configurable IT services in the FEMA GO system that will support all FEMA grant programs.

What systems and/or grants programs were developed next?

The FEMA GO development team used the functions that had been built for AFGP to quickly configure the system to support the Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID-19 Supplemental Program, funded in response to the pandemic. Simultaneously, the FEMA GO team started work on two Hazard Mitigation grant programs: the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant Program. These mitigation grant programs provide funding to states, which then pass money to subrecipients who manage the projects funded by the grant.

Unlike the AFGP grants, which provide funding directly to grant recipients, BRIC and FMA grant programs pass grant funding through the recipient (i.e., state) to local jurisdictions to execute projects funded by the grant. Both funding

routes provide a foundation of reusable, configurable FEMA GO capacity that enable us to bring more FEMA grant programs more quickly into the FEMA GO system. FEMA plans to open funding opportunities for more than a dozen additional non-disaster grant programs and two disaster programs in FEMA GO during Fiscal Year 2023, with the remainder of FEMA grant programs moving to FEMA GO during Fiscal Year 2024.

Will other FEMA systems undergoing modernization efforts be compatible with FEMA GO?

Yes. There are currently three major IT modernization efforts underway within FEMA.

- The Financial Systems Modernization improves the Integrated Financial Management Information System, which is the FEMA legacy financial management system.
- The Enterprise Data and Analytics Modernization Initiative (EDAMI) optimizes the use of FEMA and emergency management data through greater data sharing and analytics capabilities to ensure data-driven decision making and its FEMA Data Exchange (FEMADex) cloud-based data analytics platform will replace FEMA's legacy Enterprise Data Warehouse.
- A modernization of the Individual Assistance module within the National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS) platform will enhance FEMA's Individual Assistance program's ability to provide rapid, holistic, and integrated support to individuals, and to more quickly respond to changing administrative and agency priorities for helping individuals impacted by disasters by replacing the aging and fragile Individual Assistance system in parallel with the FEMA GO development effort.
- A fourth modernization initiative, the National Flood Insurance Program Modernization (commonly referred to as "PIVOT"), was completed in 2021.

Due to the interrelated functions and needs for these efforts, FEMA GO stays connected with modernization programs and actively works with their program management offices. This ensures seamless integration and compatibility between these systems as each one moves toward a new solution. Ultimately, end users will experience enhanced functionality and greater overall satisfaction with the administration of their grants.

What business capabilities will be built into FEMA GO?

FEMA GO is being built to perform all business functions that fall within all five phases of the Grants Management Lifecycle: pre-award, award, post-award, closeout, and post-closeout. Any functionality that is needed to complete grant work will fall within the scope of this initiative.

The following graphic explains the basic functionality of the Grants Management Lifecyle. For additional capabilities of FEMA GO, visit FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO) | FEMA.gov.

Unified Grants Management Life Cycle
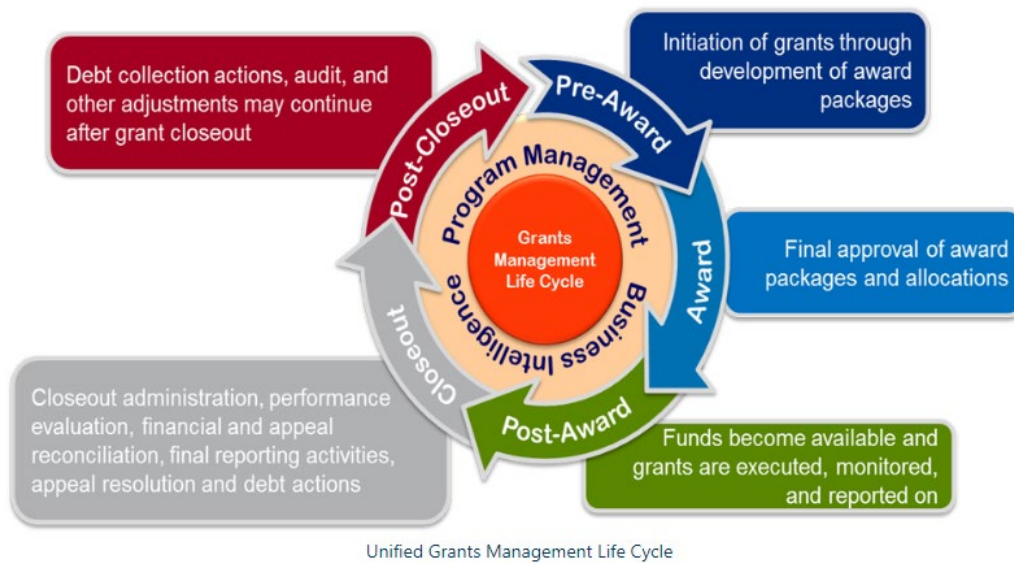
What systems and/or grants programs are to be developed next?

