

US Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Iowa Joint Field Office
FEMA-4421-DR-IA
7900 Hickman Road, Suite 600
Windsor Heights, IA 50324



FEMA

January 14, 2020

Congresswoman Cynthia Axne
330 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Axne:

On behalf of FEMA Administrator Pete Gaynor, I am responding to your Nov. 1, 2019 inquiry regarding FEMA's role in the 2019 Iowa severe storms and flooding.

The detailed answers to your six questions are outlined in the attached document. As you will see, FEMA's reach in Iowa has been quite extensive. We continue to work daily with our state partners at Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management to help deliver much-needed assistance to Iowa citizens and communities impacted by the March 12-June 15, 2019 disaster. In addition, we are continuing to work through recovery for three other presidentially declared disasters from 2018 and 2019 to include the first-ever Tribal Declaration for Region VII and the state of Iowa.

Among all of these disasters, our efforts will not end until we have provided everything we can under the law to help Iowa recover and better prepare for future events.

We appreciate your interest in our agency's efforts. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions to the Region VII External Affairs Director, Mike Cappannari at 816-810-5382 or on e-mail, michael.cappannari@fema.dhs.gov.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Scranton".

Timothy J. Scranton
Federal Coordinating Officer
DR-4421, DR-4430, DR-4392, DR-4386

Attachment: FEMA response to Nov. 1, 2019 inquiry

Disaster Overview

- DR-4421 Major Disaster Declaration issued March 23, 2019
- Incident Period: March 12 – June 15, 2019
- 10 counties eligible for Individual Assistance
- 80 counties eligible for Public Assistance
- 99 counties eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Funding

Q: Please outline a) which programs are available under your agency or disaster relief, b) where are the website links and relevant application information, c) who is the Agency Point of Contact (POC) to submit a question or request to, and d) who is the correct POC that my office should speak with to ensure funding is allocated to those most in need?

Point of Contact for Congresswoman Axne's Office:

Michael Cappannari, Regional External Affairs Director

Phone: 816-810-5382

E-mail: michael.cappannari@fema.dhs.gov

Available programs:

Individual Assistance:

This program helps individuals and families who have been adversely impacted by a Presidentially declared disaster. Individual Assistance provides grants to help repair damaged primary residences and/or replace essential personal property.

Website: <https://www.fema.gov/individual-disaster-assistance>

Point of Contact (POC): There is no specific point of contact who determines allocation of funds. That decision is based on individual identified needs, inspection results, insurance coverage, etc. once someone registers for assistance with FEMA. Registration is accessible by:

- a) Going online to www.disasterassistance.gov
- b) Calling the FEMA helpline at 1-800-621-3362.

Persons who have already applied for individual assistance (deadline to register for this disaster was July 16, 2019), who have questions about their assistance, want to check the status of their cases or provide updated information to FEMA may do so using the same two methods outlined above.

Help available under the Individual Assistance program includes:

Temporary rental assistance – Financial grants to help eligible FEMA applicants who are displaced from their primary residences pay for another place to temporarily live until they can find permanent housing – either via fixing up their damaged house or choosing a different residence. The assistance is available for up to 18 months from the date of the declaration, provided that applicants continue to be eligible for the help.

Lodging Expense Reimbursement (LER) – This help may be available to applicants who incur out-of-pocket, temporary lodging expenses because of damage that affects the habitability of their primary residence as a result of a presidentially declared disaster. Receipts are required.



This assistance generally is available only for a short period of time because it is meant to cover a temporary situation.

Minimal home repair – Financial grants available to homeowners to repair disaster-caused damage to their primary residence that is not covered by insurance. The goal is to make the damaged home safe, sanitary, or fit to occupy.

Note: Federal guidelines only allow FEMA to provide housing assistance when a person's primary residence is impacted by a presidentially declared disaster so secondary homes are not considered eligible under this FEMA program.

Other Needs Assistance (ONA) – Financial grants for eligible survivors for necessary expenses and serious needs caused by the disaster and not covered by other aid, including such things as: medical, dental, funeral and burial expenses, costs to replace essential household items, childcare, fuel for primary heat source (heating oil, gas); disaster-caused damage to an essential vehicle and other items.

Direct Temporary Housing – This assistance is utilized when adequate, alternate housing is unavailable, and the occupants cannot fulfill their permanent housing plan through no fault of their own. In these cases, FEMA provides a manufactured housing unit for the applicant to live in temporarily for up to 18 months from the date of the disaster declaration. FEMA determines who will be offered direct disaster housing, based on an applicant's individual situation. After the initial move-in, continued eligibility to remain in the unit is evaluated by FEMA on a monthly basis.

