

State of Mississippi

Safe Room-Storm Shelter-Community Shelter Initiative

A Safe Place to Go

Background:

Mississippi remains a state subject to a variety of natural and man-made hazards. As a state which has been negatively impacted by fourteen (14) Presidential disaster declarations in eleven (11) years, Mississippi is placing a high priority on reducing or eliminating the effects of disaster events. The State experiences approximately 20 tornadoes per year that are a continued threat to life and property.

As a result of the devastating tornadoes that affected the State on February 16th and 24th, 2001, a Presidential Disaster Declaration was issued. Under the declaration, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds are available to the State for the implementation of long-term, cost-effective measures that will significantly reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property from natural disasters.

A Safe Place to Go Initiative:

It is the intent of the State of Mississippi to utilize the FEMA 1360-DR-MS Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding as a source for reimbursement grants for the installation of residential and community safe rooms and storm shelters within the declared counties.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funding:

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding may not exceed 75% of the eligible project cost. A non-Federal share may be provided by the subgrantee, by project participants or any other non-Federal source. The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind.

Program Administration:

This strategy has been developed and will be administered by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and County Emergency Management Agencies (EMA).

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants are identified as:

1. State and Local Governments
2. Private Non-Profit organizations or institutions that own or operate a private non-profit facility as defined in §206.221 (e) of the 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).
3. Indian tribes or authorized tribal organizations.

Specifications:

Applicants are eligible for this initiative provided they meet one of the following construction criteria:

1. The construction of a “safe room” that meets the written specifications developed by Texas Tech University and publicized in the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s August 1999 Publication 320.
2. The installation of an underground or in-ground shelter that meets the written specifications developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for In-ground Shelters.
3. The construction of a community shelter that meets the specifications in FEMA Publication 361.
4. Due to limited availability of funding, safe room grant amounts will be set at 75% of the eligible cost, and may not exceed \$3,500 for the construction and installation of a residential safe room or in-ground shelter, and \$5,000 for the construction and installation of a governmental critical facility safe room.

Eligibility:

The State of Mississippi Safe Room Initiative will be available to any eligible applicant within the FEMA 1360-DR-MS area however, due to limited funding the following prioritization is given to:

1. Any homeowner, government organization, or private non-profit located within the FEMA-1360-DR-MS declared counties whose primary residence, critical government facility, or private non-profit structure that has documented damage (insurance settlement, contractor receipts, etc.) is eligible to apply.
2. Any homeowner, governmental organization, or private non-profit located within the FEMA-1360-DR-MS declared counties whose primary residence, critical government facility, or private non-profit structure has no documented damage.

3. The date and time that the Notice of Interest is received by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency from the County Emergency Management Coordinator.

The Process:

This incentive will be implemented by MEMA (the Grantee) through the County EMA office of the counties or other local governments (the subgrantee) declared under FEMA-1360.

Step 1:

The Subgrantee will provide the Grantee with a Notice of Interest (NOI) to participate in this incentive project, based upon applications received from homeowners and communities in their county. A sixty-day application period will be implemented by the Grantee for receipt of the NOIs from the Subgrantee.

Step 2:

Based upon the NOIs received at the end of the application period, the Grantee will assess the amount of funding that is available through an approved HMGP application, and award HMGP funding to the eligible Subgrantees.

Step 3:

The Grantee will initiate Grantee/Subgrantee agreements with each funded County EMA, which will specify the documentation required and process to be used for reimbursement.

Step 4:

As shelter projects are completed, the Subgrantee will provide to the Grantee a verification form certifying that the shelter was constructed in accordance with the established federal guidelines. This packet will also include a Request-for-Payment Form from the Subgrantee to the Grantee.

Step 5:

Based upon receipt of the request for payment form, a verification form and supporting cost documentation, the Grantee will release the funds to the Subgrantee.

Step 6:

The Subgrantee will disburse warrants to the eligible homeowner or applicant community.

Step 7:

The Grantee will perform financial audit of completed work, and close out the project.