

FEMA Administrator Authority to Approve Crisis Counseling

On April 28, 2020, President Trump delegated authority to approve the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training program for coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic related disasters to the FEMA Administrator for disasters declared prior to that date.

Criteria Used to Authorize the Crisis Counseling Program

- The total number of cases of COVID-19 exceeds 5,000 within the state or territory, or
- The total of number of cases of COVID-19 exceeds 1,000 per 1 million of the state or territory's population.

Pending Crisis Counseling Program Requests

- The outbreak of COVID-19 is stressful for many people. Fear and anxiety about a pandemic can cause strong emotions in adults and children.
- Each state and territory that had a major disaster declaration with a pending request for the Crisis Counseling program prior to the April 28, 2020, Presidential Memorandum is being evaluated separately based on the criteria listed above. FEMA will continue to monitor COVID-19 cases and evaluate pending requests.
- This delegation of authority does not affect the Crisis Counseling program grant application and review process. State, tribal, and territorial governments have 14 days from the date Individual Assistance was designated on the Major Disaster declaration to submit the Immediate Services Program grant application and 60 days after the date Individual Assistance was designated on the major disaster to submit the Regular Services Program grant application.

Crisis Counseling Contacts

- Crisis counseling is also available Nationwide to all residents of the United States through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' (SAMHSA) Disaster Distress Helpline by calling 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. Spanish speakers may call 1-800-985-5990 and press "2" or text Hablanos to 66746 from all 50 states.
 - If calling from Puerto Rico, text Hablanos to 1-787-339-2663.
 - If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use your preferred relay service to call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or TTY 1-800-846-8517.
 - For additional information on the Disaster Distress Helpline, please visit [SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline](#).