Home Replacement: Financial assistance may be available to homeowners to replace their home destroyed in the disaster when the damage is not covered by insurance. The goal is to help the homeowner with the cost of replacing their destroyed home.

Permanent or Semi-Permanent Housing Construction: Direct or financial assistance for the construction or repair of a home. This type of help occurs only in insular areas or other locations specified by FEMA, where no other type of housing assistance is possible. This form of assistance was not available in Iowa for DR-4421.

Note: While some housing assistance funds are available through our Individuals and Households Program (IHP), most disaster assistance from the federal government is in the form of low-interest disaster loans administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA). See info later in this document.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) – Available to eligible individuals whose employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted due a presidentially declared event. The program is **funded by FEMA** and administered by the state.

Disaster Legal Services – Provides free legal assistance to disaster-impacted individuals for a period of time following an event, generally through a toll-free hotline. Those who qualify are matched with lawyers who can provide legal help including assistance with securing FEMA and other government benefits available to disaster survivors; assistance with life, medical and

property insurance claims; help with home repair contracts and contractors; and counseling on landlord-tenant problems. **Funding for the hotline comes from FEMA.**

Crisis Counseling – Free mental health assistance to help survivors deal with disaster-related issues.

Voluntary Agency Liaisons - FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) work with a myriad of voluntary and non-governmental agencies to support recovery efforts.

Public Assistance:

FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program supports communities' recovery from major disasters by providing grant money to help pay certain costs associated with emergency work such as debris removal and life-saving emergency protective measures and permanent work to restore public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, public buildings and parks. Local governments, states, tribes, territories, houses of worship and certain private nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Individuals and businesses are not eligible for this program.

Grant funding is provided by FEMA (75% cost share) for eligible, disaster-related projects. These funds go to the state emergency management agency – in this case Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) – as the primary grant recipient. From there, the State disburses those grant funds to eligible local, state and tribal government entities, and non-profit organizations when certain work and documentation benchmarks are met. The remaining 25% project cost comes from the State and/or eligible applicant.

Website: <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>
<https://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/>

Point of Contact (POC): Katie Waters, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management.
Phone: 515-725-3231.

Hazard Mitigation:

The program encompasses several areas with the overarching goal of reducing future disaster damage, creating safer communities and encouraging better financial protection ahead of a disaster. The key elements are:

- Floodplain management
- Flood insurance (National Flood Insurance Program)
- Mitigation grant funding for projects that will reduce or prevent future damage (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and others).

Websites: <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>
<https://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/>

POCs: Maria Maldonado, Hazard Mitigation Assistance Specialist, FEMA Region VII.
Phone: 816-912-9233.

Aimee Bartlett, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Phone: 515-725-3231.



Floodplain Management:

Floodplain specialists assist local communities with a variety of floodplain management issues including floodplain ordinances and enforcement and, when requested, substantial damage determinations of disaster-damaged properties to help local officials decide which properties can be permitted for repair/rebuilding.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP):

Hazard mitigation funding supports local projects intended to reduce or eliminate future disaster damage. Projects funded through this program are based on a percentage of the total disaster assistance provided and have a cost-share of 75% federal money; 25% non-federal money.

Funding applications must be sponsored by a governmental entity; individuals are not eligible to apply directly for this money. The governmental entities apply to the state and compete for funds for their projects.

The final available funding amount for HMGP is determined 12 months from the date of the declaration because it is linked to the money spent in disaster assistance. However, FEMA does provide estimates at certain points during the 12-month period to give the state an idea of approximately how much money will be available to fund projects.

Websites: <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-grant-program>
<https://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/>

POC: Aimee Bartlett, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management.
Phone: 515-725-3231.

National Flood Insurance Program:

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) aims to reduce the impact of flooding on private and public structures. It does so by providing affordable insurance to property owners, renters and businesses and by encouraging communities to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations. These efforts help mitigate the effects of flooding on new and improved structures.

NFIP flood insurance policies can only be purchased for properties in communities that participate in the NFIP. Policies can be purchased for properties within the mapped floodplain as well as properties that are not in a designated floodplain or have never flooded before as long as the property is within a municipality or county that participates in the NFIP program.

Websites: <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program> and www.FloodSmart.gov.

