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and Human Services from users of its SMARTLINK service.

(iii) The State shall provide weekly program status reports which include the number and dollar amount of applications approved, the amount of assistance disbursed and the number of appeals received.

(3) *Ineligible costs.* Funds provided to the State for the administrative costs of administering Other Needs assistance shall not be used to pay regular time for State employees, but may be used to pay overtime for those employees.

(4) *Closeout.* The State has primary responsibility to closeout the tasks approved under the Grant Award. In compliance with the period of assistance, as identified in the award, the State must reconcile costs and payments, resolve negative audit findings, and submit final reports within 90 days of the end of the period of assistance. The State must also provide an inventory of equipment purchased with grant funds and loaned to it by FEMA for purposes of administering IHP, which lists the items, dates, and costs of equipment purchased.

(5) *Recovery of funds.* The State is responsible for recovering assistance awards from applicants obtained fraudulently, expended for unauthorized items or services, expended for items for which assistance is received from other means, and awards made in error.

(i) Adjustments to expenditures will be made as funding is recovered and will be reported quarterly on the Financial Status Report.

(ii) A list of applicants from whom recoveries are processed will be submitted on the quarterly progress report to allow FEMA to adjust its program and financial information systems.

(iii) The State will reimburse FEMA for the Federal share of awards not recovered through quarterly financial adjustments within the 90 day close out liquidation period of the grant award.

(iv) If the State does not reimburse FEMA within the 90 day close out liquidation period, a bill for collection will be issued. FEMA will charge interest, penalties, and administrative fees on delinquent bills for collection in accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act. Recovered funds, interest,

penalties, and fees owed to FEMA through delinquent bills for collection may be offset from other FEMA disaster assistance programs from which the State is receiving funds or future grant awards from FEMA or other Federal agencies. Debt collection procedures will be followed as outlined in 44 CFR part 11.

(6) *Audit requirements.* Pursuant to 44 CFR 13.26, uniform audit requirements apply to all grants provided under this subpart.

(7) *Document retention.* Pursuant to 44 CFR 13.42, States are required to retain records, including source documentation, to support expenditures/costs incurred against the grant award, for 3 years from the date of submission to FEMA of the final Financial Status Report. The State is responsible for resolving questioned costs that may result from an audit conducted during the three-year record retention period and for returning disallowed costs from ineligible activities.

[67 FR 61452, Sept. 30, 2002; 67 FR 62896, 62897, Oct. 9, 2002]

**§§ 206.121–206.130 [Reserved]**

**Subpart E—Individual and Family Grant Programs**

**§ 206.131 Individual and Family Grant Program for major disasters declared on or before October 14, 2002.**

(a) *General.* The Governor may request that a Federal grant be made to a State for the purpose of such State making grants to individuals or families who, as a result of a major disaster, are unable to meet disaster-related necessary expenses or serious needs for Presidentially-declared major disasters declared on or before October 14, 2002 (Note that the reference to section 411 of the Stafford Act refers to prior legislation amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act 2000). The total Federal grant under this section will be equal to 75 percent of the actual cost of meeting necessary expenses or serious needs of individuals and families, plus State administrative expenses not to exceed 5 percent of the Federal grant (see paragraph (g) of this section). The total Federal grant is made only on

condition that the remaining 25 percent of the actual cost of meeting individuals' or families' necessary expenses or serious needs is paid from funds made available by the State. With respect to any one major disaster, an individual or family may not receive a grant or grants under this section totaling more than \$10,000 including both the Federal and State shares. The \$10,000 limit will be adjusted annually, at the beginning of each fiscal year, to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers. IFG assistance for damages or losses to real or personal property, or both, will be provided to individuals or families with those IFG-eligible losses totaling \$201 or more; those individuals with damages or losses of \$200 or less to real or personal property, or both, are ineligible. The Governor or his/her designee is responsible for the administration of the grant program. The provisions of this regulation are in accordance with 44 CFR Part 13, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

