



August 31, 2020

The Honorable Pete Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

On behalf of the 5000+ members of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), I am writing to let you know the emergency management profession wholeheartedly agrees with the concerns expressed to you in the letter dated August 25, 2020, and signed by National Governors Association, International City/County Management Association, National Association of Counties, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Emergency Management Association, National League of Cities, Council of State Governments, and United States Conference of Mayors. Specifically, IAEM is concerned about reports FEMA intends to eliminate personal protective equipment (PPE) and disinfectants as eligible reimbursable expenses under Public Assistance for COVID-19.

PPE is a fundamental need for all COVID-19 related operations and is the definition of an “emergency protective measure.” Shifting policy guidance in the middle of a pandemic is impractical, causes confusion, and disrupts operations in states and localities. It also imposes significant bureaucratic and administrative burdens at a time when state and local resources are already critically strained.

FEMA and the Administration have long maintained that every disaster is federally supported, state managed, and locally executed. Like our fellow stakeholders, IAEM maintains our long-standing request that FEMA waive the state cost share for COVID-19 assistance which has not been addressed, rather the opposite. We call on FEMA to keep its current guidance on emergency protective measures, and encourage the Administration to provide clear guidance on eligibility of funding streams from across the federal government.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teri Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Teri Smith
President, International Association of Emergency Managers