




United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Washington, DC 20240

July 14, 2020

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
Attention: Regional Budget Officers
Regional Fire Management Officers
Agency Superintendents

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs 

Subject: Emergency Support Function #4 – Firefighting Annex, Non-Fire Emergency

In anticipation of providing assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for various Non-Fire assistance, this memorandum provides guidance and direction pertaining to the Emergency Support Function #4 – Firefighting Annex (ESF4). The Department of the Interior may request of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in providing support, through FEMA, for areas affected by hurricanes, tornadoes, and other all-hazard incidents (ESF4 support). To support emergency efforts, we are encouraging line officers to make individuals available through the Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC) system.

ESF4 incidents differ from wildland fire incidents in many ways and require more administrative oversight to ensure that the costs are accurately captured, appropriate and reimbursable from FEMA. The Office of Wildland Fire and bureaus will initiate the mobilization of emergency resources as requested prior to receiving a formal written FEMA Mission Assignment (MA) or United States Forest Service Subtasking Request as the situation dictates. The Budget Section within the Branch of Wildland Fire Management (BWFM) will establish appropriate accounting codes for each MA supported by BIA/Tribal resources.

FEMA is authorizing reimbursement for travel and overtime costs for employees, however, FEMA policy does not reimburse for employee base hours who are normally working at this time. Employees cannot charge base-eight salary costs to the incident unless it is for furlough or seasonal employees who must return to duty to assist on the incident. This includes all Permanent Full Time (PFT) employees and may include some career seasonal and temporary employees (depending on their normal period of funding). FEMA will not reimburse for actions they did not request or specify in the MA, such as dispatch or other support functions and costs associated with mobilization. Additional ESF4 information can be found in the attachment (*Reference Guide – Emergency Support Function #4*).

ESF4 support is not a fire suppression activity. No expenditures related to ESF4 support should be charged to the suppression, severity or emergency stabilization (AF2) functional area codes. Overtime provisions of P.L. 106-558 (Wildland Fire Overtime) do not apply to ESF4 incidents and the use of QuickTime code 113 is not permitted for non-suppression. Employees in an exempt position will use Hours Code 110 for any overtime hours that they work. Non-exempt individuals will retain their non-exempt status, regardless of the ESF4 work they perform.

Hazard pay for General Schedule (GS) employees and Environmental Differential for Wage Grade (WG) employees may be authorized if the work performed meets the requirements of 5 CFR 550 (refer to the CFR, Title 5, Chapter I, Part 550 to determine if hazard pay is applicable for general schedule employees. Refer to CFR, Title 5, Chapter 1, Part 532 for information on environmental differential for wage grade employees). Employees must document the work performed and the specific hazard/environmental engaged.

Employees (BIA and Tribal) and the home unit will notify as soon as possible their Regional Fire Management Officer (Regional FMO) of an ESF4 support assignment. The RFMO in turn will notify the Regional Director and the Budget Director at BWFM. Employees cannot participate on an ESF4 assignment unless they have a valid resource order and authorization from their Regional FMO before they are dispatched. The BWFM will generate a unique line of accounting for each FEMA MA and all expenses must be charged to this specific line of accounting. BWFM will assign a specific FBMS commitment item or WBS number to each region; regions must not assign a FBMS commitment item on their own.

Length of assignment, excluding travel, will not exceed 30 days. FEMA may release resources sooner, as need requires.

Tribal Resources: Tribes operating under a valid cooperative agreement for wildland fire may participate in ESF4 support if authorized by their cooperative agreement and approved by the BIA. Tribal employees mobilized in support of an ESF4 incident must notify their respective BIA Regional Office to determine that the incident is an approved ESF4 incident prior to mobilizing. Tribal employees are responsible for following all tribal time and attendance policies and procedures for the duration of their assignment, in addition to the requirements of the cooperative agreement. Tribal cooperators should be prepared for shortened time periods for reimbursement packages to be submitted and should be familiar with the administrative differences between suppression incidents and ESF4 incidents. Tribal cooperators must submit supporting documentation to the regional offices as soon as the responder returns from assignment. Any costs incurred by tribal employees that are not reimbursable under the MA may be charged back to the tribe and/or not reimbursed by the BIA.

Administratively Determined (AD) Employees: The BIA may hire and pay AD employees in accordance with the 2020 Pay Plan for Emergency Workers (AD Pay Plan). BIA-hired AD personnel assigned to ESF4 approved incidents will follow direction in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, Chapter 10, Pg. 10-16, Work/Rest Guidelines and length of assignment, located online at: <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/902>

BWFM is responsible for preparing Intra-Governmental Payment and Collections (IPAC) billing packages for reimbursement by FEMA, however, it is up to each of the regional offices to provide to the BWFM all of the documentation and reports for each responder. This includes a tribal invoice that contains all of the following:

- Copies of all resource orders
- Copies of all OF-288 and/or CTRs
- Labor report showing overtime and, if applicable, hazard pay
- Per diem rate sheet
- Travel invoice (through Concur) showing travel arrangements
- Copies of airfare and baggage fee receipts
- Copies of hotel receipts
- Copies of rental car receipts

- Copies of fuel receipts
- Copies of supply receipts (if applicable)
- Copy of ESF Mission Assignment Subtasking Request for employee

Regional offices will be responsible for collecting all supporting documentation for any resources, and must be diligent and thorough in submitting all of the supporting documentation to BWFM within 60 days of the demobilization of those resources. If the billing period takes longer than 60 days a "Mission Assignment Quarterly Progress Report" must be submitted to BWFM. These directions are listed under "Statement of Work" on the MA. This process allows FEMA to keep the MA open to receive future billings that are past the 60-day deadline.

Invoice packets related to the ESF4 incidents must be submitted separately from any other invoices (do not combine them with other incidents or other fire program cost codes).

Additional reporting requirements may be necessary to appropriately document expenditures and costs throughout the incident. The BWFM will send additional information to the regional offices regarding ESF4 deployments with MAs and the proper reimbursable codes as they receive it. The BWFM will update these requirements as necessary. Regions and agencies must follow this guidance and report in a timely manner.

Complete invoice billing packages will be mailed to BWFM at:

BIA - Branch of Wildland Fire Management
Attention: Rachael Larson, Budget Director
3833 South Development Avenue, MS-170
Boise, ID 83705

If you have additional questions please contact Robin White, Administrative Officer, at (208) 387-5463 or email at Robin.White@bia.gov.

Attachment

Reference Guide – Emergency Support Function #4