

CRS Report for Congress

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Recovery from Terrorist Attacks: A Catalog of Selected Federal Assistance Programs

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Ben Canada, Coordinator
Analyst in American National Government
Government and Finance Division

Recovery from Terrorist Attacks: A Catalog of Selected Federal Assistance Programs

Summary

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on New York City and Washington, DC, Members of Congress from affected jurisdictions asked CRS to compile a list of federal programs that could assist recovery from the results of such attacks in urban areas. Subsequently, Members from jurisdictions not directly affected have requested such a compilation, in the event their jurisdiction were to experience an attack.

This catalog of programs also represents a selection of programs for which Congress might provide funds in the FY2003 appropriations process or through emergency supplemental legislation.

The programs listed in this catalog can be classified into two broad categories. First are programs specifically for disaster situations. Most of these programs are administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA). Second are general assistance programs that may apply to disaster situations. Many federal agencies, including the Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Justice, administer programs that may be brought to bear under certain circumstances.

The programs can also be classified by recipients, primarily individuals, state and local governments, or businesses. The programs address such short-term needs as food and shelter, and such long-term needs as repair of public utilities.

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Recovery from Terrorist Attacks: A Catalog of Selected Federal Assistance Programs

Introduction

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on New York City and Washington, DC, Members of Congress from affected jurisdictions asked CRS to compile a list of federal programs that could assist recovery from the results of such attacks in urban areas. Subsequently, Members from jurisdictions not directly affected have requested such a compilation, in the event their area was to experience an attack. This catalog, therefore, lists both federal disaster assistance programs and other federal assistance programs that may appropriately be brought to bear on recovery operations at the state and local levels. This report also represents a spectrum of programs for which Congress might decide to provide funds in the FY2003 appropriations process or through emergency supplemental legislation.

Program Selection Criteria

Programs discussed in this report satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Congress expressly designated the program as a disaster relief or recovery program;
- The program is applicable to disaster situations;
- FEMA and other federal agencies view the program as an emergency response program;
- The program's eligible recipients and eligible activities make it appropriate for use in urban areas; or
- The program is potentially useful for addressing short-term and long-term recovery needs (e.g., assistance with processing survivor benefits, repair of public facilities).

The programs listed in this catalog can be classified into two broad categories: 1) programs specifically for disaster situations, and 2) general assistance programs that may apply to disaster situations. The programs can also be classified by recipients, primarily individuals, state and local governments, or businesses. The programs address such short-term needs as food and shelter, and such long-term needs as repair of public utilities (see **Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Framework of Federal Assistance Programs

Eligible Recipient	Disaster Programs Examples	General Assistance Programs Examples
Individual	Individual Assistance (FEMA) Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DOL)	Dislocated Worker Activities (under the Workforce Investment Act) Medicaid
State and Local Governments	Public Assistance (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grants (FEMA)	Community Development Block Grant (HUD) Social Services Block Grant (HHS)
Business	Physical Disaster Loans (SBA) Economic Injury Loans (SBA)	—

Limitations of This Report

The purpose of this catalog is to identify programs pertinent to the recovery process. The report, therefore, does not provide *detailed* program information; it offers brief descriptive information to help congressional offices determine which programs bear further consideration when planning, organizing, or implementing recovery operations. Most of the programs listed here are expressly authorized as assistance programs and are listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA). The list does not include *ad hoc* assistance that some agencies provide in emergency or disaster situations.¹

As Congress and the Administration respond to domestic needs, some of these programs may be altered. For the most up-to-date information on a particular program, please contact the listed CRS analyst.

Other Sources of Information

Federal Agency Web Sites. Many federal agencies have established web sites specifically to respond to efforts for overcoming the results of the terrorist attacks. Some agencies maintain web sites with comprehensive information about their disaster assistance programs. Other agencies, however, supply only limited information. Most web sites list contact phone numbers for more information. A comprehensive list of federal agency web sites is maintained by Louisiana State University (see [<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgovall.html>]).

