

Greetings state, local, Tribal, and private non-profit partners,

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) is reaching out to you today to explain the damage assessment process for the impacts from **Tropical Storm Isaias**. On July 31, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam declared a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia to prepare and coordinate a statewide response to Isaias, as outlined in [Executive Order Number Sixty-Nine \(2020\)](#). The Governor is authorized to declare an emergency when the anticipated effects of a severe weather situation constitute a disaster as described in [§ 44-146.16 of the Code of Virginia](#).

To expedite the process VDEM has created a hybrid process to include combine the initial damage assessment (IDA) and preliminary damage assessment (PDA) process. VDEM is requesting that the following steps happen by close of business on **Friday August 7, 2020** in order to determine if your locality, tribe, agency, or private non-profit meet the eligibility requirements to be included in this declaration. We will assess future deadlines, as needed, and communicate those.

Step 1: Notify the VDEM Recovery Team of your intent to submit a damage assessment for this event

- Recovery Contact – Recovery@vdem.virginia.gov

Step 2: Register for an account in VirginiaPA.org (VDEM's grants portal) – <https://virginiaPA.org>

- If you are already registered, you can log-in or request a reset of your login information

Step 3: Create a damage assessment in VirginiaPA.org

- Instructions and screenshots provided in How-to Submit a Damage Assessment document

Step 4: Create damage sites in VirginiaPA.org, and upload supporting documentation

- Instructions and screenshots provided in How-to Submit a Damage Assessment document

Step 5: When all of your damage sites are entered, VDEM will review your damage assessment

- Instructions and screenshots provided in How-to Submit a Damage Assessment document

Disaster-Specific Guidance:

For the current disaster declaration, potentially reimbursable costs are those under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) program Categories A through G, including permanent and non-permanent work. Reimbursable costs submitted for consideration should only include damages that do not qualify under another state or federal grant program. For definitions of Categories of work and for more information on the PA program, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/assistance/public> and <https://virginiapa.org/site/resources.cfm>.

Documentation Recommendations:

There is no one-sized-fits-all approach to documenting damage, work, and costs, or to collecting supporting documentation. Damage assessment teams must weigh the benefit of increased accuracy against the timeline for delivering necessary assistance.

Labor (Force Account) Damage Assessment Tips:

For the purpose of damage assessments, potential applicants may choose to use average pay rates for groups of force account employees performing similar work, if calculating the actual cost for individual employees is time prohibitive. In either case, the rate claimed needs to be reasonable for the type of work performed.

The applicant should document:

- Number of employees performing a given task
- Type of employee (budgeted or unbudgeted)
- Type of work being performed
- Regular time and overtime hours worked
- Hourly rate claimed in the summary

Equipment (Force Account) Damage Assessment Tips:

Potential applicants may estimate the cost of force account equipment using [FEMA equipment rates](#), or Tribal, State, or local equipment rates that meet the criteria defined by FEMA.

The applicant should document:

- Type of equipment that was leased
- Type of work being performed
- Cost of the leased equipment in a summary
- Leased equipment would be similar to contracting requirements

Materials and Supplies Damage Assessment Tips:

The cost of supplies and materials should be based on invoices, potential applicant's established methods for pricing supplies and materials, historic prices for materials, or prices from area vendors

FEMA will consider the cost of supplies, including materials, if:

- The supplies or materials are or will be purchased and are justifiably needed to effectively respond to and/or recover from the incident; or
- The supplies are or will be taken from the potential applicant's stock and used for the incident

Contract Services Damage Assessment Tips:

FEMA will consider the cost of contract services based on the terms of the contract.

The applicant should document:

- All contract work and costs in a summary
- Description of the work performed under the contract
- The estimate, bid, or executed contract itself

Mutual Aid Agreements Damage Assessment Tips

When a potential applicant requests resources from another jurisdiction through a mutual aid agreement, FEMA will consider costs incurred by the potential applicant.

The applicant should include:

- Labor costs (similar to Force Account Labor requirements listed above)
- Equipment costs (similar to equipment requirements listed above)
- Supply and/or materials costs (similar to the supply/material requirements listed above)