(b) *Purpose.* The grant program is intended to provide funds to individuals or families to permit them to meet those disaster-related necessary expenses or serious needs for which assistance from other means is either unavailable or inadequate. Meeting those expenses and needs as expeditiously as possible will require States to make an early commitment of personnel and resources. States may make grants in instances where the applicant has not received other benefits to which he/she may be entitled by the time of application to the IFG program, and if the applicant agrees to repay all duplicated assistance to the State. The grant program is not intended to indemnify disaster losses or to permit purchase of items or services which may generally be characterized as nonessential, luxury, or decorative. Assistance under this program is not to be counted as income or a resource in the determination of eligibility for welfare or other income-tested programs supported by the Federal Government, in that IFG assistance is intended to address only disaster-related needs.

(c) *Definitions used in this section.* (1) *Necessary expense* means the cost of a serious need.

(2) *Serious need* means the requirement for an item or service essential to an individual or family to prevent, mitigate, or overcome a disaster-related hardship, injury, or adverse condition.

(3) *Family* means a social unit living together and composed of:

(i) Legally married individuals or those couples living together as if they were married and their dependents; or

(ii) A single person and his/her dependents; or

(iii) Persons who jointly own the residence and their dependents.

(4) *Individual* means anyone who is not a member of a family as described above.

(5) *Dependent* means someone who is normally claimed as such on the Federal tax return of another, according to the Internal Revenue Code. It may also mean the minor children of a couple not living together where the children live in the affected residence with the parent who does not actually claim them on the tax return.

(6) *Expendable items* means consumables, as follows: linens, clothes, and basic kitchenware (pots, pans, utensils, dinnerware, flatware, small kitchen appliances).

(7) *Assistance from other means* means assistance including monetary or in-kind contributions, from other governmental programs, insurance, voluntary or charitable organizations, or from any sources other than those of the individual or family. It does not include expendable items.

(8) *Owner-occupied* means that the residence is occupied by: The legal owner; a person who does not hold formal title to the residence but is responsible for payment of taxes, maintenance of the residence, and pays no rent; or a person who has lifetime occupancy rights in the residence with formal title vested in another. In States where documentation proving ownership is not recorded or does not exist, the State is required to include in its administrative plan a State Attorney General approved set of conditions describing adequate proof of ownership.

(9) *Flowage easement* means an area where the landowner has given the right to overflow, flood, or submerge the land to the government or other entity for a public purpose.

(d) *National eligibility criteria.* In administering the IFG program, a State shall determine the eligibility of an individual or family in accordance with the following criteria;

(1) *General.* (i) To qualify for a grant under this section, an individual or family representative must:

(A) Make application to all applicable available governmental disaster assistance programs for assistance to meet a necessary expense or serious need, and be determined not qualified for such assistance, or demonstrate that the assistance received does not satisfy the total necessary expense or serious need;

(B) Not have previously received or refused assistance from other means for the specific necessary expense or serious need, or portion thereof, for which application is made; and

(C) Certify to refund to the State that part of the grant for which assistance from other means is received, or which is not spent as identified in the grant award document.

(ii) Individuals and families who incur a necessary expense or serious need in the major disaster area may be eligible for assistance under this section without regard to their alienage, their residency in the major disaster area, or their residency within the State in which the major disaster has been declared except that for assistance in the “housing” category, ownership and residency in the declared disaster area are required (see paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section).

(iii) The Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, Public Law 93–234, as amended, imposes certain restriction on approval of Federal financial assistance for acquisition and construction purposes. This paragraph states those requirements for the IFG program.

(A) For the purpose of this paragraph, *financial assistance for acquisition or construction purposes* means a grant to an individual or family to repair, replace, or rebuild the insurable portions of a home, and/or to purchase or repair insurable contents. For a discussion of

what elements of a home and contents are insurable, see 44 CFR part 61, Insurance Coverage and Rates.

