

New York State Archives

**Local Government Records Management
Improvement Fund (LGRMIF)**

***Disaster Recovery Project
Application Guidelines***

May 2005



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
New York State Archives
Grants Administration and Program Support
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Introduction

Who can apply?

Disaster Recovery grants are available to all local governments in New York State, except New York City municipal agencies. There is no set annual deadline for disaster recovery grants; you may submit an application whenever a disaster occurs. **For the purposes of disaster recovery projects, a disaster is defined as:** *Damage caused by a sudden, unexpected event involving fire, water, man-made or natural phenomena where a **timely response** is necessary to prevent the irretrievable loss of vital or archival records, or to ensure reasonable, timely access to vital records.* The maximum amount for a disaster recovery grant is **\$20,000**.

When you experience a disaster, it is critical that you contact your State Archives Regional Advisory Officer (RAO) *immediately*. The RAOs and other State Archives staff are trained to offer technical advice on how to mitigate the effects of a disaster on your records. They can also determine whether you are eligible for disaster recovery funding and assist with identifying appropriate grant project activities. If you do apply for funding, the RAO prepares a site visit report, which constitutes a significant portion of your grant application.

You should also be aware that acceptance of other state or federal disaster recovery funds can affect your eligibility for Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) money. Consequently, it is imperative that you contact FEMA first before applying for LGRMIF disaster grants.

About the LGRMIF

Disaster Recover grants are provided through the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund, a dedicated fund to improve records management and archival administration in New York's local governments. The Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) is derived from fees that county clerks and the New York City Register collect for the recording of selected documents, including deeds and mortgages, and for the assignment of index numbers for certain court cases. The fund supports a regional program of technical advice and a program of grants, including disaster recovery grants, to local governments to improve the management of their records. The State Archives administers the fund, with advice from the Local Government Records Advisory Council (LGRAC).

As part of the LGRMIF grant program for New York City's municipal agencies, the Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS) offers disaster recovery grants. New York City municipal agencies that experience a disaster as defined above should contact DORIS for further information and assistance.

Instructions for Applicants

Role of RAO

As soon as you have contained the disaster, contact your RAO immediately for advice on minimizing its impact on your records. After directly assessing the situation, the RAO will determine whether you are eligible for disaster recovery funding. Disaster recovery grants are available to salvage or mitigate damage only to permanent records or to records that are essential to the resumption of normal business operations. If such records are in immediate danger or already damaged, the RAO will prepare a site visit report that will not only include recommendations for preventing further damage until you receive funding but will also function as your application narrative.

You are strongly encouraged to work closely with your RAO throughout the recovery period, regardless of whether or not you receive a grant.

Damage to court records

If court records are involved, you should also immediately contact the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to discuss disposition of those records. You may reach OCA at 518-238-0183 ext. 240 or 212-428-2877.

Parts of the application

You must submit the grant application to the State Archives' Grants Administration and Program Support unit within thirty days of the disaster, unless extenuating circumstances preclude this. A complete application consists of:

1. A cover letter, in which you explain your request for funding, describe the disaster, and justify all expenses listed in your proposed budget.
2. A grant application form (LG-1), signed in blue ink.
3. A site visit report, which will be completed by your RAO. Directions for filling out the site visit report are included below under "Instructions for Regional Advisory Officers."
4. A proposed budget (FS-10), which you should complete in consultation with your RAO. Disaster grant funds may be used to support the following:

salaries for project staff, including clerical workers, laborers, and others;

purchased services, such as freeze drying, fumigating, some conservation, microfilming, storage, transportation (including moving), rental, and others;

costs of data and system recovery, including consultants' and vendors' fees, associated hardware and software purchases, and others;

supplies, including acid-free boxes and folders, standard storage cartons, folders, cleaning materials, plastic milk crates, protective gear, and others;

and any other expenses, as justified.

The focus of the grant should be on information retrieval. Activities and purchases that merely improve the cosmetic look of the records are not allowed.

The Review Process

The State Archives' Grants Administration and Program Support unit will forward your grant application to the disaster grant review team. The team, made up of representatives from the State Archives' Government Records Services, Archival Services and Grants Administration and Program Support units, reviews the application and makes recommendations.

The disaster recovery grant application and recommendations are submitted to the Local Government Records Advisory Council (LGRAC) Grants Committee and the LGRAC Chair.

Upon review and approval of a disaster recovery grant State Archives' Grants Administration and Program Support will notify the local government by fax, telephone, or e-mail, with a formal notification letter to follow.

LGRMIF requirements and forms

Once an award is made, you are expected to follow the requirements of the LGRMIF grant program. Although you may submit a disaster recovery grant application at any time, as with other LGRMIF grants you must expend or encumber all funds by June 30.

You will receive 50% of your grant 2-4 weeks after you receive official notification of an award and return the grant acceptance form. You are encouraged to submit an FS-25, *Request for Funds for a Federal or State Project*, to receive up to an additional 40% of the grant. Mail a signed (in blue ink) FS-25 to: Grants Finance Unit, New York State Education Department, Room 510W EB, Albany, NY 12234.

If you make significant changes to your proposed budget, you must first contact your RAO to verify that the changes are valid and allowed. Upon approval from the RAO, submit an FS-10-A, *Proposed Amendment for a Federal or State Project*, to the State Archives' Grants Administration and Program Support unit.

At the conclusion of the project, you must complete a final budget report (FS-10-F) and *Final Project Performance Report Form* (FR-1). Final payment of your grant is contingent on receipt of these two final reports in the State Archives' Grants Administration and Program Support unit.

All of the application, fiscal and final report forms are available on the State Archives' website at www.archives.nysed.gov/a/grantsawards/ga_lgrmif.shtml.

Instructions for Regional Advisory Officers (RAOs)

Site Visit Report

The RAO should travel directly to the disaster site to provide immediate advice and support. If the RAO determines that a disaster recovery grant is merited, he/she will prepare a site visit report that should address the following in a point-by-point response:

1. Name of the local government
2. Person who contacted the Regional Advisory Officer
3. Date of contact by the local government
4. The exact nature of the disaster including its cause, exact location, time of occurrence, and impact on records.
5. Immediate steps taken by government.
6. Name, volume, format, and retention period of the affected records series.
7. Are any of the above essential to the resumption of normal business operations?
8. Are there backup copies offsite?
9. Do the damaged records pose a health hazard? If so, what?
10. Immediate recommendations from RAO.
11. Further RAO recommendations based on consultation with the local government, the appropriate State Archives staff, vendors, or other archival consultants.
12. Did the local government follow recommendations?
13. What should the government do to prevent this disaster from happening again?
14. Are there alternate sources of funding to provide for remediation, such as insurance, contractor liability, or federal sources of funding such as FEMA?
15. For what and why is the government requesting disaster recovery funding? Describe and explain all proposed recovery expenditures.

The site visit report should be included in the application packet.

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