FEMA Web Site. From its web site, FEMA offers regular updates on recovery efforts in areas under a major disaster declaration. FEMA also maintains a “Victims

¹ Agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers (DoD) are substantially involved with recovery efforts. The Corps has assisted with installing temporary generating capacity at the twin towers rescue site in New York, has provided boats for immediate evacuations of lower Manhattan, and is providing ongoing engineering expertise for the rescue effort in New York.

Benefits and Assistance Contacts Matrix,” which is updated regularly. The matrix provides contact information for federal and state agencies, airline companies, and charitable organizations. It lists resources for meeting the financial, physical, and mental needs of victims. See [http://www.fema.gov/nwz01/wtc_victims.pdf].

FirstGov. Following the attacks of September 2001, the General Services Administration set up a special feature on its web site, FirstGov, with links to information on *individual assistance* programs, investigation assistance, and volunteer opportunities (see [<http://www.firstgov.gov>]). It also contains links to web sites that provide maps of affected areas and other useful logistical information. FirstGov, however, contains few resources for affected state and local governments and community-based organizations.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. The CFDA lists all federal assistance programs (see [<http://www.cfda.gov>]). The catalog, however, does not contain the most current information for all programs. It also does not include information pertinent to disaster situations in most program descriptions.

Because of limitations of information available via the Internet, congressional users of this report are urged to contact the appropriate CRS program analysts for more complete, timely information.

Federal Disaster Assistance Programs

The programs listed in this section are authorized specifically for disaster situations. The majority of these programs are administered by FEMA, but other agencies, including the Small Business Administration and Department of Justice, administer programs for emergency situations.

Table 1. Disaster Assistance Programs for Individuals

Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
<i>Financial Assistance</i>			
Individual and Family Grants (83.543)	FEMA	<p>This program is FEMA's primary assistance program for individuals after the President issues a major disaster declaration. Congress appropriates money for the IFG program to the Disaster Relief Fund. Grants are made to localities to assist disaster victims whose needs cannot be met through other forms of assistance or through other means such as insurance. Program funds have a wide range of eligible uses.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: State contributes 25%. The matching requirement is a statutory mandate.</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/inassist.htm]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Disaster Unemployment Assistance	Department of Labor	<p>Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) provides benefits to previously employed or self-employed individuals rendered jobless as a direct result of a major disaster and who are not eligible for regular federal/state unemployment insurance (UI). DUA is federally funded through FEMA, but is administered by the state UI agencies. The DUA weekly benefit amount and duration are the same as under the UI program.</p> <p>CRS Report RS21012, <i>Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)</i>, by Jennifer Lake</p> <p>[http://ows.doleta.gov/unemploy/duany.asp]</p>	Jennifer Lake 7-0620

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Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Dislocated Worker Activities (under the Workforce Investment Act)	Department of Labor	<p>The dislocated worker program provides training and related assistance to persons who have lost their jobs and are unlikely to return to their current jobs or industries. Of the funds appropriated, 80% are allocated by formula grants to states and local entities; 20% are reserved by the Secretary of Labor for activities including National Emergency Grants to states or local entities. One specific type of national emergency grant is Disaster Relief Employment Assistance, under which funds can be made available to states to employ dislocated workers in temporary jobs involving recovery and cleanup after a national emergency.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.doleta.gov/layoff/default.asp]</p>	Ann Lordeman 7-2323
Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB)	Bureau of Justice Assistance (DOJ)	<p>Benefits (lump-sum payment) to spouses and children of public safety officers who have been permanently disabled or have lost their lives while in the line of duty. The benefit is adjusted each year to reflect the percentage of change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The benefit for FY2001 is \$151,635.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/html/fs000277.pdf]</p>	Joanne O'Bryant 7-6819
Public Safety Officers' Educational Assistance Program (PSOEA)	Bureau of Justice Assistance (DOJ)	<p>Provides an educational assistance allowance to eligible survivors of public safety officers whose death or total permanent disability are the direct and proximate result of an injury sustained in the line of duty; funds may be used only to defray educational expenses, such as tuition, room and board, books, etc.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/fs000270.pdf]</p>	Joanne O'Bryant 7-6819
Tax Relief for Disaster Victims	Internal Revenue Service	<p>Tax benefits to disaster victims and counseling on rights established by the federal tax system.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.irs.gov/relief/index.html]</p>	Gary Guenther 7-7742