(B) A State may not make a grant for acquisition or construction purposes where the structure to which the grant assistance relates is located in a designated special flood hazard area which has been identified by the Assistant Administrator for Mitigation for at least 1 year as floodprone, unless the community in which the structure is located is participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). However, if a community qualifies for and enters the NFIP during the 6-month period following the major disaster declaration, the Governor’s Authorized Representative (GAR) may request a time extension (see paragraph (j)(1)(ii) of this section) from the Regional Administrator for the purpose of accepting and processing grant applications in that community. The Regional Administrator or Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate, as appropriate, may approve the State’s request if those applicable governmental disaster assistance programs which were available during the original application period are available to the grant applicants during the extended application period.

(C)(1) The State may not make a grant for acquisition or construction purposes in a designated special flood hazard area in which the sale of flood insurance is available under the NFIP unless the individual or family obtains adequate flood insurance and maintains such insurance for as long as they live at that property address. The coverage shall equal the maximum grant amount established under § 411(f) of the Stafford Act. If the grantee is a homeowner, flood insurance coverage must be maintained on the residence at the flood-damaged property address for as long as the structure exists if the grantee, or any subsequent owner of that real estate, ever wishes to be assisted by the Federal government with any subsequent flood damages or losses to real or personal property, or both. If the grantee is a renter, flood insurance coverage must be maintained on the

contents for as long as the renter resides at the flood-damaged property address. The restriction is lifted once the renter moves from the rental unit.

(2) Individuals named by a State as eligible recipients under §411 of the Stafford Act for an IFG program award for flood damage as a result of a Presidential major disaster declaration will be included in a Group Flood Insurance Policy (GFIP) established under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations, at 44 CFR 61.17.

(i) The premium for the GFIP is a necessary expense within the meaning of this section. The State shall withhold this portion of the IFG award and provide it to the NFIP on behalf of individuals and families who are eligible for coverage. The coverage shall be equivalent to the maximum grant amount established under §411(f) of the Stafford Act.

(ii) The State IFG program staff shall provide the NFIP with records of individuals who received an IFG award and are, therefore, to be insured. Records of IFG grantees to be insured shall be accompanied by payments to cover the premium amounts for each grantee for the 3-year policy term. The NFIP will then issue a Certificate of Flood Insurance to each grantee. Flood insurance coverage becomes effective on the 30th day following the receipt of records of GFIP insureds and their premium payments from the State, and terminates 36 months from the inception date of the GFIP, i.e., 60 days from the date of the disaster declaration.

(iii) Insured grantees would not be covered if they are determined to be ineligible for coverage based on a number of exclusions established by the NFIP. Therefore, once grantees/policyholders receive the Certificate of Flood Insurance that contains a list of the policy exclusions, they should review that list to see if they are ineligible for coverage. Those grantees who fail to do this may find that their property is, in fact, not covered by the insurance policy when the next flooding incident occurs and they file for losses. Once the grantees find that their damaged buildings, contents, or both, are ineligible for coverage, they should notify the NFIP in writing in order to have their names removed from the GFIP, and to

have the flood insurance maintenance requirement expunged from the NFIP data-tracking system. (If the grantee wishes to refer to or review a Standard Flood Insurance Policy, it will be made available by the NFIP upon request.)

(D) A State may not make a grant to any individual or family who received Federal disaster assistance for flood damage occurring after September 23, 1994, if that property has already received Federal flood-disaster assistance in a disaster declared after September 23, 1994, a flood insurance purchase and maintenance requirement was levied as a condition or result of receiving that Federal disaster assistance, and flood insurance was, in fact, not maintained in an amount at least equal to the maximum IFG grant amount. However, if that property was determined to be ineligible for NFIP flood insurance coverage and is in a special flood hazard area located in a community participating in the NFIP, then the State may continue to make grants to those individuals or families that receive additional damage in all subsequent Presidentially declared major disasters involving floods.

