

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) Program

Frequently Asked Questions for Winter Storms

Is a winter storm eligible for DFA?

- Some impacts related to a winter storm are eligible for assistance if a DFA program is established. DFA will provide financial assistance only for uninsurable eligible expenses directly related to the storm. In general, eligible expenses are those required to respond to the disaster (e.g. evacuations, operating warming centres, running Emergency Operating Centres, etc.), expenses to restore essential services and expenses to repair damaged infrastructure to the immediate pre-disaster condition. Expenses must be over and above what the local authority typically spends as part of its regular operating and maintenance budget.
- Items that can be insured are not eligible for DFA. DFA will only assist with costs that cannot be recovered through insurance, legal actions and financial assistance received from other sources. Uninsured municipal deductibles may be considered for DFA eligibility — a copy of the insurance proof of loss and supporting paid invoices must be included with the submission.

Is snow removal eligible for DFA?

- Snow removal is not eligible for DFA.

Is tree and debris clean-up eligible for DFA?

- After a disaster event, a local authority may need to clean-up debris. Debris removal and clean-up costs are typically eligible for DFA.
- Ineligible clean-up and debris removal costs include:
 - ✓ Debris removal for areas that do not pose a danger to the public or that are not publically accessible.
 - ✓ Clean up of debris that was not caused by the event.

Is the purchase of equipment and capital goods eligible for DFA?

- Local authorities may need to purchase equipment to aid in the response to or recovery from severe weather. Not all equipment purchases are eligible for DFA. Equipment is eligible if:
 - ✓ The equipment is not reusable and cannot be added to the local authority's inventory after the disaster event (items like road signs, barricades, safety vests, shovels and jerry/gas cans are therefore ineligible).
 - ✓ Proper records are maintained outlining the dates when the equipment was used, period of time in-use, and details on any expenses associated with the use of the equipment.

- ✓ A local authority may encounter a situation when they have to purchase equipment that is essential to recovery and it could not be rented. In this case, assistance is available for the difference between the original purchase price and the item's residual market value immediately after the disaster event. A local authority can also claim the costs of operating the equipment during the disaster period.
- If a local authority rents equipment from another local authority, the rental costs are ineligible for DFA; however, the incremental expenses for operating this equipment, such as fuel, are eligible.

Is the use of municipal equipment during or after a disaster eligible for DFA?

- Municipalities are expected to use their own equipment and resources to recover from a disaster rather than hiring external contractors, unless it is not possible to do so. You do not have to notify Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) if you are using external contractors.
- To streamline record-keeping, local authorities may choose to claim a rate amount based on the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA) rates rather than tracking fuel, oil, lubricant, maintenance, and repair costs.
- If the equipment used is not listed in the MHCA equipment rate guide, the municipality may claim 65% of the comparable rental rate in their local area. Typical equipment that is not listed includes pumps, steamers and PTO (power take off) pumps. For PTO pumps, the municipality should claim the MHCA guide rate for the tractor used plus the attachment allowance based on the PTO rental rate in their local area.
- Eligible expenses for municipal equipment include:
 - ✓ Expenses for recovering from a disaster event using municipally-owned equipment such as graders, back-hoes, loaders, etc.
 - ✓ Mobilization and hauling costs for equipment.
 - ✓ Light duty trucks used to haul equipment, limited to the actual hours of operation for the truck (stand-by time or time where the truck is parked is ineligible).
- Ineligible expenses for municipal equipment include:
 - ✓ Stand-by equipment hours—also known as equipment “downtime.”
 - ✓ Operating costs for fuel, oil, etc. if the MHCA guide rate or equipment rental rate is used by the municipality in their claim.
- Record-keeping/audit—the use of municipal equipment must be tracked, documented on “timesheets” or “operator’s reports” to submit with the claim.

Is staff time eligible for DFA?

- Eligible personnel costs include:
 - ✓ Incremental staff time costs for responding and recovering from a disaster (these are costs over-and-above your regular staff costs in your operating budget).

- ✓ Paid overtime wages to full-time employees (banked overtime is ineligible).
- ✓ Basic statutory benefits (vacation pay, EI, and CPP) for the eligible hours worked.
- ✓ Hiring costs for additional staff needed to provide response and recovery activities.
- ✓ Temporary seasonal staff or backfills hired to perform normal duties of staff that are re-assigned to disaster events.
- ✓ Costs for volunteer firefighters, which are incremental to your regular budget
- ✓ Food and drink expenses for volunteers.
- ✓ Expenses for municipal councillors (indemnities) in accordance with municipal by-laws and agreements.
- ✓ Expenses for contracted workers, including contracted emergency coordinators or contracted claims preparation service providers. These expenses must include detailed records of the work performed and the services provided.
- Ineligible personnel costs include:
 - ✓ Regular salaries as part of your regular operating budget.
 - ✓ Negotiated benefits for workers (health & dental benefits, pension contributions).

Are waived fees and the loss of income eligible for DFA?

- The loss of income and opportunity are not eligible for DFA.

Are costs for repairing downed power lines eligible for DFA?

- Manitoba Hydro is responsible for repairing downed power lines. Since Manitoba Hydro is a Crown Corporation, it is not eligible for DFA.

Is there more eligibility information available?

- If your municipality would like to discuss an eligibility matter further or have encountered a unique situation please contact Manitoba EMO at 204-945-3050 or 1-888-267-8298 or by email at dfa@gov.mb.ca.

How does a municipality apply for DFA?

- When a natural disaster occurs that exceeds the ability of a local authority to respond or recover, DFA may be requested from the Manitoba government.
- Requests for DFA from local authorities must include:
 - ✓ A resolution from the municipality requesting DFA
 - ✓ A completed Community Impact Assessment (available from Manitoba EMO)

Will municipal damages be inspected?

- Manitoba EMO will arrange for a contracted engineering consultant to inspect and document municipal damages. More information on the inspection process is available at https://www.gov.mb.ca/emo/pdfs/dfafs_2_inspecting_sites.pdf

Can homeowners, small businesses, farms and Not-For-Profit Organizations (NPOs) apply for DFA?

- Yes, homeowners, small businesses, farms and NPOs can apply for DFA, but they should first seek assistance through their private insurance coverage. DFA will only provide assistance for non-insurable damages.

How is it determined if a DFA program will be established?

- When a DFA request is received, Manitoba EMO evaluates the request to determine if the event and its related impacts are eligible for the DFA program and makes a recommendation to central government. When approved by central government a DFA program is established on an event specific basis. Approved DFA programs have defined event beginning and end dates and include specific geographical areas.
- If a DFA program is established, the local authority will receive written confirmation that they have been accepted into the program.

How is the DFA program linked to the Government of Canada's Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA)?

- Manitoba closely aligns the provincial DFA program with the federal DFAA in order to maximize cost-sharing with the Government of Canada.
- If a DFA program is approved, the Manitoba government seeks federal cost-sharing if the threshold for DFAA cost-sharing is met.
- Independent of whether federal DFAA cost-sharing is met, Manitoba EMO administers the DFA program in alignment with the Government of Canada's DFAA.
- DFA is only able to pay for impacts that are eligible based on the criteria established in the DFAA.
- For additional information on the federal DFAA please visit <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/mrgnc-mngmnt/rcvr-dsstrs/dsstr-fnncl-ssstnc-rnngmnts/index-en.aspx>.

Is additional information available?

- Manitoba EMO has additional information and a series of Fact Sheets that are available online at https://www.gov.mb.ca/emo/dfa/municipal_factsheets.html