

*Public Assistance Program*

# **Project Specialist Transition at Joint Field Offices**

**Standard Operating Procedure SOP9570.15**



**FEMA**



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## 1.0 Purpose

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The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe the process FEMA staff will follow to efficiently and effectively transfer the responsibilities of an *outgoing Project Specialist* to an *incoming Project Specialist*, as well as the managerial responsibilities of a PAC Crew Leader within this process at the Joint Field Office (JFO).

The *incoming* and *outgoing Project Specialists* will work together for a minimum of five days during the transition period to ensure the proper transfer of responsibilities at the JFO. Transitions are required when staff demobilize or change positions in the JFO. This SOP will help to maintain Public Assistance operations at the JFO and ensure uninterrupted service to the applicants in all major disasters and emergencies.



## 2.0 Initiating the Transition Process

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The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will notify the PAC Crew Leader of the need for transition at least two weeks prior to his/her departure date (when possible). Upon receiving the notification, the PAC Crew Leader will inform the *Outgoing Project Specialist* of the transition process as detailed in this SOP. All PAC Crew Leaders will use the Transition Checklist (see Appendix A) to document the transition process. The purpose of the Transition Checklist is to outline the transition plan, articulate performance measures and expectations, provide applicant information, and formally begin the transition. The PAC Crew Leader will then set a date for the *Outgoing Project Specialist* to provide all pertinent information necessary for the transition, completion and submission of a Subgrantee Transition Worksheet (see Appendix B) for each assigned subgrantee.

### 2.1 Assessing Staff Needs

The PAC Crew Leader will determine if the *Outgoing Project Specialist's* remaining workload can be completed by an existing team member. If an existing team member cannot assume additional responsibilities, the PAC Crew Leader will notify the Ordering Specialist of the departure date of the *Outgoing Project Specialist* and request a new Project Specialist. Upon receipt of the request from the PAC Crew Leader, the Ordering Specialist will:

- Identify and arrange for the deployment of a qualified *Incoming Project Specialist* to arrive at the JFO at least five days prior to the *Outgoing Project Specialist's* departure date
- Inform the PAC Crew Leader and *Outgoing Project Specialist* of the *Incoming Project Specialist's* arrival date and contact information

### 2.2 Bringing New Project Specialist Onboard

The *Incoming Project Specialist* will check-in with the Ordering Specialist and complete the administrative functions as referenced in the *Public Assistance Operations Plan*. Additionally, the Ordering Specialist will provide the *Incoming Project Specialist* with the following information:

- Name and contact information of the PAC Crew Leader to whom the *Incoming Project Specialist* is assigned and will report for an introductory meeting
- Time and location for the *Incoming Project Specialist* to report to his/her assigned PAC Crew Leader



### 3.0 Conducting the Transition

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The *Incoming Project Specialist* will attend three (3) primary meetings in the following order during the transition:

#### 3.1 Meeting 1: The Transition Briefing

The PAC Crew Leader conducts this face-to-face meeting to initiate the formal transition process between the *Incoming* and *Outgoing Project Specialist* (as well as State partners where appropriate).

The PAC Crew Leader will discuss with the *Incoming* and *Outgoing Project Specialists* the Subgrantee Worksheets to include completed and incomplete work projects in terms of eligibility, project worksheet development, and required documentation. During this meeting, the PAC Crew Leader will provide to the *Incoming Project Specialist* the following:

- An overview of the operational procedures, situational awareness, and any time sensitive issues and deadlines
- Specific instructions and bulleted notes, if possible, necessary to perform daily subgrantee tasks and prepare project worksheets
- An update of scheduled meetings that include the applicants, state agencies, localities, contractors, and other various stakeholders (to include the points of contact and telephone numbers)
- Guidance necessary to assist with the development or formulation of projects and project worksheets
- Information that specifies if there are special considerations (i.e., historical, environmental, insurance, floodplain management and hazard mitigation) relating to a particular project
- The names and contact information of Technical Specialist(s) and their involvement in the projects, if any, such as inspections of:
  - Special considerations
  - Roads and bridges
  - Infrastructure – buildings, facilities, etc.
  - Debris removal and disposal
- Mitigation measures within the Hazard Mitigation Programs (HMP) 404 or 406 that are proposed or implemented within a project



- Any subgrantees that are requesting or are approved for Expedited Funding or Immediate Needs Funding (INF) to expedite payments for debris removal and/or emergency protective measures
- Any complex Public Assistance (PA) issues
- Any additional guidance and instruction

Additionally, the PAC Crew Leader and *Outgoing Project Specialist* must review the following information with the *Incoming Project Specialist* during this meeting:

- Subgrantee status, project worksheets, essential reports, and operational objectives
- Projects and cost estimates in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies such as the:
  - Stafford Act
  - 44 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR)
  - FEMA Policies

Within this process, the PAC Crew Leader is the single point of contact for the subgrantees regarding:

- Customer service
- Project eligibility
- Complicated projects
- Challenges with federal, state, or local stakeholders
- Time management of project worksheets
- Issues or challenges preventing the Project Specialist from performing the job task

### 3.2 Meeting 2: Subgrantee Coordination

The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will schedule a meeting with each subgrantee in coordination with the PAC Crew Leader. The purpose of this meeting is to formally and personally introduce the *Incoming Project Specialist* to subgrantees for the remaining projects. It is imperative that subgrantees are personally introduced to the *Incoming Project Specialist* and made aware that he/she will be working on any project worksheets requiring completion. At these meetings, the PAC Crew Leader will discuss in detail the project status (i.e., a discussion of project elements and verification of supporting documentation) and will schedule site visits as necessary. The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will provide the *Incoming Project Specialist* and/or the PAC Crew Leader with detailed subgrantee information, including the Subgrantee Worksheet and Documentation Control Form (See Appendices B and C). These



subgrantee transition meetings and any follow up actions should include the following:

Stakeholder Participants:

- FEMA PAC Crew Leader
- State PAC Crew Leader
- *Outgoing Project Specialist*
- *Incoming Project Specialist*
- Subgrantee Representative(s)

An Agenda:

- Subgrantee recovery progress report by FEMA and State PAC Crew Leader
- Confirmation of projects in progress or completed
- Identification of pending action items
- Discussion of issues
- Confirmation of documentation requirements
  - Provided or
  - Remaining

It is critical that the *Outgoing Project Specialist* provide the *Incoming Project Specialist* a list of all documentation he/she received from the subgrantee and a list of pending documentation. The *Outgoing Project Specialist* **MUST** ensure that all received and pending documentation are accounted for and that the *Incoming Project Specialist*, PAC Crew Leader and the applicant are aware of any issues relating to documentation.

Deliverables (by *Outgoing Project Specialist*) to *Incoming Project Specialist*:

- Completed Subgrantee Transition Worksheet (see Appendix B)
- Completed Subgrantee Documentation Control Form (see Appendix C)
- Meeting Report (Memo to PAC Crew Leader from *Outgoing Project Specialist*) detailing outcome of Applicant Meeting

Follow up Actions (by *Outgoing Project Specialist*)

- Scan Subgrantee Transition Checklist to Case Management File (CMF)
- Scan Subgrantee Document Control Form to the Case Management File
- Scan meeting report to the Case Management File



### Site visits

The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will schedule visits with the *Incoming Project Specialist* at each project site for which a project worksheet must be prepared.

The purpose of these site visits is to ensure the continuity of project development and customer service by providing the *Incoming Project Specialist* the opportunity to visit the site with the *Outgoing Project Specialist* to discuss and review applicant status, submitted and requested documentation, and eligibility issues. If the visits cannot occur with the *Outgoing Project Specialist*, the PAC Crew Leader must conduct the visit with the *Incoming Project Specialist*.

### 3.3 Meeting 3: Final Transition

The PAC Crew Leader schedules this meeting after the *Outgoing Project Specialist* has informed him/her that all subgrantee meetings are complete and all documentation and issues have been appropriately transferred to the *Incoming Project Specialist*. The purpose of this meeting is to finalize the transition of the *Incoming Project Specialist* from the *Outgoing Project Specialist*. The Final Transition meetings will include:

#### Stakeholder Participants:

- FEMA PAC Crew Leader
- State PAC
- *Outgoing Project Specialist*
- *Incoming Project Specialist*

#### An Agenda:

- Overview of subgrantee status (i.e., project worksheet status, documentation requirements, requested information, pending actions, projected completion dates, requirements for technical experts, etc.)
- Issues resolved or identified with plan for resolution
- Reporting requirements

#### Meeting Deliverables:

- Final Transition Checklist
- Final Subgrantee Transition Worksheets
- Final Documentation Control Forms



### 4.0 Departing the JFO

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The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will check out with the Ordering Specialist after completing the Final Transition Meeting. The *Outgoing Project Specialist* will submit a copy of the completed Transition Checklist, his/her evaluation form, and any credentialing updates (if applicable) to the Ordering Specialist. Additionally, the *Outgoing Project Specialist* should provide his/her contact information to the Ordering Specialist should pending or unresolved issues arise after his/her departure. Once the transition is complete, the PAC Crew Leader will notify all interested parties (i.e., Quality Assurance Specialists, etc.) of the transition.



## 5.0 List of Appendices

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Appendix A	Transition Checklist
Appendix B	Subgrantee Transition Worksheet
Appendix C	Subgrantee Documentation Control Form

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APPENDIX A – TRANSITION CHECKLIST

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**Transition Information:**

**Disaster #:**

**FEMA PAC:**

**State PAC:**

**Outgoing Project Specialist:**

**Departure Date:**

**Incoming Project Specialist:**

**Arrival Date:**

The *Outgoing Project Specialist* must be released from the disaster event with the concurrence of the PAC and Public Assistance Branch Director, or designee.

**Reason for Transition of Project Specialist:**

- Pre-Established date for completion of deployment
- Extenuating circumstances (such as emergency, illness, etc)
- Outgoing Project Specialist* released from disaster
- Other: Please provide reason:

**Timeframe for Transition of Project Specialist:**

- There is sufficient time from the arrival date of the *Incoming Project Specialist* to the departure date of the *Outgoing Project Specialist* to conduct a full transition. Transition completed by *Outgoing* and *Incoming Project Specialists* under the direction of the FEMA/State PACs.
- There is insufficient time from the arrival date of the *Incoming Project Specialist* to the departure date of the *Outgoing Project Specialist* to conduct full transition. Transition completed by FEMA/State PACs.

**Subgrantees Assigned to Outgoing Project Specialist:**

Subgrantee	Assigned Work Completed (Yes, No)	Transition Meeting Required
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Attach Continuation Sheet if Required

**Transitioning Projects:**

Project Transition Worksheet for each Subgrantee due by:  
 Project Transition Worksheets completed by:

**Attach completed form for each Subgrantee to this Checklist.**





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APPENDIX C – SUBGRANTEE DOCUMENTATION CONTROL FORM

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