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**DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES  
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**FROM:** Charisse Childers, Ph.D., Director

**TO:** Local Workforce Development Area Administrators/Service Providers

**SUBJECT:** National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) Application Guidance

- 1. Purpose:** The purpose of this program guidance is to provide an implementation framework for the National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) program, including policies, priorities, and requirements. The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) accepts DWG applications in two categories: Disaster Recovery and Employment Recovery.

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) are responsible for monitoring for national disaster occurrences within their counties. Once the President of the United States has declared a National Disaster Proclamation for their county, the LWDA should reference the FEMA website at [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov) for a declaration number. The National Disaster Declaration number is required in order to apply for a National Disaster Grant. An emergency application should be submitted to ADWS within ten (10) days from the date of the declaration. A full application must be submitted to ADWS within 45 days from the date of the disaster declaration.

Applicants should reference TEGL 16-21 National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) and become familiar with all requirements. All required forms are available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and that link is provided as an attachment to this issuance.

ETA may develop additional categories or conduct limited competitions to meet particular needs or events, as program funding allows. Where appropriate, ETA will issue an announcement for such competitions and may issue separate guidance.

DWGs are supplemental, time-limited funding assistance provided in response to major economic dislocations or other events that cause significant impact on states and local areas that exceed the capacity of existing formula funds and other relevant resources. DWGs enable states and communities to respond to and recover from large, unexpected events. As such, ETA expects that projects funded with DWG resources be aligned with existing state

and local strategic priorities, and where possible focus on returning dislocated workers and other eligible individuals to sustainable, quality, family-supporting employment.

2. **General Information:** DWGs are discretionary grants awarded by the Secretary of Labor under Section 170 of WIOA to provide employment-related services for dislocated workers. Disaster Recovery DWGs provide funding to create temporary employment opportunities to assist with clean-up and recovery efforts when an area impacted by an emergency or major disaster is declared eligible for public assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or is declared, or otherwise recognized, as an emergency or disaster of national significance by a Federal agency with authority or jurisdiction over Federal response to the disaster or emergency. Employment Recovery DWGs temporarily expand capacity to serve dislocated workers and to meet the increased demand for employment and training services following a qualifying event. Qualifying events include major economic dislocations, such as plant closures, mass layoffs, or higher-than-average demand for employment and training activities for dislocated members of the Armed Forces and their spouses.

### **A. Disaster Recovery DWGs**

#### **Description**

Disaster Recovery DWGs provide temporary disaster-relief employment, as well as employment and training activities, as appropriate, to minimize the employment and economic impact of declared disasters and emergency situations, in disaster-declared areas as defined in 20 CFR 687.110(b).

Disaster Recovery DWGs are valuable resources that help communities address and recover from the impacts of an emergency or disaster, and the State Workforce Agency or DWG grant recipient plays an important role in not only connecting the DWG to larger disaster relief efforts but also bringing a workforce development perspective to disaster response. For instance, the State Workforce Agency or DWG grant recipient can raise awareness of workforce preparation needs common across recurring disasters, provide perspective on the range of talent that can fill needed disaster relief positions, and can train workers in the skills necessary to respond to the current disaster and future disasters. All grant recipients should maximize their resources by making meaningful connections with other one-stop partners and organizations to ensure a streamlined and efficient delivery of services for the participant.

It is important that Disaster Recovery DWGs should begin operating and providing benefits to participants as quickly as possible after receipt of a grant award. ETA encourages entities eligible to apply for Disaster Recovery DWGs to establish relationships with potential subrecipients as soon as after an award; agreements may even be established prior to grant awards to help ensure grant operations begin in a timely manner.

#### **B. Qualifying Events**

The following events are eligible for Disaster Recovery DWGs:

1. Emergencies and major disasters, as defined under Section 102 of the Stafford Act (42 U.S.C. 5122), declared by FEMA as eligible for Public Assistance.
2. Emergencies or disaster situations of national significance, natural or man-made, that could result in a potentially large loss of employment, as declared or otherwise recognized and issued in writing by the chief official of a Federal agency with jurisdiction over the Federal response to the disaster or emergency.

Note: Not every Federal declaration of a disaster qualifies an applicant for Disaster Recovery DWG assistance. Applicants must demonstrate that a potentially large loss of employment could result from the disaster or emergency. ETA defines this as the potential loss of at least 50 jobs within the disaster area covered by the relevant declaration within the jurisdiction of the applicant. The application for Disaster Recovery DWG funds must include a rationale justifying the projected level of job loss.

Where the circumstances or scope of a particular Federally declared disaster, such as nationwide public health emergencies including the opioid epidemic or the COVID-19 pandemic, or other unforeseen events require it, ETA may issue additional guidance. Such guidance may include application instructions, allowable activities, policy interpretations, or other information specific to the declared disaster event.

WIOA does not allow declarations by a governor to qualify an applicant for Disaster Recovery DWG assistance.

3. Relocation of a substantial number of individuals from a state, tribal area, or outlying area affected by a disaster or emergency to other states, tribal areas, or outlying areas outside the disaster or emergency area.

ETA will determine whether a relocation is "substantial" based on the information provided in the DWG application, which includes the number of individuals relocating.

