

in order to facilitate an efficient recovery from major disasters, the Administrator shall establish procedures under which an applicant may request the use of alternative dispute resolution, including arbitration by an independent review panel, to resolve disputes relating to eligible assistance.

“(2) BINDING EFFECT.—A decision by an independent review panel under this section shall be binding upon the parties to the dispute.

“(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—The procedures established under this section shall—

“(A) allow a party of a dispute relating to eligible assistance to request an independent review panel for the review;

“(B) require a party requesting an independent review panel as described in subparagraph (A) to agree to forgo rights to any further appeal of the dispute relating to any eligible assistance;

“(C) require that the sponsor of an independent review panel for any alternative dispute resolution under this section be—

“(i) an individual or entity unaffiliated with the dispute (which may include a Federal agency, an administrative law judge, or a reemployed annuitant who was an employee of the Federal Government) selected by the Administrator; and

“(ii) responsible for identifying and maintaining an adequate number of independent experts qualified to review and resolve disputes under this section;

“(D) require an independent review panel to—

“(i) resolve any remaining disputed issue in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Agency interpretations of those laws through its published policies and guidance;

“(ii) consider only evidence contained in the administrative record, as it existed at the time at which the Agency made its initial decision;

“(iii) only set aside a decision of the Agency found to be arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law; and

“(iv) in the case of a finding of material fact adverse to the claimant made on first appeal, only set aside or reverse such finding if the finding is clearly erroneous;

“(E) require an independent review panel to expeditiously issue a written decision for any alternative dispute resolution under this section; and

“(F) direct that if an independent review panel for any alternative dispute resolution under this section determines that the basis upon which a party submits a request for alternative dispute resolution is frivolous, the independent review panel shall direct the party to pay the reasonable costs to the Federal Emergency Management Agency relating to the review by the independent review panel. Any funds received by the Federal Emergency Management Agency under the authority of this section shall be deposited to the credit of the appropriation or appropriations available for the eligible assistance in dispute on the date on which the funds are received.

“(c) SUNSET.—A request for review by an independent review panel under this section may not be made after December 31, 2015.”

§ 5189b. Date of eligibility; expenses incurred before date of disaster

Eligibility for Federal assistance under this subchapter shall begin on the date of the occurrence of the event which results in a declaration by the President that a major disaster exists; except that reasonable expenses which are incurred in anticipation of and immediately preceding such event may be eligible for Federal assistance under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 93-288, title IV, § 424, as added Pub. L. 100-707, title I, § 106(l), Nov. 23, 1988, 102 Stat. 4706.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 93-288, May 22, 1974, 88 Stat. 143. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 5121 of this title and Tables.

§ 5189c. Transportation assistance to individuals and households

The President may provide transportation assistance to relocate individuals displaced from their predisaster primary residences as a result of an incident declared under this chapter or otherwise transported from their predisaster primary residences under section 5170b(a)(3) or 5192 of this title, to and from alternative locations for short or long-term accommodation or to return an individual or household to their predisaster primary residence or alternative location, as determined necessary by the President.

(Pub. L. 93-288, title IV, § 425, as added Pub. L. 109-295, title VI, § 689f, Oct. 4, 2006, 120 Stat. 1452.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 93-288, May 22, 1974, 88 Stat. 143. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 5121 of this title and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Another section 425 of Pub. L. 93-288 was renumbered section 427 and is classified to section 5189e of this title.

§ 5189d. Case management services

(a) In general

The President may provide case management services, including financial assistance, to State or local government agencies or qualified private organizations to provide such services, to victims of major disasters to identify and address unmet needs.

(b) Training

Each State, local government agency, or qualified private organization providing professional counseling services described in subsection (a) shall ensure that any individual providing case management services to victims of a major disaster as authorized under subsection (a), including individuals working for nonprofit partners and recovery organizations, is appropriately trained to address impacts from major disasters in communities, and to individuals, with socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

(Pub. L. 93-288, title IV, § 426, as added Pub. L. 109-295, title VI, § 689f, Oct. 4, 2006, 120 Stat. 1453; amended Pub. L. 117-251, § 8(a), Dec. 20, 2022, 136 Stat. 2357.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2022—Pub. L. 117-251 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a), inserted heading, and added subsec. (b).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2022 AMENDMENT**

Pub. L. 117-251, §8(b), Dec. 20, 2022, 136 Stat. 2357, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section] shall apply with respect to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 20, 2022].”

