



Rebuild Florida Critical Facility Hardening Program (CFHP) Frequently Asked Questions

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Rebuild Florida Critical Facility Hardening Program (CFHP) Frequently Asked Questions

I. Application

Q: When does this application start and close?

A: The CFHP application opened on Wednesday, April 15, and closes on Tuesday, June 30.

Q: How many projects should be included in one application?

A: Applicants may only propose one project per application.

Q: How many applications can one entity submit?

A: Eligible entities may submit as many applications as they wish. If entities are submitting more than one application, they must make sure to name all attached files using this format: EntityNamePD_CFHP1, EntityNamePD_CFHP2, EntityNamePD_CFHP3 etc.

Q: What are the maximum and minimum allocation an entity can be awarded?

A: An **entity** may be awarded a maximum of \$15,000,000 and a minimum of \$50,000 for allocation across all of their project applications.

Q: I registered for the CFHP application link but have not received it yet. What should I do?

A: The mitigation team sends out application links every day. Please allow up to 24 hours before contacting the mitigation team for your application link. Additionally, the individual application links are sent from a noreply email domain: noreply@gemailserver.com. Please check your spam box or email application settings before contacting the mitigation team.

Q: How do I make a zip file?

A: Create a folder in your documents that contains the Word document and .jpeg files. Name the file your EntityNameCV_CFHP. Next, right click the folder. Select “Send to”, then select “Compressed zipped folder”. Additionally instructions for making a zip file can be found [here](#).

Q: Do I have to make a zip file for the Community Value question?

A: A zip file for this section is preferred. However, you can attach photos to a Word document or PowerPoint Presentation. Only a single document will be accepted in any of the attachment questions. This means that you cannot upload both a Word document and a PowerPoint. Therefore, if you upload a Word document or PowerPoint instead of a zip file, you must make sure both the community value questions and images are included in the single document.

Q: The application only allows me to input three co-applicants. What if I have more than three?

A: List the three co-applicants who contribute the most for your project. Any additional co-applicants should be identified in your Capacity Plan.

Q: I accidentally uploaded the wrong document, what do I do?

A: Click on the name of the document that you uploaded. A dialog box will pop up to allow you to replace the current document with the correct one. Only a single document can be attached per section. Double check that the correct document is submitted under its designated section.

Q: I accidentally did not attach a document that is required, what do I do?

A: If you are still in the application, then navigate back to the question by using the green arrows located on the bottom pane of the application. Proceed to upload the document for this section. If you have already submitted the application to DEO, then you will need to email: CDBG-MIT@deo.myflorida.com with the missing documents attached. Explain the situation clearly in your email and describe which documents were missing. Make sure the documents you attach to the email are titled appropriately.

Q: The templates included in the application will not open for me, what do I do?

A: The Implementation Plan and Budget Templates are included at the very beginning of the application and are attached under their designated questions. Additionally, these templates can be found in the CFHP Guidelines in Appendices D and E and on the DEO website. If you are unable to open or find these templates, then contact the CDBG-MIT team.

Q: I am having trouble finding my Census Tract and Block Group numbers for my area of benefit, what do I do?

A: Before contacting DEO, make sure you have read the detailed instructions on how to find these numbers in the CFHP Instructions. Additionally, view the material on HUD's website on how to find your Census Tract and Block Group numbers. A link to HUD's webinar and instructions can be found [here](#).

Q: Do I have to include all the Census Tract and Block Group numbers?

A: Yes, this is mandatory. Including every number allows DEO to accurately calculate the overall percentage of LMI benefit.

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, I could not get into my application.

A: In order to have unlimited access to your application, you must complete the DEO registration process. You can find the DEO registration process on our website by clicking [here](#).

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, my answers were not saved.

A: First, make sure you have a strong Wi-Fi connection when accessing this application. Second, do not delete your "cookies" while completing this application. Additionally, in order to have unlimited access to your application, you must complete the DEO registration process. You can find the link to the registration process on our website [here](#). Last, do not click the "back" button in the top left-hand corner of your browser. To navigate through the application, click the green arrow buttons on the bottom pane of the application.

Q: Who can sign the application for submission?

A: The application can be signed with a digital signature by the person who has signature authority for the UGLG.

II. Eligibility

Q: Does this grant only apply to existing critical facilities that need to be hardened, updated or replaced?

A: The CFHP only applies to existing critical facilities that need to be hardened. New construction for a facility or new construction to add onto a facility is not eligible.

Q: Are roofing projects included as an eligible hardening project for this program?

A: Yes, an eligible project for this program can involve roof hardening for a critical facility.

Q: Can an organization that is a non-state agency or non-government entity with a critical facility apply to this program?

A: The primary applicant must be a state agency or unit of general local government (UGLG), such as a town, city, county or municipality. Non-state and non-government entities can participate as co-applicants for the CFHP as long as a UGLG is the primary applicant **and** a critical facility to be hardened is included.

Q: Is a public housing authority, school board or fire district an eligible applicant entity?

A: Organizations and entities with a critical facility in need of hardening that are not UGLG or state agencies may apply in partnership with their UGLG or state agencies as a co-applicant.

Q: My county is located within a HUD or state-designated most impacted and distressed (MID) area. Does the project also have to fall in one of the designated zip codes to be eligible?

A: No. Eligible applicants for the CFHP include HUD and state-designated MID counties *and* zip codes. If your county is located within a HUD or state-designated county or zip code, then your project is eligible for this program.

Q: My county is not a HUD or state-designated MID county. Will I still be able to apply for this grant?

A: No. Eligible areas for the CDBG-MIT program include HUD and state-designated MID areas and/or zip codes only.

