

Disaster Declaration Process

When an event occurs that is beyond the response and recovery capabilities of the local county, they request assistance from state governments, after the state surveys the affected area, the State of Nevada initiates a process to seek assistance from the Federal Government.

1. Local and State Officials Conduct an initial Preliminary Damage Assessment – This assessment occurs shortly after a storm occurs. Local officials inform DEM of the damage to public infrastructure within their community and the impacts to residents.
2. DEM Requests FEMA to Conduct a Preliminary Damage Assessment – Teams from the affected county, DEM and FEMA conduct the assessment. They view the damage and collect the cost estimates from county officials. Each county must meet its individual indicators and the state must also meet a \$3.8 million indicator statewide.
3. DEM Prepares the Governor’s Request for a Disaster Declaration – A letter details the event and cites National Weather Service data. It must document factors that determine severity, magnitude and impact. It also documents what local officials did to respond to the emergency. Local input regarding impact to the community is gathered and incorporated in the letter. This includes the amount and type of damage, impact on infrastructure, impact on essential services, concentration of damage, level of insurance coverage, assistance available from other sources, and if there is an imminent threat to public health and safety.
4. Governor Submits the Letter to the President through FEMA – FEMA’s regional office reviews and sends the letter to FEMA headquarters in Washington D.C., headquarters verifies documentation and makes a recommendation to the President. The President is the only one with authority to grant a Presidential Disaster Declaration. If assistance programs are approved, DEM officials work in partnership with local government and FEMA to ensure delivery of available disaster assistance programs.

Primary Assistance Programs

- Public Assistance - Public Assistance provides grants to state, tribal and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies that have affected public infrastructure.
- Individual Assistance – Individual Assistance provides financial help or direct services to those who have necessary expenses and serious needs if they are unable to meet these needs through other means.