Local Government Recovery Management Training and Guidance

Recovery Timeline - Just-In-Time Training – Recovery Management Guide

FEMA’s Community Planning and Capacity Building Branch (CPCB) is leading a multi-partner effort to strengthen local disaster recovery management capability by developing targeted, just-in-time training courses that support FEMA Strategic Goal 3.2.1[[1]](#footnote-1). The courses are designed to deliver information following a disaster in appropriate packages, timed to the phase of the disaster when they are needed. Along with these offerings FEMA is developing a Recovery Timeline and a Recovery Management Guide. Each of these products will address the same local government recovery management disciplines but through different learning formats. *More than 40 internal and external partners (listed on page 3) have participated in their development.*

**The Need** - A disaster brings with it not just physical, social, and economic damage but also significant complexity for local governments responsible for managing the long-term recovery process. Recovery presents a unique management context with a deluge of unfamiliar programs, compliance requirements, many-fold increase in workload, unique financial challenges, new planning considerations, and all of this at an incredibly fast pace.

This period can be very challenging for local government executives, managers, and organizations, especially those with little or no prior experience managing recovery efforts. While training is offered before events, and that remains a priority focus for preparedness, the fact remains that many local governments will not have leaders and staff experienced in disaster recovery management.

Currently available guidance for local government executives (offered by governmental and non-governmental sources) is far from scant. Rather, it is often:

*When you are a small town you just don’t have the capacity. For example, we don’t have a housing department. Our finance department is one person. Information thrown at you following a federal disaster is so overwhelming. There’s so much to learn. But so confusing because they all have different rules and processes.*

* Victoria Simonsen, Town Administrator, Lyons, CO

1. Too much information that cannot be digested easily by local government officials
2. Not presented as a coordinated, comprehensive training system
3. Not tailored to the disaster environment - in content, timing or duration.

**Three Products**

1. *Recovery Timeline:* A 20,000 foot overview of the significant recovery milestones and action steps that local governments should be familiar with across the first year and a half after a disaster. This will first be developed as a static visual and later as a web-based document allowing the user to zoom in on specific dates and activities that will link to additional technical guidance, resources, case studies, and peer support. The Recovery Timeline informs the sequence of chapters and lessons in the next two products.
2. *Just-In-Time Recovery Management Training (JIT-RMT):* This is a series of sequenced and coordinated post-disaster trainings that will teach, using peer and SME instructors, to the challenges and solutions across the recovery management disciplines that are relevant to the term of the disaster in which they are given. Several elements will be developed:
3. **Immediate Guidance (future development)** - Very short, webinar-based learning engagements provided soon after disaster impact.
4. **Three Foundational Courses (piloted in early 2020)** - Survey classes that present best practices on all recovery disciplines
5. **Community Recovery Symposium Template** **(available now)** – A gathering of local governments, hosted by the state and organized by CPCB, to mobilize leaders and shift the focus from response to resilience and long-term recovery.
6. **Skills Building Courses (future development).** Discipline-specific classes offering intensive training on each recovery management discipline.
7. *Recovery Management Guide:* This comprehensive, stand-alone manual presents succinct recovery management guidance in written form, with multiple references to detailed information. It will complement the Just-In-Time trainings and present information in a highly accessible and easy to follow format. It will be useful to those who cannot take the JIT trainings or who want a written explanation of what they just learned. It will also be synced with a new version of FEMA’s Community Recovery Management Toolkit website.

**Development Timeline** PD = Post Disaster

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Recovery Timeline (Pdf) | Published January 2020 | | | |
| Recovery Timeline (Web) | Late 2020 or 2021 | | | |
| Recovery Management Guide | March 2020 | | | |
| Just-In-Time Trainings | 0-3 Weeks PD | 4-9 Weeks PD | 10-22 Weeks PD | 22+ Weeks PD |
| Immediate Guidance/Webinar | 2021 |  | | |
| Foundational Courses |  | Pilot Jan 2020 | Pilot Jan 2020 | Pilot late 2020 |
| Skills Building Courses | 2021 | 2021 | 2021 |

**Delivery** – State governments are key to building the capacity of their local governments following disasters. States have the best understanding of local needs as well as access to significant administrative and management funds and personnel to ensure localities are in a strong position to succeed with long term recovery. For these reasons, they are central to how the JIT-RMT will be delivered in their state.

EMI is engaged in supporting development of these courses to meet EMI standards, with assigned “L” course numbers so they can be field delivered consistently, using EMI standards. FEMA anticipates working with states to tailor the instruction team to respond to state preferences while meeting the consistent delivery of planned content. FEMA will also work with states to support ‘train the trainer’ endeavors.

FEMA plans to use local government peers with recovery experience as well as subject matter experts and EMI qualified instructors to deliver the foundational courses. It is critical that knowledgeable peers be involved in the instruction as peers lend credibility and depth to the material and have proven to be highly effective in delivering well-received content.

**Partners** - More than 40 internal and external partners have provided detailed verbal and written feedback on this initiative in extensive interviews, have convened at FEMA to provide direct input during a formal focus group (8/24/18) and in a course development workshop (7/22-23/19). The courses have also been informed by feedback from precursor courses that have been delivered numerous times in collaboration with the states of Florida and Louisiana. Partners include:

FEMA – FEMA programs were engaged, consulted and provided comments at multiple stages. FEMA components substantially involved include National Integration Center, Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Intergovernmental Affairs-TPT, Procurement Disaster Assistance Team, Grants, National Training and Educational Division, Emergency Management Institute, and Regions 6, 8, and 10.

Federal - HUD, USDA, EPA, Economic RSF

State - State of Louisiana - Office of Community Development, State of Colorado – Department of Local Affairs, State of North Dakota – Department of Emergency Services

Local - City of Bloomfield, IL, City of Longmont, CO, Town of Lyons, CO, City of Cedar Rapids, IA, Monroe County, FL, Snohomish County, WA

Organizational - National Emergency Management Association, International Emergency Management Association, National Governors Association, National Council of State Legislators, National Association of Development Organizations, National Association of Counties, International City/County Management Association, National League of Cities, National Grants Management Association, Government Finance Officers Association, Society for Human Resource Management, Louisiana Municipal Association, National Voluntary Associations Active in Disaster, Extension Disaster Education Network, University of North Carolina School of Local Government, Old Dominion University – Center for Regional Excellence

**For more information –** Please contact:

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1. Increase State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial embrace and implementation of NDRF principles and concepts through recovery management, planning, and preparedness. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)