(iv) In order to comply with the President's Executive Orders on Floodplain Management (E.O. 11988) and Protection of Wetlands (E.O. 11990), the State must implement the IFG program in accordance with FEMA regulations 44 CFR part 9. That part specifies which IFG program actions require a floodplain management decision-making process before a grant may be made, and also specifies the steps to follow in the decisionmaking process. Should the State determine that an individual or family is otherwise eligible for grant assistance, the State shall accomplish the necessary steps in accordance with that section, and request the Regional Administrator to make a final floodplain management determination.

(2) *Eligible categories.* Assistance under this section shall be made available to meet necessary expenses or serious needs by providing essential items or services in the following categories:

(i) Housing. With respect to primary residences (including mobile homes) which are owner-occupied at the time

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of the disaster, grants may be authorized to:

- (A) Repair, replace, or rebuild;
- (B) Provide access. When an access serves more than one individual or family, an owner-occupant whose primary residence is served by the access may be eligible for a proportionate share of the cost of jointly repairing or providing such access. The owner-occupant may combine his/her grant funds with funds made available by the other individuals or families if a joint use agreement is executed (with no cost or charge involved) or if joint ownership of the access is agreed to;
- (C) Clean or make sanitary;
- (D) Remove debris from such residences. Debris removal is limited to the minimum required to remove health or safety hazards from, or protect against additional damage to the residence;
- (E) Provide or take minimum protective measures required to protect such residences against the immediate threat of damage, which means that the disaster damage is causing a potential safety hazard and, if not repaired, will cause actual safety hazards from common weather or environmental events (example: additional rain, flooding, erosion, wind); and
- (F) Minimization measures required by owner-occupants to comply with the provision of 44 CFR part 9 (Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands), to enable them to receive assistance from other means, and/or to enable them to comply with a community's floodplain management regulations.
  - (ii) Personal property. Proof of ownership of personal property is not required. This category includes:
    - (A) Clothing;
    - (B) Household items, furnishings, or appliances. If a predisaster renter receives a grant for household items, furnishings, or appliances and these items are an integral part of mobile home or other furnished unit, the predisaster renter may apply the funds awarded for these specific items toward the purchase of the furnished unit, and toward mobile home site development, towing, set-up, connecting and/or reconnecting;
    - (C) Tools, specialized or protective clothing, and equipment which are re-

quired by an employer as a condition of employment;

- (D) Repairing, cleaning or sanitizing any eligible personal property item; and
- (E) Moving and storing to prevent or reduce damage.
  - (iii) Transportation. Grants may be authorized to repair, replace, or provide privately owned vehicles or to provide public transportation.
  - (iv) Medical or dental expenses.
  - (v) Funeral expenses. Grants may include funeral and burial (and/or cremation) and related expenses.
  - (vi) Cost of the first year's flood insurance premium to meet the requirement of this section.
  - (vii) Costs for estimates required for eligibility determinations under the IFG program. Housing and personal property estimates will be provided by the government. However, an applicant may appeal to the State if he/she feels the government estimate is inaccurate. The cost of an applicant-obtained estimate to support the appeal is not an eligible cost.
  - (viii) Other. A State may determine that other necessary expenses and serious needs are eligible for grant assistance. If such a determination is made, the State must summarize the facts of the case and thoroughly document its findings of eligibility. Should the State require technical assistance in making a determination of eligibility, it may provide a factual summary to the Regional Administrator and request guidance. The Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate also may determine that other necessary expenses and serious needs are eligible for grant assistance. Following such a determination, the Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate shall advise the State, through the Regional Administrator, and provide the necessary program guidance.
- (3) *Ineligible categories.* Assistance under this section shall not be made available for any item or service in the following categories:
  - (i) Business losses, including farm businesses and self-employment;
  - (ii) Improvements or additions to real or personal property, except those

required to comply with paragraph (d)(2)(i)(F) of this section;

- (iii) Landscaping;
- (iv) Real or personal property used exclusively for recreation; and
- (v) Financial obligations incurred prior to the disaster.