POC: Local floodplain manager or an insurance agent. Interested persons can find an agent or get information about a policy by calling the NFIP Help Center at 1-800-427-4661.

Community Disaster Loan Program:

The Community Disaster Loan Program provides operational funding for local governments that have incurred a significant loss of revenue, due to a major disaster, that has or will adversely affect their ability to provide essential municipal services.

Community Disaster Loan Program (cont.)

Local governments can apply if they are in a presidentially declared disaster area, have a substantial revenue loss equal to or greater than 5% of their total annual budget or if the disaster losses affect the current or subsequent fiscal year.

Website: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/176527>

POC: Martha Castro, FEMA Community Disaster Loan Program Manager.

Phone: 202-212-5761

Other Federal Assistance:

Four federal agencies were tasked by FEMA to assist Iowa with specific response and/or recovery efforts. These taskings, also known as mission assignments, are used when the impact of an incident is so severe that local, state and tribal governments lack the capability to perform or contract for that work. Generally, funding for this work is 100% federal but some work carries a cost-share of 75% federal, 25% non-federal.

- **As of Jan. 8, 2020**, the estimated costs of the DR-4421 mission assignments are **\$2,245,325**. Final costs will not be determined until all interagency billing is complete.

The four agencies are:

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)

CNCS deployed more than 118 AmeriCorps members to assist impacted communities in Fremont and Mills counties with a variety of needs. Among them, AmeriCorps members mucked out and gutted more than 89 homes; cleared more than 2,820 cubic yards of debris, conducted at least 465 wellness/safety checks at survivors' residences and supported 414 volunteers during their efforts.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provided technical support for FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program and direct housing efforts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) retrieved hazardous containers such as propane tanks and farm chemical tanks that were dislodged by the flooding in seven western Iowa counties. By the end of the effort in mid-June, more than 2,082 containers had been retrieved. The containers were recycled or otherwise properly disposed.

The U.S. Geological Service (USGS) documented high-water marks to help document flood levels.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA provides the bulk of disaster-recovery funding via low-interest disaster loans for individuals and for businesses of all sizes. Loans are available for repair or replacement of real estate, personal property, economic injury (businesses), machinery and equipment and inventory.

SBA (cont.)

- **As of Jan. 8, 2020, more than \$33.7 million in SBA low-interest disaster loans** have been approved for 346 Iowa homeowners and renters, and 30 businesses. The deadline to apply for a low-interest disaster loan was July 16, 2019. The deadline for business owners to apply for economic injury funding was December 23, 2019.

Website: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>

POC: Rick Jenkins, Manager, Public Information Office.

Phone: 916-735-1500

Q: Please outline each program that has been utilized by Iowans impacted by these floods and explain briefly what each program provides for disaster relief and recovery.

The following programs were utilized by Iowans under DR-4421-IA. Program descriptions are provided under Question #1. Specific details for the current disaster are provided here.

**Funding figures are rounded up to the nearest dollar.*

Individual Assistance:

As of Nov. 26, 2019, a total of **\$15,061,035** has been provided for the Individuals & Households Program. Of that:

- \$13,292,909 was provided for housing assistance (including temporary rental assistance and minimal home repair);
- \$1,768,126 was provided in Other Needs Assistance

Direct Temporary Housing:

- For DR-4421, this program was approved for Fremont and Mills counties.
- FEMA determined that 67 survivors in Fremont and Mills counties were eligible for direct temporary housing assistance. Of those 67, only eight individuals/families expressed interest in moving into a temporary housing unit. As of Nov. 1, 2019, five of those units were still occupied. As of Dec. 23, 2019, four units still were occupied. The temporary housing units were installed in an existing mobile home park in Glenwood, IA – the best location available to serve the most qualified applicants.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA):

For DR-4421, the DUA program is administered through Iowa Workforce Development. The claim period for this program is now closed. For information about filing unemployment benefits in general, please see this website: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>.

- FEMA provided \$169,623 to the state to help fund DUA benefits.

Disaster Legal Services:

For DR-4421, disaster legal services have been available to survivors in the counties designated for FEMA Individual Assistance: Fremont, Harrison, Louisa, Mills, Monona, Muscatine, Pottawattamie, Scott, Shelby and Woodbury.

Disaster Legal Services (cont.)

The toll-free disaster hotline is a partnership among Iowa Legal Aid, The Iowa State Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division and the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division. **Funding for the hotline comes from FEMA.**

Crisis Counseling:

For DR-4421, help is available by calling the Iowa Concern 24-hour line at 800-447-1985. Iowa Concern staff can connect the caller with Project Recovery Iowa services or one of their stress counselors who can talk with callers any time of the day. Project Recovery Iowa is funded by FEMA and operated by the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program.

