



Disaster Assistance Program Specialist – Lead

Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA)

Department of Defense – Resilience Branch

Location: O'ahu

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) is seeking an experienced and highly skilled Program Specialist – Lead to serve as a subject matter expert in the Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program and support statewide disaster recovery efforts.

Position Summary

The Resilience Branch administers the Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program, a federal program managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under Public Law 93-288 (Stafford Act), for the purpose of directing and managing activities related to statewide recovery from damages caused by major disasters.

The Program Specialist – Lead is responsible for implementing all aspects of the Public Assistance Program and recommending internal process improvements. The incumbent serves as the primary liaison and advocate among federal, state, local, and private nonprofit partners.

Key Responsibilities

Public Assistance Grant Program Implementation

- Manage the team to execute delivery of the Public Assistance Grant Program before, during, and after federally declared emergencies and disasters under the Stafford Act
- Manage Project Worksheet (PW) formulation, amendments, time extensions, and closeout
- Monitor project design and execution to ensure program compliance
- Verify state and federal grant and programmatic compliance; work with sub-applicants to ensure accurate documentation
- Create and maintain HIEMA Project Worksheet files (physical and electronic)
- Draft official correspondence required by policy and law

- Advocate on behalf of the State and sub-applicants during project formulation, execution, and closeout
- Identify and mitigate potential problems in the execution of the Public Assistance Program
- Train staff to manage, monitor, and certify projects and to advocate for subrecipients

Data Collection and Reporting

- Compile data for quarterly and periodic reports on ongoing PA projects, including project status and identification of potential issues with recommended solutions
- Conduct project inspections in consultation with Disaster Assistance Engineers and Building Inspectors
- Collect and compile data for Public Assistance closeout reports, including financial statements

Supervisory Responsibilities

- Work with the Disaster Assistance Project Manager to determine annual team goals supporting disaster closeout
- Set team goals and monitor productivity
- Review and manage processes associated with disaster closeout activities

Other Duties

- Present briefings to communities and stakeholders with varying levels of expertise
- Perform other duties as assigned in support of the Public Assistance Program

Supervision

Supervisor: Civil Defense Planner

Specific instructions or procedures are provided for assignments. The employee seeks supervisory assistance on precedent-setting matters. Completed work is reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with established guidelines.

Required License

- Must possess a valid State of Hawai'i driver's license

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Recommended Qualifications

Knowledge

- English grammar, statistical applications, research methodologies, and computer software applications
- Federal and state laws governing disaster assistance and grants management
- FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide
- Applicable sections of the Code of Federal Regulations and Hawaii Revised Statutes

Skills & Abilities

- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with public officials and private organizations
- Ability to organize and conduct meetings and workshops
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to analyze data and determine compliance with program standards
- Ability to work effectively in open office environments with interruptions and moderate noise levels
- Ability to meet deadlines under pressure

Education

- Graduation from an accredited college or university
- Excess general or specialized experience demonstrating comparable knowledge, skills, and abilities may be substituted on a year-for-year basis

Experience

- One and one-half (1.5) years of progressively responsible professional work experience requiring analytical skill
- Two (2) years of progressively responsible professional experience in disaster assistance, emergency management, or grants management
- One and one-half (1.5) years of supervisory experience demonstrating the ability to plan, organize, schedule, and direct the work of a team

Tools & Equipment

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- Common office equipment
 - Computer systems and related software programs
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Working Conditions

- Work may occur in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).
 - The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be activated during disasters or emergencies. During activation, the EOC operates on a 24-hour work schedule and work conditions may be highly stressful.
 - Must be able and willing to work shift assignments, overtime with little advance notice, and extended or long work hours when required, including nights, weekends, and holidays.
 - Must be able to travel to disaster-affected areas on neighbor islands for multiple consecutive days.
 - Ability to perform effectively in fast-paced, high-pressure emergency environments is essential.
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Join the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency and be part of a dedicated team committed to building a ready and resilient Hawai'i through preparedness, coordination, and all-hazards emergency management.

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