(4) *Verification.* The State will be provided most verification data on IFG applicants who were not required to first apply to the SBA. The FEMA Regional Administrator shall be responsible for performing most of the required verifications in the categories of housing (to include documentation of home ownership and primary residency); personal property; and transportation (to include notation of the plate or title number of the vehicle; the State may wish to follow up on this). Certain verifications may still be required to be performed by the State, such as on late applicants or reverifications, when FEMA or its contractors are no longer available, and on medical/dental, funeral and "other" categories. Eligibility determination functions shall be performed by the State. The SBA will provide copies of verification performed by SBA staff on housing and personal property (including vehicles) for those applicants who were first required to apply to SBA. This will enable the State to make an eligibility determination on those applicants. When an applicant disagrees with the grant award, he/she may appeal to the State. The cost of any estimate provided by the applicant in support of his/her appeal is not eligible under the program.

(e) *State administrative plan.* (1) The State shall develop a plan for the administration of the IFG program that includes, as a minimum, the items listed below.

(i) Assignment of grant program responsibilities to State officials or agencies.

(ii) Procedures for:

(A) Notifying potential grant applicants of the availability of the program, to include the publication of application deadlines, pertinent program descriptions, and further program information on the requirements which must be met by the applicant in order to receive assistance;

(B) Participating with FEMA in the registration and acceptance of applications, including late applications, up to the prescribed time limitations;

(C) Reviewing verification data provided by FEMA and performing verifications for medical, dental, funeral, and "other" expenses, and also for all grant categories in the instance of late applications and appeals. FEMA will perform any necessary reverifications while its contract personnel are in the disaster area, and the State will perform any others;

(D) Determining applicant eligibility and grant amounts, and notifying applicants of the State's decision;

(E) Determining the requirement for flood insurance;

(F) Preventing duplication of benefits between grant assistance and assistance from other means;

(G) At the applicant's request, and at the State's option, reconsidering the State's determinations;

(H) Processing applicant appeals, recognizing that the State has final authority. Such procedures must provide for:

(1) The receipt of oral or written evidence from the appellate or representative;

(2) A determination on the record; and

(3) A decision by an impartial person or board;

(I) Disbursing grants in a timely manner;

(J) Verifying by random sample that grant funds are meeting applicants' needs, are not duplicating assistance from other means, and are meeting floodplain management and flood insurance requirements. Guidance on the sample size will be provided by the Regional Administrator;

(K) Recovering grant funds obtained fraudulently, expended for unauthorized items or services, expended for items for which assistance is received from other means, or authorized for acquisition or construction purposes where proof of purchase of flood insurance is not provided to the State. Except for those mentioned in the previous sentence, grants made properly by the State on the basis of federally sponsored verification information are not subject to recovery by the State,

i.e., FEMA will not hold the State responsible for repaying to FEMA the Federal share of those grants. The State is responsible for its 25 percent share of those grants. As an attachment to its voucher, the State must identify each case where recovery actions have been taken or are to be taken, and the steps taken or to be taken to accomplish recovery;

(L) Conducting any State audits that might be performed in compliance with the Single Audit Act of 1984; and ensuring that appropriate corrective action is taken within 6 months after receipt of the audit report in instances of non-compliance with Federal laws and regulations;

(M) Reporting to the Regional Administrator, and to the Federal Coordinating Officer as required; and

(N) Reviewing and updating the plan each January.

(iii) National eligibility criteria as defined in paragraph (d) of this section.

(iv) Provisions for compliance with 44 CFR part 13, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments; 44 CFR part 11, Claims; the State's own debt collection procedures; and all applicable Federal laws and regulations.

(v) Pertinent time limitations for accepting applications, grant award activities, and administrative activities, to comply with Federal time limitations.

(vi) Provisions for specifically identifying, in the accounts of the State, all Federal and State funds committed to each grant program; for repaying the loaned State share as of the date agreed upon in the FEMA-State Agreement; and for immediately returning, upon discovery, all Federal funds that are excess to program needs.

(vii) Provisions for safeguarding the privacy of applicants and the confidentiality of information, except that the information may be provided to agencies or organizations who require it to make eligibility decisions for assistance programs, or to prevent duplication of benefits, to State agencies responsible for audit or program review, and to FEMA or the Government Accountability Office for the purpose of

making audits or conducting program reviews.