### **C. Eligible Participants**

The following are eligible to enroll in allowable activities and receive services provided through a Disaster Recovery DWG, per 20 CFR 687.170(b):

1. Individuals temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the emergency or disaster.
2. Long-term unemployed individuals, as defined by the grant recipient; or
3. Self-employed individuals who became unemployed or significantly underemployed as a result of the disaster or emergency.

Dislocated workers as defined in WIOA Section 3(15), including displaced homemakers as defined in WIOA Section 3(16); see TEGL 19-16 for more specific information on the flexibilities that WIOA provides to Governors with regard to establishing procedures for interpreting and applying the definition of dislocated worker to individuals.

For the purposes of eligibility for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-D Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs), as described in WIOA § 170(d)(2)(B), 20 CFR 687.170(b)(ii), and TEGL 2-15, the following definition applies: Long-term unemployed individuals: Individuals, who at the time of eligibility determination, have been [*Arkansas Issuance 18-19*]:

- Unemployed for at least 13 weeks, in aggregate, during the past 26 weeks, or
- Not in the labor force for at least 13 weeks, in aggregate, during the past 26 weeks.

Note that there is no previous work history requirement for this definition.

Grant recipients are responsible for developing written policies and procedures for determining participant eligibility, such as long-term unemployed and significantly underemployed. These policies should include a protocol to enable verification of participant eligibility in alignment with WIOA, in particular for situations when disaster events may impact the availability of common forms of documentation and require the use of self-attestation as an eligibility determinant. Grant recipients must demonstrate that they have made a reasonable effort to collect, during the disaster and after the disaster, the additional documentation necessary to ensure that each participant is eligible under 20 CFR 687.170(b). Grant recipients who subaward monies to other entities must ensure that these entities adhere to these same provisions.

#### **D. Application Requirements: Disaster Recovery DWGs**

There are two types of applications that may be submitted for Disaster Recovery DWGs: emergency or full applications.

**1 . Emergency Application.** Applicants may request Disaster Recovery DWGs through an abbreviated emergency application to facilitate timely delivery of DWG assistance in response to a disaster event. Unless the grant officer permits an extension, emergency applications must be submitted to ETA within 15 business days of the declaration of a qualifying disaster by FEMA or other Federal agency having jurisdiction over the disaster. Applicants must submit the following when submitting a request for a Disaster Recovery DWG through an emergency application:

- A copy of the relevant declaration of a qualifying event.
- A completed form SF-424.
- An abbreviated project summary that includes a brief description of the impacts of the declared emergency or disaster, including the initial number of expected participants, and the urgent needs that may be addressed; and
- Where applicable, a description of any disaster-relief employment positions that the applicant intends to begin following approval of an emergency application and prior to the full award.

For more information regarding these requirements, including additional emergency application instructions, sample forms and other resources, please see Section 6 of TEGL 16-21 and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply>.

ETA Department of Labor- WorkforceGPS Webinar Recordings for DWG grants training can be found at the following links: <https://vimeo.com/838827081> <https://vimeo.com/839847964> ETA encourages grant recipients awarded Disaster Recovery DWG funding under an emergency application to begin grant operations as quickly as possible to support economic and employment-related recovery in the disaster area(s). Activities such as participant outreach, implementing subrecipient or project operator agreements, identifying potential worksite employers, and enrolling participants in employment and training activities may begin immediately upon approval of an emergency application.

In addition, applicants may request, as part of the emergency application, approval for disaster-relief employment positions that address the impacts of the declared disaster and begin cleanup or humanitarian assistance disaster-relief employment as soon as an emergency award is approved.

In some cases, applicants may be able to begin some activities prior to the approval of the emergency application. Applicants may request a start date that aligns with the date of the qualifying declaration rather than the date of award; see Grant Start Date for more information on what information must be provided in such cases.

Grant recipients should work to ensure that other activities begin immediately after award so the grant can begin to provide full services as soon as possible after the full application is approved.

Within 60 business days following the award of Disaster Recovery DWG funds requested via an emergency application, the grant recipient must modify the grant to provide a full and complete application. Grant recipients who anticipate challenges with meeting the 60-day requirement should notify ETA for technical assistance or to request an extension. Where applicable, applicants may decide to submit a full application containing a complete budget and plan in lieu of an emergency application. However, ETA recommends applicants consider the urgency of the need for funds to address the emergency or disaster situation when determining whether to submit a full application, which will be more time consuming to prepare and review.

**2. Full Application.** The full application must be completed in accordance with TEGL 16-21 and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply>. The full application includes: 1) a current SF-424; 2) Statement of Work inclusive of a completed Community Needs Assessment; 3) budget (SF-424A) and budget narrative including median wages anticipated for disaster-relief employment (see Participant Wages section above), the proposed disaster-relief jobs to be

created that were not previously approved as part of an emergency application; and 4) a draft or preliminary Project Implementation Plan.

Note: Full applications that are submitted following an initial emergency award must also address any special conditions included in their grant agreement.

3. **Action Required:** Please provide this information to appropriate staff.
4. **Inquiries:** Eddie Thomas, ADWS EA Assistant Director, at [eddie.thomas@arkansas.gov](mailto:eddie.thomas@arkansas.gov)
5. **Attachments:**
  - TEGL 16-21, with changes and attachments.
  - Grants.gov list of all required forms.
6. **Expiration Date:** Ongoing.