

COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT (PDA) FOR FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Public Assistance Preliminary Damage Assessment (PA-PDA) is a joint effort to verify damages after a disaster, identify the adverse impact to essential facilities and services, and estimate the amount of supplemental assistance needed. This effort is conducted by PA-PDA teams; each composed of a representative from federal (Federal Emergency Management Agency), state (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection), and county and local (borough, township, etc.) governments. After this assessment is complete, the Governor may request federal assistance. If the event is of catastrophic magnitude a declaration may be issued prior to the PA-PDA. No federal funding assistance can be provided until a Presidential Declaration is received.

An accurate PA-PDA is important in that it determines if a Presidential Declaration may be requested and provides management information to determine what work – emergency and/or permanent – will be approved for funding.

Counties do the following in preparation for the Federal-State-Local PA-PDA team to expedite the process and help produce accurate estimates:

1. Provide affected local governments a copy of “Applicant Responsibilities in PA-PDA” with associated forms, and the team’s anticipated arrival date and time.
2. Provide a **short** (10-15 minute) **briefing** for the PA-PDA team on the status of the disaster response & recovery efforts to date including:
 - a. **A list** of municipalities, schools, authorities, and eligible private non-profit organizations affected by the disaster. Include the adverse impact on essential facilities and services as well as estimated dollar amounts of damage for each.
 - b. **A map** annotated to identify impacted local governments and facilities with directions via open roads to reach these communities/facilities.
 - c. The contact **name and phone number** (cell phone, pager, etc.) for all impacted eligible entities and assistance in coordinating meetings with potential applicants.
3. **Provide a guide** to lead the team throughout the county to survey the damage. The team should be led (as much as is geographically reasonable) to the most severely impacted/damaged municipalities first.
4. If available, provide a workspace for the PA-PDA team upon their return from the field assessment where they can prepare their reports and transmit them by email or fax to the State EOC.
5. Participate in the process as much as possible to insure the County’s input and concerns are addressed.
6. Continue to coordinate with the PA-PDA team advising them of significant damaged areas or facilities as this information becomes available.