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Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Social Security	Social Security Administration	<p>Counseling on claims for Social Security survivors and disability benefits; assistance with obtaining necessary evidence for claims processing (e.g., evidence of death); and resolution of problems involving lost or destroyed SSA checks and lost or destroyed claims forms.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.ssa.gov]</p>	Dawn Nuschler 7-6283
Cora Brown Fund (83.538)	FEMA	<p>Direct payments to individuals and groups for disaster-related needs that have not been, or will not be, met by government agencies or any other organizations that have programs to address such needs. Annual obligations for the entire program are typically less than \$100,000.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Savings Bonds Replacement or Redemption	Bureau of the Public Debt (Treasury)	<p>Assistance to disaster victims in expediting replacement or redemption of U.S. savings bonds.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov/sav/sbfaqs2.htm]</p>	James Bickley 7-7794
<i>Counseling and Other Specialized Services</i>			
Assistance for Victims of Crime	Office for Victims of Crime (DOJ)	<p>Offers a variety of services to victims, including emergency travel assistance, assistance with obtaining information, and long-term mental health counseling.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/]</p>	Alison Siskin 7-0260

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Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Crisis Counseling (83.539)	FEMA	<p>Grants to states to provide immediate crisis counseling services, when required, to victims of a major federally declared disaster for the purpose of relieving mental health problems caused or aggravated by a major disaster or its aftermath; assistance is short-term and community-oriented.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/counsel.htm]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Disaster Legal Services (83.540)	FEMA	<p>Free legal assistance to individuals affected by a major federal disaster. Types of assistance typically include help with insurance claims, preparing powers of attorney, help with guardianships, and preparing new wills and other lost legal documents.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
<i>Food and Housing</i>			
Emergency Food and Shelter (83.523)	FEMA	<p>Grants to supplement and expand ongoing efforts to provide shelter, food, and supportive services for needy families and individuals. Activities include strengthening efforts to create more effective and innovative local programs by providing supplemental funding for them; conducting minimum rehabilitation of existing mass shelter or mass feeding facilities, but only to the extent necessary to make facilities safe and sanitary and bring them into compliance with local building codes.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fedguide/ch1-21.htm]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Disaster Housing Program (83.545)	FEMA	<p>Direct payments to individuals affected by a disaster to assist with their related housing needs; examples include rental assistance, home repair, and transient accommodations.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None, except units of government must provide 25% of the eligible costs of developing mobile home sites.</p> <p>[http://www.hud.gov:80/disassit.cfm]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672

Table 2. Disaster Assistance Programs for State and Local Governments

Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Public Assistance (PA) Grants (83.544)	FEMA	<p>PA is FEMA's primary assistance program for state and local governments. Funds may be used to repair, replace, or restore disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain private nonprofit organizations. This program has a wide range of eligible activities, including removal of debris, repair of roads and bridges, repair of water control facilities, etc. Congress appropriates funds to the Disaster Relief Fund.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: generally 25%, but the statute authorizes the President to waive part or all of the required match.</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/pa/]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Hazard Mitigation Grants (83.548)	FEMA	<p>Grants to states to enable mitigation measures to be implemented following the recovery from a disaster; and to provide funding for previously identified mitigation measures to benefit the area.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: 25%</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672
Community Disaster Loans (83.537)	FEMA	<p>Loans to local governments that have suffered substantial loss of tax and other revenue in areas included in a major disaster declaration. The funds can only be used to maintain existing functions of a municipal operating character and the local government must demonstrate a need for financial assistance.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: No matching requirement, but loan amount may not exceed \$5 million.</p> <p>CRS Report RS20736, <i>Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390): Summary of New and Amended Provisions of the Stafford Disaster Relief Act</i>, by Keith Bea.</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672

Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Reimbursement for Firefighting on Federal Property (83.007)	FEMA	<p>Direct payments to fire departments for engaging in firefighting operations on federal property; applicants may be reimbursed for direct expenses and direct losses (those losses and expenses not considered normal operating expenses) incurred in firefighting.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.fema.gov/]</p>	Keith Bea 7-8672

Table 3. Disaster Assistance Programs for Businesses

Title	Agency	Description, Funding, and Web Site	CRS Contact
Economic Injury Disaster Loans (59.002)	Small Business Administration (SBA)	<p>Loans and loan guarantees to assist small businesses suffering economic injury as a result of disasters. Business must be located in disaster areas declared by President, Small Business Administration (SBA), and/or Secretary of Agriculture.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.sba.gov/disaster/newyorkfires.html]</p>	Bruce Mulock 7-7775
Physical Disaster Loans (59.008)	SBA	<p>Provides loans to small businesses in declared disaster areas for uninsured physical damage and losses.</p> <p>Matching Requirement: None</p> <p>[http://www.sba.gov/disaster/newyorkfires.html]</p>	Bruce Mulock 7-7775

General Assistance Programs

In addition to programs described in Tables 1, 2, and 3, which provide targeted assistance to individuals, state and local governments, and businesses specifically affected by disasters, numerous other general assistance programs may potentially be useful to communities in disaster situations. For example, by virtue of losing income, employment, or health insurance, individuals affected by disasters may become eligible for programs that are not specifically intended as disaster relief, such as cash assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, unemployment compensation, job training under the Workforce Investment Act, Medicaid, or the State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP).

Likewise, state or local officials have the discretion to use funds under such programs as Social Services Block Grants or Community Development Block Grants to meet disaster-related needs, even though these programs were not established specifically for such purposes. Other agencies that may potentially offer assistance to state and local governments include the Economic Development Administration and Army Corps of Engineers. For businesses, however, only the disaster programs administered by the SBA are applicable.

Numerous federal programs of potential use as disaster relief can be found throughout the government. However, while many programs might be of *potential* use based on their statutorily *allowable* use of funds, specific eligibility criteria or other program rules might make it less likely that they would *actually* be used. Moreover, available funds might already be obligated for ongoing program activities. On the other hand, to the extent that federal agencies have discretion in the administration of programs, some may choose to adapt these non-targeted programs for use in disaster situations.

On the other hand, Congress may choose to provide additional funds through the emergency supplemental for certain general assistance programs, specifically for use after a disaster.

CRS analysts and program specialists can help provide information on the extent to which general assistance programs might be of relevance in a given disaster situation. CRS appropriations reports (accessible at [<http://www.crs.gov/products/appropriations/apppage.shtml>]) may have information on disaster assistance within particular federal agencies. These reports also contain a list of key policy staff at CRS (including phone numbers), identified by their program-area or agency expertise.

Related CRS Products

CRS Report RS21061, *Small Business Disaster Assistance: Responding to the Terrorist Attacks*, by Bruce Mulock.

CRS Report RS21023, *Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)*, by Jennifer Lake.

CRS Report RS20669, *Federal Grants to State and Local Governments: Overview and Characteristics*, by Ben Canada.

CRS Report RS20272, *FEMA's Mission: Policy Directives for the Federal Emergency Management Agency*, by Keith Bea.

CRS Report RL30460, *The Federal Emergency Management Agency: Overview of Funding for Disaster Relief and Other Activities*, by Keith Bea.