(viii) A section identifying the management and staffing functions in the IFG program, the sources of staff to fill these functions, and the management and oversight responsibilities of:

(A) The GAR;

(B) The department head responsible for the IFG program;

(C) The Grant Coordinating Officer, i.e., the State official assigned management responsibility for the IFG program; and

(D) The IFG program manager, where management responsibilities are assigned to such a person on a day-to-day basis.

(2) The Governor or his/her designee may request the Regional Administrator to provide technical assistance in the preparation of an administrative plan to implement this program.

(3) The Governor shall submit a revised State administrative plan each January to the Regional Administrator. The Regional Administrator shall review and approve the plan annually. In each disaster for which assistance under this section is requested, the Regional Administrator shall request the State to prepare any amendments required to meet current policy guidance. The Regional Administrator must then work with the State until the plan and amendment(s) are approved.

(4) The State shall make its approved administrative plan part of the State emergency plan, as described in subpart A of these regulations.

(f) *State initiation of the IFG program.* To make assistance under this section available to disaster victims, the Governor must, either in the request of the President for a major disaster declaration or by separate letter to the Regional Administrator, express his/her intention to implement the program. This expression of intent must include an estimate of the size and cost of the program. In addition, this expression of intent represents the Governor's agreement to the following:

(1) That the program is needed to satisfy necessary expenses and serious needs of disaster victims which cannot otherwise be met;

(2) That the State will pay its 25 percent share of all grants to individuals and families;

(3) That the State will return immediately upon discovery advanced Federal funds that exceed actual requirements;

(4) To implement an administrative plan as identified in paragraph (e) of this section;

(5) To implement the grant program throughout the area designated as eligible for assistance by the Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate; and

(6) To maintain close coordination with and provide reports to the Regional Administrator.

(g) *Funding.* (1) The Regional Administrator may obligate the Federal share of the IFG program based upon the determination that:

(i) The Governor has indicated the intention to implement the program, in accordance with paragraph (f) of this section;

(ii) The State's administrative plan meets the requirements of this section and current policy guidance; and

(iii) There is no excess advance of the Federal share due FEMA from a prior IFG program. The State may eliminate any such debt by paying it immediately, or by accepting an offset of the owed funds against other funds payable by FEMA to the State. When the excess Federal share has been repaid, the Regional Administrator may then obligate funds for the Federal share for the current disaster.

(2) The Regional Administrator may increase the State's letter of credit to meet the Federal share of program needs if the above conditions are met. The State may withdraw funds for the Federal share in the amount made available to it by the Regional Administrator. Advances to the State are governed by 44 CFR 13.21, Payment.

(3) The Regional Administrator may lend to the State its share in accordance with subpart A of these regulations.

(4) Payable costs are governed by 44 CFR 13.22, Allowable Costs, and the associated OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State and Local Governments. Also, the costs must be in accordance with the national eligibility

criteria stated in paragraph (d) of this section, and the State's administrative plan, as stated in paragraph (e) of this section. The Federal contribution to this program shall be 75 percent of program costs and shall be made in accordance with 44 CFR 13.25, Matching or Cost-Sharing.

(h) *Final payment.* Final payment to the State for the Federal share of the IFG program plus administrative costs, is governed by 44 CFR 13.21, Payment, and 44 CFR 13.50, Closeout. The voucher is Standard Form 270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement). A separate voucher for the State share will be prepared, to include all disaster programs for which the State is requesting a loan of the nonFederal share. The FEMA Regional Administrator will analyze the voucher and approve, disapprove, or suspend approval until deficiencies are corrected.

(i) *Audits.* The State should perform the audits required by the Single Audit Act of 1984. Refer to 44 CFR part 13. All programs are subject to Federal audit.

