

FY 2026 NIMS Grant Award Terms and Conditions

Term and Condition Title: FY2026 NIMS Grant / Cooperative Agreement Award Performance Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Additional Requirements:

1. As a preliminary matter, it is important to clarify that adoption and implementation of the National Qualification System (NQS) by award recipient is not required under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) award. Rather, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) administrator is required to support and advance the Federal government's priority to implement the National Preparedness System and Support the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient Nation; and increase the effectiveness of the national mutual aid compact by supporting and coordinating with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program offices, including the National Integration Center's NIMS, as follows:
 - a. In collaboration with FEMA, support the use of the NQS among EMAC members in accordance with the indicators found on the [NQS Implementation Objectives Fact Sheet](#). Beginning in Fiscal Year 2022, FEMA made NQS implementation a requirement of award for the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Program funding, however NQS qualification, certification, and credentialing processes are voluntary for all non-Federal entities not seeking EMPG Program funding.
 - b. Advance the use of NQS-qualified personnel shareable under EMAC from the prior year. These efforts will be carried out through the following activities:
 - i. Use the FEMA provided template to report progress towards increasing the use of NQS-qualified personnel or positions under EMAC.
 - ii. Provide analytical support from EMAC activations to identify priorities, assistance with content development identification and alignment of existing Mission-Ready Package (MRP) content with developed job titles, and integration of NQS-qualified personnel into EMAC systems. This will aid FEMA with the identification of subject matter expertise, assistance, and validation in developing resource typing definitions, job titles /position qualifications, and Position Task Book (PTB) templates.
 - iii. Help promote and disseminate among EMAC members NIMS and NQS-related content to expedite its adoption and use in mutual aid.
 - iv. Continuously identify emerging needs from EMAC members for new NQS content and for substantive, critical changes to existing NQS content, including related learning requirements based on real-world events and exercises.
 - v. Explore how to further implement the NQS into EMAC's systems using

PrepToolkit National Resource Hub (NRH) components such as OneResponder and the Resource Inventory System (RIS), the EMAC's web-based applications linked with local, state, and territorial partners.

c. The administrator of EMAC will maintain Application Programming Interface (API)/Data Services Connections with NRH components hosted within PrepToolkit. The following activities will support sustainment of data sharing:

- i. Maintain, and enhance as needed, the connection to RIS in a dashboard within the EMAC Emergency Operations System (EOS).
- ii. Continue to utilize data services from RIS for resources and OneResponder (hosted by FEMA) for NQS-credentialed personnel in the latest versioned dashboard within the EMAC Emergency Operations System (EOS) and Mutual Aid Support System (MASS).
- iii. Data services RIS are owned and hosted by FEMA and will be provided in multiple formats as documented in the application programming interface (API) and data services guide.
- iv. FEMA will provide EMAC with API user guide(s) and technical assistance at the systems development level as needed to support consuming and configuring these data services within EMAC's system.
- v. Incorporation of these data services into the EMAC EOS assumes a refresh rate of at least every two days to ensure the data being consumed and viewed within the EOS retains currency.
- vi. Data services will be governed by FEMA Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Information Technology policies and associated terms of use.
- vii. Serve as a key stakeholder in providing thought leadership and expertise on resource management and mutual aid in FEMA NIC supported meetings and other forums. FEMA will provide stakeholder forums throughout the year to inform the development of NRH, a system that will consolidate and unify the Resource Inventorying System and OneResponder. EMAC will be requested to participate in these stakeholder forums and lend subject matter expertise throughout the development process.
- viii. Review, provide feedback on, and/or beta test any new or updated versions of the NRH API and data services that FEMA may develop to ensure the product meets stakeholder needs and is technically viable when integrated into EMAC systems.

2. Ensure the reliability and efficiency of EMAC operations through the following activities:

- a. Develop, sustain, and maintain a cadre of personnel to support, upon request, 24-hour mutual aid operations at the Federal level—both at the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) via National EMAC Liaison Teams (NELT) and at the FEMA Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCC) via Regional EMAC Liaison Teams (RELT).
- i. Support the deployment of qualified EMAC Advance Teams (A-Teams) to states

requesting assistance, assisting states, EMAC liaison teams, and the National Coordinating State (NCS). (EMAC A-Teams are trained emergency management personnel who supplement an affected state's ability to process EMAC requests).

- ii. To stand up the NRCC or an RRCC, FEMA NRCC contacts the EMAC Coordinator who coordinates with the NRCC, EMAC administrator, and the National Coordinating State (NCS) to determine if the deployment of state resources under EMAC is at a level that requires coordination and if so, FEMA will complete a task order for the deployment of a NELT/RELT. In clarification, at a Level 1 activation, the NRCC will activate (all-hands). But at Level 2 (or higher), FEMA will specifically request the NELT/RELT in the Operations Order or Amendment after analyzing both filled and unfilled EMAC requests. At a Level 3, National Watch Center (NWC) or NWC Enhanced Watch, the NELT/RELT are generally not requested but are to be available for consultation.
- b. For the National Coordinating State (NCS) or administration staff: Virtually provide situational awareness, for the EMAC Operations System (EOS) on short notice prior to the arrival of a NELT at the NRCC and RELTs at the RRCCs.
- c. For EMAC administrator: Establish a formalized training program for NELT members assigned to the NRCC by pre-identifying personnel from the region that may be able to deploy to the NRCC during a disaster or incident. Personnel will attend a joint FEMA/EMAC training program at the NRCC to identify workspace, responsibilities, and resources.
 - i. Include in the EMAC administrator's training program the relevant NRCC-hosted training and education seminars.
 - ii. Maintain the EMAC position Job Aid and include relevant NRCC requirements and duties.
- d. Develop, sustain, and maintain at least a 90 percent (90%) qualification rate of a qualified cadre of personnel to support mutual aid operations in alignment with the requirements for EMAC A-Teams.
- e. Develop comprehensive After-Action Reviews (AAR) for incidents following large-scale or unique activations of EOS within the performance period. This may include large-scale mutual aid operations and mutual aid-related exercises that are part of the National Exercise Program. As part of this program, EMAC will work with FEMA to:
 - i. Update the process for developing AARs, in keeping with FEMA's process for gathering lessons learned and continuous improvement and in alignment with the core capabilities contained in the National Preparedness Goal.
 - ii. Work with the EMAC Committee to formalize a review process, within 90 calendar days of award, by which FEMA and EMAC identify potential corrective actions for EMAC operations and establish a timeline for corrective actions.
 - iii. Monitor and ensure the on-time completion of corrective actions.
- f. Sustain and maintain EOS to share on demand deployment data regarding filled