Q: Can CFHP be applied to purchasing fire trucks, security equipment, communication systems, etc.?

A: No, CFHP funds can only be applied to hardening an existing critical facility. Other facility improvements will not be eligible for funding.

Q: I have been told that my project building is not eligible for complete or partial CDBG-MIT funds because it is a “building for the general conduct of government”. What does that mean?

A: Some portions may be eligible for hardening, but the administrative portion of the building would not be eligible for funding due to HUD’s guidance on the general conduct of government. HUD does not allow CDBG-MIT funds to be applied for the general conduct of government. Per HUD, the definition of “buildings for the general conduct of government” encompasses buildings whose **predominant** use involves activities such as planning and administration. These buildings could be city halls, county administrative buildings, or facilities in which the legislative or general administrative affairs of the government are conducted. Buildings that are used to deliver services to the public would not fall within this category. For further information, please look at the Federal Register for CDBG-Mitigation.

Q: Can my public works building qualify for CFHP?

A: The facility must be critical to the community. HUD will not allow the CDBG-MIT grant funds to be applied to buildings where administrative offices or general government services are the primary function.

III. Requirements

Q: Is there a public notice requirement for this program?

A: Yes. Per recent guidance by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and HUD, due to the impacts of COVID-19, Units of General Local Governments (UGLG) must receive public input on their application by either posting information about their project to their public website for 14 days or by holding a virtual public meeting. Details about the specific requirements are available on the DEO website [here](#). A survey link for completing this requirement is located at [here](#). Failure to complete this requirement before June 30th for the CFHP application will render the applicant ineligible.

Q: Will we be required to go out for a request for qualifications (RFQ) for an administration consultant to administer the grant for us?

A: No, you are not required to procure a consultant. However, if you choose to, you must follow all HUD and DEO procurement guidelines that will be included in subrecipient agreement forms.

Q: My county has a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) approved by our county commission. Are we required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for this grant?

A: No, applicants are not required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for the CFHP and there are no additional points awarded for LMS approved projects.

IV. Budget

Q: Are engineering and administration costs for a new project covered under the grant?

A: Engineering and administrative costs may be eligible under covered costs if they are directly tied to project activities.

Q: How does Leveraged Dollars Scoring work?

A: Within the application, applicants will describe how they plan to maximize the outcomes of investments and the degree to which CDBG-MIT funds will be leveraged to generate more effective and comprehensive mitigation outcomes. An applicant will be scored based on the percentage of leveraged dollars utilized. The scoring criteria is as follows: less than 15%: 2pts, 16-30%: 4pts, 31-45%: 6pts, 46-60%: 8pts, 61% or more: 10pts.

Q: Can CDBG-MIT funds be used to match FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for Irma-related projects?

A: Yes, CDBG-MIT funds can be used to meet a matching share for other federal programs. This includes FEMA HMGP. The CFHP does not require any local match. However, all use of leveraged or matched funds must be clearly outlined in the CFHP application and comply with all HUD and DEO regulations. Leveraged projects can earn up to 10 points for scoring.

Q: If we have been awarded a grant for which a project is already underway, can match still be applied?

A: It is possible. However, you must have followed all HUD and CDBG-MIT regulations from the very beginning of the project. These requirements are in addition to other federal requirements. You should contact DEO to provide additional information before applying.

Q: When will CDBG-MIT funds be available to subrecipients?

A: The general process for subrecipients is as follows: At the end of the application process, the mitigation team will begin scoring all applications received. Those applications that appear to qualify for funding will be scheduled for a site visit from DEO. Next, DEO will proceed to award subrecipient agreements to successful applicants. DEO expects notices to award to be issued by the end of 2020 for the CFHP. In a best-case scenario, funds will be available early in 2021. However, COVID-19 may interrupt this timeline.

Q: Does hiring staff and/or consultants for CDBG-MIT programs fall under eligible costs for reimbursement?

A: Some of these costs may be eligible if they can be directly and exclusively applied to the hardening project. Note that all eligible expenditures will be outlined in subrecipient agreements for successful applicants before the funds are awarded.

Q: Describe how the maximum amount of funds permitted for applications works?

A: Each eligible entity can be awarded within the range of the max/min thresholds of each of DEO’s three CDBG-MIT programs. If an entity meets the maximum application amount for one program, that does not preclude them from applying for another program.

There may be separate entities within the same region that can apply independently for the maximum amounts. For example, both Leon County and the City of Tallahassee can be awarded up to \$15 million independently, because they are two separate UGLG entities. Even though both entities are located within the same county, they are separate entities and therefore both may be awarded the maximum amount allowable.

However, if just Leon County is applying for multiple projects, they will be limited by the maximum threshold of the given program because they are one entity responsible for multiple projects. For example, Leon County may have three separate projects for the CFHP. One of the three might be a school board applying in partnership with the County (because school boards are not UGLGs). The second might be a local hospital. The third might be the County itself. The County would be the applicant for three separate projects and combined, the three cannot exceed the maximum award threshold of \$15 million.



V. Miscellaneous

Q: We have a facility with a service area that encompasses both a State-designated MID and HUD-designated MID. Which area will be considered when scoring the application?

A: If the service area of your facility crosses into both a State and HUD-designated MID area, then DEO will give you the full points for having a service area in a HUD MID area, as that has the most points.

Q: I have critical facilities that need multiple generators; can I combine these into one application?

A: Each facility needs its own application. If one facility has a need for multiple generators (and other hardening), you may submit one application for all of that facility's hardening needs. However, you can submit multiple applications if you would like to harden more than one facility. Stationery generators, affixed to the structure, are eligible. Per HUD, DEO is not permitted to fund portable generators.