The program has a FEMA GO Product Roadmap to deliver new products and features in the system that is updated each quarter to reflect work over the coming year. Roadmap planning is a fully collaborative effort with key stakeholders, including the FEMA grant programs, programmatic subject-matter experts, and external stakeholders (including FEMA grant applicants and recipients) that meet quarterly to recommend prioritization of programs and functionality being integrated into FEMA GO.

Currently, our top priorities remain development of remaining post-award functionality, including ability to close out grants and onboarding all remaining non-disaster grant programs. At the same time, we will complete design of pre-award consultative project development functions needed for Fire Management Assistance Grants, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation disaster grants to comply with the Robert T. Stafford Act requirements, and to provision Individual Assistance Community Support Services grants, including Disaster Case Management. In Fiscal Year 2023, we plan to onboard the following grant programs into FEMA GO:

- Community Assistance Program-State Support Services Element Grant Program
- National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Grant Program
- Cooperating Technical Partners Grant Program
- National Dam Safety Grant Program
- High Hazards Potential Dams Grant Program
- Emergency Management Baseline Assessment Grant Program
- National Incident Management System Grant Program
- Homeland Security Preparedness Technical Assistance Program
- Homeland Security National Training Program/National Domestic Preparedness Consortium
- Homeland Security National Training Program/Continuing Training Grants
- Presidential Residence Protection Assistance
- State Fire Training Systems Grant Program

- National Urban Search & Rescue-Readiness Program.

Stakeholder Engagement

How does Grants Modernization Management engage its stakeholders?

FEMA develops FEMA GO using an incremental, iterative approach to delivering high-quality software with frequent deliveries to ensure value throughout the process for its stakeholders. We value working collaboratively with ability to incorporate user feedback to respond to change.

From 2015 to 2019, FEMA conducted extensive stakeholder outreach sessions across the country with FEMA regional offices, states, Tribal Nations, and other interested stakeholders to capture how these groups manage grants to create a streamlined and unified grants management experience for all FEMA grant programs that will look and behave the same every time a stakeholder comes to FEMA for a grant.

FEMA took extensive notes from those outreach sessions and used that feedback to develop a grants management lifecycle that captures 39 unique business functions across all grant lifecycle phases and supporting activities. FEMA GO simplifies the customer experience in the system by developing standard, less complex workflows to support those 39 business functions across the entire grants management lifecycle.

As FEMA builds capability in the system, functionality is validated with users through progressive demonstrations, click-through prototypes and retrospectives, or hot washes. Users can participate in user acceptance testing (UAT) where developers use business requirements to build a prototype and work with users to test the prototype to ensure it functions properly. After testing, FEMA will make the functionality available for users in FEMA GO.

FEMA conducted three FEMA GO usability and design surveys to solicit feedback from all FEMA GO stakeholders, including FEMA employees and registered FEMA GO users. The results of these surveys are integral to the User Experience (UX) design approach that FEMA GO employs in its system design, testing, and delivery. UX design helps ensure that we are achieving Agency and program strategic objectives to unify coordination and delivery of federal assistance, reduce complexity, simplify grant management processes, and eliminate barriers to FEMA programs through a people-first approach.