(j) *Time limitations.* (1) In the administration of the IFG program:

(i) The Governor shall indicate his/her intention to implement the IFG program no later than 7 days following the day on which the major disaster was declared and in the manner set forth in paragraph (f) of this section;

(ii) Applications shall be accepted from individuals or families for a period of 60 days following the declaration, and for no longer than 30 days thereafter when the State determines that extenuating circumstances beyond the applicants' control (such as, but not limited to, hospitalization, illness, or inaccessibility to application centers) prevented them from applying in a timely manner. *Exception:* If applicants exercising their responsibility to first apply to the Small Business Administration do so after SBA's deadline, and SBA accepts their case for processing because of "substantial causes essentially beyond the control of the applicant," and provides a formal decline or insufficient loan based on lack of repayment ability, unsatisfactory credit, or unsatisfactory experience with prior loans (i.e., the reasons a loan denial client would normally be eligible for IFG assistance),



then such an application referred to the State by the SBA is considered as meeting the IFG filing deadline. The State may then apply its own criteria in determining whether to process the case for grant assistance. The State automatically has an extension of time to complete the processing, eligibility, and disbursement functions. However, the State must still complete all administrative activity within the 270-day period described in this section.

(iii) The State shall complete all grant award activity, including eligibility determinations, disbursement, and disposition of State level appeals, within 180 days following the declaration date. The Regional Administrator shall suspend all grant awards disbursed after the specified completion date; and

(iv) The State shall complete all administrative activities and submit final reports and vouchers to the Regional Administrator within 90 days of the completion of all grant award activity.

(2) The GAR may submit a request with appropriate justification for the extension of any time limitation. The Regional Administrator may approve the request for a period not to exceed 90 days. The Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate may approve any request for a further extension of the time limitations.

(k) *Appeals*—(1) *Bills for collection (BFC's)*. The State may appeal the issuance of a BFC by the Regional Administrator. Such an appeal shall be made in writing within 60 days of the issuance of the bill. The appeal must include information justifying why the bill is incorrect. The Regional Administrator shall review the material submitted and notify the State, in writing, within 15 days of receipt of the appeal, of his/her decision. Interest on BFC's starts accruing on the date of issuance of the BFC, but is not charged if the State pays within 30 days of issuance. If the State is successful in its appeal, interest will not be charged; if unsuccessful, interest is due and payable, as above.

(2) *Other appeals*. The State may appeal any other decision of the regional Administrator. Such appeals shall be made in writing within 60 days of the

Regional Administrator's decision. The appeal must include information justifying a reversal of the decision. The Regional Administrator shall review the material submitted and notify the State, in writing, within 15 days of receipt of the appeal, of his/her decision.

(3) *Appeals to the Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate*. The State may further appeal the Regional Administrator's decisions to the Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate. This appeal shall be made in writing within 60 days of the Regional Administrator's decision. The appeal must include information justifying a reversal of the decision. The Assistant Administrator for the Disaster Assistance Directorate shall review the material submitted and notify the State, in writing, within 15 days of receipt of the appeal, of his/her decision.

(l) *Exemption from garnishment*. All proceeds received or receivable under the IFG program shall be exempt from garnishment, seizure, encumbrance, levy, execution, pledge, attachment, release, or waiver. No rights under this provision are assignable or transferable. The above exemptions will not apply to the requirement imposed by paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(K) of this section.

(m) *Debt collection*. If the State has been unable to recover funds as stated in paragraph (e)(1)(k) of this section, the Regional Administrator shall institute debt collection activities against the individual according to the procedures outlined in 44 CFR part 11, Claims, and 44 CFR 13.52, Collection of Amounts Due.

[54 FR 11615, Mar. 21, 1989, as amended at 55 FR 28627, July 12, 1990; 60 FR 7130, Feb. 7, 1995; 61 FR 19201, May 1, 1996; 67 FR 61460, Sept. 30, 2002; 74 FR 15348, Apr. 3, 2009]

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**Subpart F—Other Individual Assistance**

**§ 206.141 Disaster unemployment assistance.**

The authority to implement the disaster unemployment assistance (DUA) program authorized by section 410 of the Stafford Act, and the authority to