



KENTUCKY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Andy Beshear
Governor

Department of Military Affairs
100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601-6168

Eric Gibson
Director

April 28, 2025

Robert Samaan
FEMA Region IV Administrator
3005 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

THROUGH

Jeremy Slinker
Federal Coordinating Officer

Re: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) DR-4864-KY
Request for Activation of the Public Assistance Program and Hazard Mitigation Program

Dear Administrator Samaan:

In reference to Presidential Major Disaster Declaration FEMA DR-4864-KY, the Commonwealth of Kentucky respectfully requests the Public Assistance Program for the following counties:

- Allen
- Barren
- Breathitt
- Breckinridge
- Butler
- Caldwell
- Calloway
- Campbell
- Carroll
- Carter
- Casey
- Christian
- Clark
- Edmonson
- Elliott
- Estill
- Floyd
- Franklin
- Gallatin
- Garrard
- Graves
- Grayson
- Green
- Greenup
- Hancock
- Hart
- Henderson
- Hickman
- Hopkins
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Johnson
- Kenton
- LaRue
- Lawrence
- Lee
- Logan
- Lyon
- Magoffin
- Marion
- Martin
- McLean
- Meade
- Metcalfe
- Morgan
- Muhlenberg
- Nelson
- Nicholas
- Owen
- Owsley
- Pendleton
- Perry
- Powell
- Rockcastle
- Spencer
- Taylor
- Trigg
- Trimble
- Union
- Warren
- Washington
- Webster
- Wolfe
- Woodford

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For these counties, FEMA has validated the damages caused by severe storms which resulted in DR-4864-KY. The validation results are included.

As evidenced by the attached reports from the Paducah Nation Weather Service and the Louisville National Weather Service, this event was historic in many respects and areas. Damages to public properties and infrastructure were validated by FEMA during Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments. While these assessments clearly demonstrate the destruction experienced by the state, there are still unseen damages in numerous areas which remain inundated by flood waters.

This disaster includes historic rainfall, tornadoes, flash floods, and riverine flooding. There are many areas of the state that received more than 10 inches (some more than 15 inches), of rain during this event which caused historic river levels throughout Kentucky's river basins; including the Kentucky and Ohio rivers. Owensboro Kentucky experienced the highest Ohio River level since 1997. The Green, Rough, Rolling Fork, Ohio, and Kentucky river basins were the hardest hit. This flooding submerged homes, destroyed hundreds of roads and bridges, damaged water distribution systems, and disrupted critical government services.

In the Kentucky capital city of Frankfort, major access bridges were closed after being hit by floating homes and boat docks. The county courthouse was flooded, causing the destruction of tens of thousands of records. The city's water and waste water systems were inundated and out of service until the water receded and repairs could be made.

The damages to local, state, and federal roadways are massive. At one point there were more than 500 road closures due to flooding. Even parkways and interstate highways became flooded, requiring closures. In other areas, fast-moving flash flooding undercut roadways, leaving only pavement with no support. A number of roads in south central Kentucky have been damaged by sinkholes caused by flooded karst areas.

As this event unfolded on April 2, the cold front caused a number of supercells to develop in western Kentucky. This front reached central Kentucky on April 3. Over these two days, the system generated eight tornadoes. Strong winds and large hail were experienced across the state,

These event components caused significant debris. All flooded areas are dealing with waterborne vegetative debris. Some areas also have tornado-generated debris. Waterlogged areas lost mature trees to strong winds. Local governments have implemented debris missions. Volunteer organizations are helping homeowners to deal with both vegetative and household debris.

The emergency response at the local, state, and federal levels is massive and still underway. The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and local EOCs across the state activated and remained activated for weeks. First, and foremost, the protection of impacted citizens has ranged from evacuations, to sheltering and feeding. Hundreds of households have been displaced. More than a thousand evacuations and wellness checks were performed by local, federal, state, and Emergency Management Assistance Compact teams from other states.

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The costs of response activities and restoration or replacement of infrastructure have been examined by Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment teams comprised of local, state, and federal representatives. The history of this ongoing event and the damages assessed, to date, clearly demonstrate the dire need of impacted counties for assistance through the FEMA Public Assistance Program.

Additionally, I ask for the activation of the Hazard Mitigation Program for the entire state. This proactive approach to reducing the impact of future disaster events has proven to be extremely successful, not just in Kentucky but across the entire nation. FEMA estimates that for every dollar invested in mitigating against flood events, there will be a realized savings of \$7.00 in avoided disaster damages and recovery costs.

Currently there are 16 states that exceed the minimum FEMA mitigation program requirements and have been recognized as having Enhanced Mitigation Programs. Kentucky's Enhanced Mitigation Program has been instrumental in protecting Kentucky communities from many risks and threats. The impact of DR-4864 would have been far worse were it not for previously-implemented mitigation measures. This event demonstrates the need for additional mitigation activities. Many local government officials have identified mitigation projects needed to protect their communities. Requested projects include the need for improved drainage, diversion of waterways, removal of households from floodplains, and elevation of critical infrastructure.

The main focus of Kentucky's mitigation efforts is the protection of lives. In the aftermath of the catastrophic July 2022, East Kentucky flood disaster (DR-4663), the state, in partnership with FEMA, was able to fund the buyout of over 500 homes located in floodplains. These citizens have been able to relocate to safe high ground. All structures on buyout sites are razed and in perpetuity deed restrictions ensure the areas will never be inhabited again. Currently there are more than an additional 1,000 homeowners who have expressed interest in a buyout. These mitigation actions ensure that the lives and properties of citizens participating in the buyout program will not be at risk in future flood events. Furthermore, when future flood events occur in the buyout areas, there will be a significant reduction in the need for the FEMA Individuals and Households Program.

Please advise if you have any questions or require additional information. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Eric Gibson
Governor's Alternate Representative

Enclosures

Cc: Eric Gibson; Jessica Mitchell; Cynthia Belton; Gary Bruey