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FDEM Streamlines PA Process with F-ROC

Disaster after disaster, public assistance applicants across the country run into ever-changing red tape, inconsistent formatting, delays in payment, and de-obligations. Having gone through the application process himself, current Florida Department of Emergency Management Executive Director, Kevin Guthrie, took the sticking points he experienced and focused his team around them.



"We are convinced that this will be looked at as a national best practice."

- Kevin Guthrie, FDEM Executive Director

"We developed four areas of focus that ultimately have become the Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation or F-ROC: standardization, procedures, procurement, and assessment," said Guthrie. "We are convinced that this will be looked at as a national best practice."

A self-declared "applicant-first" initiative, the core of F-ROC is its disaster readiness assessment and customized abatement plan, which together lay the risk mitigation groundwork to make public aid more hit-the-ground-running than day-late-and-a-buck-short. "To be successful at the 'end' process you have to be successful at the start of the process," Guthrie explains.

"Assessment focuses on five specific areas: Applicant Experience, Policy and Procedure, Documentation, Procurement, and Contract Administration. Customized abatement plans are also part of the assessment process, which may include enhancements to procedures and procurements, training and other activities."

The abatement program further incentivizes subrecipients with paths forward to improved scores and increased payment percentages. For example, through F-ROC, Florida will provide an additional 5% payment boost for applicants accredited by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. For another example, subrecipients can significantly increase up-front payment (up to 80% of cost for the 2024 hurricane season) by completing training, a disaster readiness assessment, and a post-disaster questionnaire.

F-ROC will be state-run, and federally supported, to maximize both efficiency and impact. Through a more elegant interface for guidance, trainings, and documentation, allowing organizations and individual applicants to increase readiness and mitigate risks prior to disaster.

For the next two years of the initiative, opt-in will be limited to category A and B, non-expedited projects. The deadline for opt-in is September 30, 2023. Opt-in will be pursuant to applicant commitment to advance procurement and documentation, to simplify the approval process for FEMA staff and decrease the chances of de-obligation. There are zero costs for opt-in.

Beyond readiness, FDEM believes F-ROC's more accurate risk assessment will take Florida beyond mere readiness, and increase equity in aid distribution.

Want to learn more? Find all the F-ROC information [here](#).

"When the sun shines, we shine together." - Rihanna "Umbrella"

If you have a state practice you'd like to highlight as part of this series, please contact [John Benedict](#).

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