§ 5189e. Essential service providers**(a) Definition**

In this section, the term “essential service provider” means an entity that—

- (1)(A) provides
 - (i) wireline or mobile telephone service, Internet access service, radio or television broadcasting, cable service, or direct broadcast satellite service;
 - (ii) electrical power;
 - (iii) natural gas;
 - (iv) water and sewer services; or
 - (v) any other essential service, as determined by the President; or
- (B) is a tower owner or operator;
- (2) is—
 - (A) a municipal entity;
 - (B) a nonprofit entity; or
 - (C) a private, for profit entity; and
- (3) is contributing to efforts to respond to an emergency or major disaster.

(b) Authorization for accessibility

Unless exceptional circumstances apply, in an emergency or major disaster, the head of a Federal agency, to the greatest extent practicable, shall not—

- (1) deny or impede access to the disaster site to an essential service provider whose access is necessary to restore and repair an essential service; or
- (2) impede the restoration or repair of the services described in subsection (a)(1).

(c) Implementation

In implementing this section, the head of a Federal agency shall follow all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies.

(Pub. L. 93-288, title IV, §427, formerly §425, as added Pub. L. 109-347, title VI, §607, Oct. 13, 2006, 120 Stat. 1941; renumbered §427, Pub. L. 113-2, div. B, §1102(1), Jan. 29, 2013, 127 Stat. 39; amended Pub. L. 115-141, div. P, title III, §302, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 1087.)

Editorial Notes**AMENDMENTS**

2018—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 115-141 designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), redesignated former subpars. (A) to (E) as clss. (i) to (v), respectively, of subpar. (A), substituted “wireline or mobile telephone service, Internet access service, radio or television broadcasting, cable service, or direct broadcast satellite service” for “telecommunications service” in cl. (i), and added subpar. (B).

§ 5189f. Public assistance program alternative procedures**(a) Approval of projects**

The President, acting through the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management

Agency, may approve projects under the alternative procedures adopted under this section for any major disaster or emergency declared on or after January 29, 2013. The Administrator may also apply the alternate procedures adopted under this section to a major disaster or emergency declared before enactment of this Act for which construction has not begun as of the date of enactment of this Act.¹

(b) Adoption

The Administrator, in coordination with States, tribal and local governments, and owners or operators of private nonprofit facilities, may adopt alternative procedures to administer assistance provided under sections 5170b(a)(3)(A), 5172, 5173, and 5192(a)(5) of this title.

(c) Goals of procedures

The alternative procedures adopted under subsection (a) shall further the goals of—

- (1) reducing the costs to the Federal Government of providing such assistance;
- (2) increasing flexibility in the administration of such assistance;
- (3) expediting the provision of such assistance to a State, tribal or local government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility; and
- (4) providing financial incentives and disincentives for a State, tribal or local government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility for the timely and cost-effective completion of projects with such assistance.

(d) Participation**(1) In general**

Participation in the alternative procedures adopted under this section shall be at the election of a State, tribal or local government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility consistent with procedures determined by the Administrator.

(2) No conditions

The President may not condition the provision of Federal assistance under this chapter on the election by a State, local, or Indian tribal government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility to participate in the alternative procedures adopted under this section.

(e) Minimum procedures

The alternative procedures adopted under this section shall include the following:

- (1) For repair, restoration, and replacement of damaged facilities under section 5172 of this title—
 - (A) making grants on the basis of fixed estimates, if the State, tribal or local government, or owner or operator of the private nonprofit facility agrees to be responsible for any actual costs that exceed the estimate;
 - (B) providing an option for a State, tribal or local government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility to elect to receive an in-lieu contribution, without reduction, on the basis of estimates of—

¹ See References in Text note below.