- **FEMA has provided a total of \$677,778** in crisis counseling funding to the state of Iowa in these two areas:
 - Immediate Services Program for Crisis Counseling: **\$139,454.86**
 - Regular Services Program for Crisis Counseling: **\$538,322.86**

Disaster Case Management funding to the State of Iowa: \$2,654,084

Disaster Case Management is a state level, time-limited resource and process that partners a disaster case manager with a household impacted by a disaster to develop and carry out a Disaster Recovery Plan. This partnership provides the client with a single point of contact to facilitate access to a broad range of resources, promoting sustainable assistance for an individual's/household's recovery. Services are client-focused and provided in a manner consistent with standards for trauma-informed practice in human services. Persons needing help can contact their local Community Action Agency at www.iowacommunityaction.org. The service is provided by the state and locals and **largely funded by FEMA.**

Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALS):

For DR-4421, FEMA VALS supported the formation of Long-Term Recovery Committees in the 10 counties designated for Individual Assistance to help meet identified unmet needs of disaster survivors.

National Flood Insurance Program:

As of Nov. 19, 2019, 474 flood insurance claims relating to the March 12–June 15, 2019 flooding have been filed. Those claims, from 34 Iowa counties, have paid a total **more than \$24 million to insured homeowners, renters and businesses.**

FEMA insurance specialists conducted **302 outreach visits** to insurance agents throughout the designated counties to answer questions and encourage increasing flood insurance policies.

Q: In total, how much of this disaster relief funding has your agency provided to Iowans as of Nov. 1st?

Total federal disaster assistance to date is \$100 million*.

**Note: Figure is rounded up to the nearest million and as of Jan. 8, 2020. This includes \$66 million for FEMA and \$33.7 million for SBA. These numbers are typically reported together as total federal assistance when SBA loans are authorized as part of a presidential disaster declaration (versus an SBA-only declaration under that agency's own authority).*



The FEMA-only total includes aid to individuals, governmental entities, certain non-profit organizations, other federal agencies tasked by FEMA to assist with response and recovery, flood insurance, and grants to the State of Iowa to help fund disaster unemployment, crisis counseling and other human services-related resources.

FEMA's total will rise significantly as more public assistance projects are completed. The estimated \$34.4 million in HMGP funding is NOT included in the \$100 million yet because the final figure will not be known until the 12-month mark. We include the 6-month estimate here to provide a sense of approximately how much will become available.

Q: Please provide as much information as possible about which businesses, communities, counties and state agencies have received funding (e.g. grants, loans and total dollar amounts). There may be circumstances where personal information cannot be released. In those cases, please provide information that does not include personal details and instead provide me with the program information and total dollar amount.

Businesses: On a large scale, FEMA does not offer disaster assistance to businesses impacted by a presidentially declared disaster. FEMA's main partner for business recovery is the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), which offers low-interest loans for business damages as well as economic injury to help with cash flow while the business gets back up and running.

Some businesses owners may receive help in specific situations. Those are:

- 1) Disaster Unemployment Assistance. Some self-employed business owners may be eligible for DUA to help replace lost income that is disaster-related. This is for lost personal income, not lost business income.
- 2) Business owners or renters who were covered by a flood insurance policy and had eligible damages could be assisted via an NFIP insurance claim.

Communities and counties: The main FEMA assistance available to communities and counties is largely through the Public Assistance program which provides grants to help reimburse certain costs associated with repairing or replacing eligible, disaster-related damage. Again, these grants are paid to the State of Iowa (Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management) on behalf of local and state government applicants. The state then transmits the money to applicants as/when work is completed and certain terms and conditions are met (i.e. work completed, invoices submitted).

a) Public Assistance:

- For DR-4421, 80 Iowa counties are eligible for assistance through the PA program. At this time, 436 entities from those 80 counties have been determined eligible for assistance.
- As of Jan. 8, 2020, **FEMA has obligated \$20.4 million for 440 recovery projects** to the State of Iowa on behalf of eligible applicants. For the status of payments to eligible applicants, please contact the POC from HSEMD listed earlier in this document.
- Currently, the estimated federal share to reimburse damages for all 80 counties is **\$180.8 million.**

a) Community Disaster Loan Program:

- For DR-4421, 13 Iowa communities/entities were contacted by FEMA to see whether they would be interested in pursuing a CDL. As of Dec. 30, 2019, eight of the 13 are in various stages of exploring a loan, four indicated they were not interested, and one entity was determined to be not eligible.

b) Mitigation:

- Floodplain Management: For DR-4421, floodplain management specialists conducted **276 Substantial Damage Assessments** of disaster-damaged properties for the City of Hamburg. The city can use this information to determine which properties can be rebuilt in accordance with local floodplain ordinances.
- FEMA insurance specialists conducted **230 Community Assistance** visits with floodplain managers and local officials in communities already participating in the NFIP program and **101 visits** in communities not participating in the NFIP.
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: At the request of Gov. Kim Reynolds, HMGP funding was approved for projects statewide under DR-4421. This money, which is in addition to the disaster assistance provided, can be used to pay for eligible projects from any of the state's 99 counties.
 - Iowa Homeland Security has already opened the HMGP grant application period for this disaster.
 - **The current (6-month) estimated HMGP funding** that will be available to Iowa as a result of DR-4421 assistance is **\$34,368,936** (75% federal share).

State agencies: FEMA assistance to state agencies is largely through the Public Assistance program. Eligible state agencies can receive grants to help reimburse certain costs for disaster-related emergency and permanent work. These grants are paid to Iowa HSEMD on behalf of other state agencies. The state then transmits the money to the applicants when terms and conditions are met, such as work completed and invoices submitted.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program also may be available to state agencies that submit eligible projects.

Q: If there are pending applications, please provide this information as well as expected dates of those decisions.

Individual Assistance:

FEMA continues to process appeals for Individual & Household program assistance as they are presented. FEMA will provide a written determination to the survivor(s) when a final decision on the appeal is made.

Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program:

Several entities are working through various stages of considering a CDL. Currently, we do not have a timetable of when decisions will be made as that is largely driven by the entity that is applying.

Q: If there have been denials for funding, please provide me with information on why those requests were denied.

There were two (2) denials regarding forms of program assistance associated with the Individuals & Households Program. Those denials were for:

- **Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA)**, which provides reimbursements to individuals who are staying in a hotel because they are displaced from their primary residences. This program was not approved because affected applicants were already being assisted via Lodging Expense Reimbursement (LER) and/or no longer needed the help.
- **Transportation Assistance** to help survivors with additional mileage assistance in Mills and Fremont Counties that were impacted by the I-29 closure. This program is generally very limited and has only been used one other in the case of a landslide that wiped out a road, clearly defined who needed the assistance and for how long.

Communications/Public Outreach:

It is always FEMA's goal to ensure that affected citizens, businesses and communities have clear and concise information about disaster recovery so they can make informed decisions about how to rebuild their lives and communities.

In response to your concern about disaster-impacted individuals and communities not knowing how to get help, here is additional detail about communication and public outreach efforts.

For the Iowa 2019 disaster, an extensive, multi-faceted public information effort was undertaken to ensure that disaster survivors and impacted communities knew how to apply for assistance, and access recovery funding and resources – both from FEMA and from other local, state and federal sources. This effort began as soon as the federal disaster was declared and continued throughout the response and recovery. Here are examples of this public outreach:

Online resources:

State Flood Website

Governor Kim Reynolds launched a special state website within 24 hours of the federal declaration with the goal of providing comprehensive, easy-to-understand flood recovery information for disaster survivors seeking help. This website amassed information from multiple state and federal agencies, as well as voluntary organizations and continues to be live today. The website address is: www.floods2019.iowa.gov.

FEMA also maintains a disaster-specific website, in addition to the main FEMA website. All news releases and other pertinent disaster-related information for DR-4421 is posted on the disaster-specific website, which can be found at: www.fema.gov/disaster/4421.

In addition, the addresses for the two websites were included as a tagline for most press releases and many other products so that media could continue to promote those online resources.

The state and FEMA also utilized social media channels to push disaster-related messaging to help survivors register and/or get additional recovery information.

Several other helpful disaster recovery resources also could be found online (see list at the end of this section). This information was promoted by the joint state/federal public information office throughout recovery.

Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) Teams

DSA teams are made up of FEMA staff who canvass impacted areas to spread the word about how to register for federal assistance, help register survivors on the spot and answer other questions. Team members distributed thousands of flyers with step-by-step information (English and Spanish) about how to register for FEMA through the following interactions:

As of May 31, 2019, DSA outreach and activity included:

- 9,841 homes visited
- 6,499 survivor interactions
- 391 survivor registrations
- 250 case inquiries
- 110 case updates
- 860 whole community referrals
- 404 community locations visited
- 1,088 private sector entities visits

Disaster Recovery Centers

Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) were opened in multiple counties to provide disaster survivors with a face-to-face opportunity to discuss their cases, provide updated information and get questions answered. These included both fixed sites and mobile units that traveled to smaller communities to provide more convenient access. DRCs were staffed by representatives from FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration and other recovery-related agencies and services.

The DRC in Glenwood, Iowa transitioned to a Community Recovery Center in June 2019 in order to continue providing similar services longer term. FEMA continued to have a presence at that center until July 1, 2019 as the FEMA registration period was drawing to a close. Among the eight centers that were opened, **2,020 visits were logged.**

Community Education & Outreach:

FEMA Mitigation specialists provided expertise to the public about how to reduce or prevent future disaster damage. **More than 2,000 Iowans** throughout the impacted areas visited with the specialists at DRCs and at special information fairs set up at big box stores (Walmart, Lowe's, Home Depot, Ace Hardware). More than 8,100 publications explaining mitigation techniques were distributed through this effort, which concluded June 15, 2019.

Joint Information Center (JIC)

A state/federal Joint Information Center was immediately established to help coordinate public information efforts for the Iowa disaster. This effort was staffed by external affairs/public information specialists from Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, FEMA and SBA. In addition, public information contacts from other agencies interacted with the main JIC as needed.

The JIC produced or coordinated the following:

- Produced news releases, fact sheets, flyers, recovery updates, public service announcements and other means of communication to help convey clear and concise disaster recovery information. These products were distributed through multiple channels, including media outlets, partner agencies, local officials, Congressional offices and others;
- Communicated disaster recovery information via state and federal social media channels;
- Regularly engaged with media outlets and representatives to provide necessary disaster recovery information;
- Provided liaisons who visited and/or regularly communicated with local officials, including mayors, county emergency managers, county supervisors, city and village clerks and others to distribute recovery information, help answer questions, work through disaster issues and connect resources;
- Interacted with Congressional offices to distribute recovery information, help answer questions and work through disaster issues;
- Photographically documented key recovery efforts;
- Operated a Speaker’s Bureau to support town hall meetings with FEMA and other subject matter experts who could address citizen/community questions and issues.
- Utilized a Spanish-speaking translator (FEMA) to conduct interviews with Spanish media and to translate key recovery information into Spanish to provide equal information access for affected Hispanic populations;
- Launched a targeted, three-week public information campaign to encourage disaster survivors to register before the FEMA deadline to help ensure that disaster-impacted individuals could get connected to essential help. The campaign included traditional and social media outreach, press releases, recorded public service announcements in English and Spanish, and outreach to local officials and Congressional offices. The campaign resulted in a spike of last-minute registrations which helped connect more survivors with aid.

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For reference, here is other important information the JIC published:

Iowa assistance: www.floods2019.iowa.gov

FEMA assistance: www.fema.gov/disaster/4421

SBA assistance: www.SBA.gov/disaster or SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955

Iowa Concern Hotline: 1-800-447-1985

Can connect callers with stress counselors or other resources that may help in a particular, situation, including disasters. The hotline is available 24/7. All calls are free and confidential. Disaster survivors can be referred to a multitude of resources, including legal help and financial education.

Iowa Consumer Protection (Fraud complaints):

Consumer Protection Division of the Iowa Attorney General's Office:

Call **515-281-5926** or toll-free outside of Des Moines: **888-777-4590**.

Email: consumer@ag.iowa.gov

For more information visit Attorney General consumer tips and information.

Iowa Contractor Registrations: <https://contractor.iowa.gov/IowaIWD/CREG>

Check to see if the contractor offering services to repair your home is registered with the State.

Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team: www.iowadbhrt.org, **515-281-3128**

Responds to the mental health needs of Iowa residents following disasters and critical incidents.

Housing – Rental Units: www.iowahousingsearch.org

Listing of rental units in Iowa that allows users to search a number of features, including short-term leases for flood-impacted Iowans.

Mortgage assistance: www.iowamortgagehelp.com, **877-622-4866**

Iowa Mortgage Help assists in working with your loan servicer.

Health information: www.idph.iowa.gov/flooding, **515-281-7689**

Information from the Iowa Department of Public Health related to your health and flooding such as cleaning and disinfecting, mold, immunizations, damaged items, flooded sewage systems, and mosquito bite prevention.