FEMA facilitates multiple working groups, user research interviews, and outreach sessions to keep stakeholders informed about the development of FEMA GO. For more information or to get involved with the planning efforts, please email FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov.

Transition

What is happening to the other Grants systems? How is FEMA socializing this transition?

The legacy grants systems' functionalities and business processes will be modernized and developed in FEMA GO. The legacy systems will be decommissioned once FEMA GO is at full operating capacity; the grants data in the legacy systems is migrated to FEMA GO; and, users validate that they have all the information they need to manage those

grants. Users of FEMA's legacy grants management systems will transition to FEMA GO as grant programs migrate onto the new platform. FEMA will socialize training opportunities with users to support this transition.

Will FEMA GO provide resources to guide applicants through the grant application process?

Yes. To successfully transition all FEMA grant recipients, applicants, and users to FEMA GO, FEMA continues to develop and add user guides and training materials to the [FEMA GO website](#) to create a more user-friendly and customer-centric experience.

Will FEMA provide training for FEMA GO?

Yes. FEMA GO has a comprehensive training program for all stakeholders using the system. FEMA grant programs also offer training webinars to their external stakeholders. The FEMA GO training team develops user guides and training webinars for FEMA internal staff. User guides, one-pagers, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for external stakeholders are located on the [FEMA GO website.](#) FEMA will add, update, and create user guides to the website as new functionality is available and when new grant programs get built in FEMA GO.

The goal is to make FEMA GO user-friendly and intuitive to eliminate or reduce the need for extensive training. The training team will continue to work with system developers to provide training following the initial deployment for each functionality and then in an on-going, as-needed basis to complement training materials and user guides. The training program will cover each phase of the grant lifecycle.

Training priorities are determined by each of FEMA's grant programs and may be subject to change as the virtual training environment is developed and aligned with new FEMA GO capabilities.

Are there data analytics and reporting resources or tools available?

Yes, but the current functionality is only available to a specific set of users. FEMA GO provides reporting and analytic data through data hubs accessible to data analysts in the FEMA Headquarters and Regional Offices. FEMA GO will develop accessible data sets and will integrate with the EDAMI system to support the full analytics community, including non-FEMA users.

Is there a FEMA GO Help Desk?

Yes. All issues should be reported to the FEMA GO Help Desk to resolve user issues as quickly and efficiently as possible. Users can contact the Help Desk by calling 877-585-3242 or by emailing FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov.

All issues should be reported to the FEMA GO Help Desk to create and track a ticket, research, analyze, and resolve the issue being reported by a user. If the resolution of the issue requires more in-depth knowledge or research, the Help Desk will escalate the issue to program or technical experts.

- The FEMA GO Help Desk accepts phone calls at 877-585-3242 and emails at FEMAGO@fema.dhs.gov. The FEMA GO Help Desk is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), Monday–Friday.

- A key goal of the Help Desk is to resolve a user's questions as quickly as possible, ideally in a single conversation. Because user questions could be related to system programs, how to use the system, and program or policy, the Help Desk also facilitates a "hand-off" to other experts.

  - The Assistance to Firefighter Grants Program Help Desk is not for IT systems support, but instead provides technical assistance for user questions related to the grant programs or policy. The AFG Help Desk accepts calls at 866-274-0960 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET Monday–Friday and emails at firegrants@fema.dhs.gov. The Help Desk is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET Monday–Friday.

  - The Hazard Mitigation Assistance Help Desk provides technical assistance and answers to programmatic questions about hazard mitigation grant programs (such as eligibility) and reached at 1-866-222-3580 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday–Friday.

How will the FEMA GO Help Desk address an issue reported by a user?

The FEMA GO Help Desk will respond to emails and calls received from users. Once system issues are resolved, the Help Desk will contact the reporting user to validate that the software fix has addressed their problems and they are able to successfully complete work in the FEMA GO system.