and unfulfilled EMAC requests with FEMA and ensure that the system operates from alternate locations in case of loss of the primary facility or the need to work remotely. The system shall:

- i. Maintain information in an organized, secure, searchable online database.
- ii. Possess a reporting capability determined by FEMA that is compatible with Web Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC) software reporting that can produce:
 - a) Daily reports of both filled and unfulfilled EOS requests to FEMA during NRCC/NELT and RRCC/RELT deployments. Reports of events in the EOS are not limited to national-level responses but apply whenever EOS is involved in a disaster or incident response. These reports will inform FEMA on the nation's resilience posture. To this end, EMAC may be prepared to receive and respond to requests for on demand summary reports for all incidents in which jurisdictions use EMAC to request and deploy mutual aid, even if no EMAC liaison team is deployed. The EMAC administrator will provide steady-state and in-event support/training to EOS users (states) to minimize the occurrence of missing or null values and ensure better data quality. FEMA will provide specific guidance on the format of these data reports. More information about daily reports:
 - Reports should be consistent, automated, and available as requested by FEMA in real-time or near real-time.
 - FEMA will determine the report criteria and format.
 - b) Reports on corrective actions that EMAC addressed based on incidents reported in AARs following activations.
 - c) Historical data on both filled and unfulfilled EMAC requests tracked by the EMAC administrator and provided on a frequency determined by FEMA to the level of EOS activity during the period of performance as well as an annual report of system effectiveness. This shall include data reports on EOS requests and deployment during and after incidents as requested by state emergency management agencies. FEMA will provide specific guidance on the format of these data reports.
 - d) Survey of EMAC members deploying resources that asks whether and to what extent deployed resources were supported by Homeland Security Grant Program, Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program, or Emergency Management Performance Grant Program funding, and what percent of the resource's cost utilized that funding source. FEMA will provide specific guidance on the format of these data reports.
- g. Develop, enhance, and maintain the interoperability between MASS and the EOS with under a 5% error rate for processing both filled and unfulfilled resource requests in all states during all-hazard incidents requiring mutual aid. The system will:
 - i. Help categorize and track people, teams, and equipment deployable for

- interstate mutual aid.
- ii. Integrate available national NIMS RT definitions, including NQS positions.
- iii. Where appropriate interface with existing information management systems used by state emergency management agencies to automate and expedite mutual aid.
- iv. Prepare and deliver monthly summary progress reports to FEMA to analyze the data in MASS, to assess gaps in resource types, resource requirements, and mutual aid.

3. Conduct EMAC supporting activities through the following actions:

- a. Maintain and support the EMAC Operations System, the EMAC website and the MASS. Provide technical support to state emergency management agencies as needed to support EMAC operations.
- b. Maintain and support the EMAC Governance Structure to include the EMAC Committee, EMAC Executive Task Force, and the EMAC Advisory Group. The EMAC advisory group serves as a forum for mutual aid stakeholders to provide input and guidance, at least semi-annually, which enhances EMAC and advances mutual aid between the private sector and all jurisdictional levels. The EMAC advisory group should comprise whole-community partners and mutual aid stakeholders across all communities of practice and levels of government.
- c. As funding allows, develop, maintain, and implement a formalized subaward program in coordination with FEMA:
 - i. This effort will include developing a set of criteria for soliciting and selecting subawards. FEMA will be informed on the process of subrecipients selection to ensure that they are doing so in accordance with 2 C.F.R. part 200. The new subaward program will also include developing a set of outcome measures and subaward objective acceptance criteria.
 - ii. The subaward program must provide program information to FEMA along with its other required reports.
 - iii. The subaward program will focus on developing more robust intrastate, interstate, and tribal mutual aid programs, compacts, agreements, and capabilities at the local level that will in turn enhance EMAC, as mutual aid scales during a governor-declared state of emergency. Activities supported through subawards may include developing locally based and nationally scalable mutual aid information management solutions; designing systems/processes for sharing data with FEMA from the beginning for each new initiative related to developing more diverse local/intra and inter-state mutual aid systems, developing RT definitions and Job Titles/Position Qualifications; integrating resource types into MRPs; piloting national preparedness-related tools, guides, and guidelines, such as Comprehensive Preparedness Guides; and completing exercises included in the National Exercise Program.
 - iv. The subaward program will engage multiple major mutual aid stakeholder

professional associations and national tribal organizations with expertise in developing and implementing mutual aid agreements and systems.

- d. Prepare and deliver briefings upon request for local, state, territorial, tribal, and Federal agencies, the White House National Security Council, and other appropriate stakeholders, to develop and sustain historical and institutional knowledge of EMAC.
- e. Coordinate with FEMA Regional Tribal Liaisons to provide Understanding the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) training and other relevant information to Tribal Nations upon request.
- f. For EMAC administrator: Conduct annual transition exercise to train incoming NCS, which serves as the primary operational contact for the EMAC member states.