



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 3/28/2025 Meeting Date: 4/3/2025

Department: BCC Administration

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) has created the Elevate Florida program to assist homeowners with mitigation programs. Staff recommends using 10% of the Hurricane Helene mitigation funds on the Elevate Florida programs. Homeowners would then directly apply to the State for the home mitigation or buyout funds instead of a local Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for home buyout.

2. Recommended Motion/Action:

Approve use of Hurricane Helene for FDEM Elevate Florida program

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

JANUARY WINTER STORM Updates

HURRICANE MILTON Updates

HURRICANE HELENE Updates

HURRICANE DEBBY For Recovery Information

PUBLIC NOTICES Read Here

Elevate Florida: FDEM's Residential Mitigation Program

Important Notice: Elevate Florida Application Deadline Approaching

Attention all interested property owners! **Please be advised that applications will no longer be accepted after April 11, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. ET.** All draft applications that have not been submitted by the deadline will not be considered for funding. To access your draft application, log into your account, click on the Status tab at the top of your screen, and click on the tracking number hyperlink. Make sure to complete and click on the Submit button before the deadline to ensure your application is considered. Don't miss out on this opportunity—submit your application today!

Elevate Florida is a first-of-its-kind, groundbreaking statewide residential mitigation program. Led by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), this program is designed to protect homes and communities by reducing damage caused by natural disasters like hurricanes and floods. Elevate Florida is designed to expedite the entire process and complete a resident's mitigation project.

Be cautious of unexpected phone calls, visits, or agreements from individuals, inspectors or contractors claiming to represent Elevate Florida. Before any home inspection for Elevate Florida, your assigned case manager will inform you of an inspection date and time in advance of any visit to your property. Be advised not to give money to any individuals claiming to be affiliated with our program. All official transactions will be conducted through our secure, authorized channels.

Elevate Florida Procurements

FDEM is seeking to establish a pool of qualified Respondents to provide Inspection and Assessment services to implement the statewide residential mitigation grant program, Elevate Florida. Please see the solicitation documents at the following link.

Link to My Florida Marketplace: <https://vendor.myfloridamarketplace.com/search/bids/detail/11961>

Eligibility

To become a potential participant of the Elevate Florida program, applicants must:

- Be over the age of 18,
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be the legal property owner of a residential property in the State of Florida, and
- Be able to contribute up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the project's total cost.

Multi-family real estate such as duplexes, triplexes, condos, townhomes, semi-detached homes, apartments and manufactured homes may be eligible. The property does not need to have experienced flooding or damage in the past to be considered. However, applications may be prioritized based on history of loss. Secondary residences may be considered if sufficient funding is available.

The property being submitted for a mitigation project must be owned by individual(s), not a corporate or commercial entity (including LLCs). Individual renters are not eligible. Although renters cannot apply directly, they are encouraged to share program information with the owner of the property.

How to Apply

Navigate to the Elevate Florida Portal to set up an account. Once registered, it will take approximately 20 minutes to fill out the application, assuming all the necessary information is available. Having the following information and documents on hand will expedite the submission review of your application:

- Photos of the structure (all four sides including front, rear, and both sides)
 - Insurance Declaration pages (if available)
 - Elevation Certificates (if applicable)
 - Geotechnical Reports (Soil Studies) (if applicable)
 - Flooding photos/high water mark photos
 - Insurance claim information
 - Substantial Damage Determination letters received from local government (if applicable)
 - Combined income as reflected on the most recent federal tax return
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Project Options

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When you apply, you must select one of the following project options:

- **Structure Elevation:** Physically raising an existing structure.
 - **Mitigation Reconstruction:** The construction of an improved, elevated building on the same site where an existing building and/or foundation has been partially or completely demolished or destroyed. These activities result in the construction of code-compliant and hazard-resistant structures. Mitigation Reconstruction is the alternative to Structure Elevation when the structure is not sturdy enough to elevate, as determined during application review.
 - **Acquisition/Demolition:** A structure is purchased from voluntary sellers and demolished, to be maintained by the local community as open space. The local community must agree to participate in this project type.
 - **Wind Mitigation:** Measures that reduce the risk of future wind damage to structures. This may include alterations to the roof, windows, doors, and other vulnerable components of structures. Wind mitigation is another alternative for homes that are not sturdy enough to elevate.
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Program Process and Timeline

Timelines vary based on project type, with some projects taking up to two years. There are five stages with estimated time periods of:

- **Stage 1 Application Submittal:** Less than one week.
 - Once an application is submitted, it will be reviewed to determine if it is complete or if additional information is needed. Your case manager will work with you to fill out all required program forms and satisfy any requests for information during review.
- **Stage 2 Application Review:** One to four months.
 - Once all required information is provided, the application will be reviewed to determine if the grant program requirements are met. If initial eligibility criteria are met, pre-construction assessments and studies will be completed for your structure. The property owner will work with the assigned case manager to sign a pre-construction contract and provide the resident cost-share for initial inspections. In addition to program eligibility, all applications must undergo reviews for cost-effectiveness and environmental and historic preservation compliance. In some cases, a more thorough environmental and/or historic review may be required which may extend the estimated timeline for application review.
- **Stage 3 Decision and Approval:** Two to three months.
 - If the project meets all grant program requirements, an application package will be prepared and submitted to FEMA for final approval and award. Following the FEMA award, your project will undergo bidding and contracting, as assigned by the State. The property owner cost-share will be finalized before contracting and will be due at contract signing.
- **Stage 4 Construction:** Three to nine months.
 - Once the contract is signed and the property owner cost-share is received, construction may begin. The State will assign contractors who will provide turnkey construction services. Occupants will be required to vacate the structure during the construction process and temporary housing assistance will be provided.

- **Stage 5 Closeout:** One to three months.
 - After construction is complete, a final inspection will be scheduled to close out the project. Property owners will be provided with a closeout packet with all necessary documentation. If applicable, property owners will be required to provide proof of the updated and satisfactory NFIP insurance policy prior to grant closeout.



Costs

Federal grant funding will cover at least 75 percent of the project cost, meaning property owners only need to invest up to 25 percent—a significant savings. Property owners will be required to provide up to 25% of initial inspection costs prior to inspections being completed. Additionally, the total construction cost for each property will be determined during the initial review period based on factors such as project type, square footage of living space, foundation and construction type, and any necessary project activities. Approved property owners will receive a detailed breakdown of their construction cost-share and will have time to decide if they would like to move forward with the project's next phase. The cost-share will also include relocation expenses during construction, meaning the program will pay at least 75 percent of these expenses.

Unfortunately, no assistance is available from the State of Florida to cover the property owner's project cost (up to 25 percent) responsibilities for Elevate Florida. Residents may use funds from a loan from the Small Business Administration to cover the property owner cost-share.

The property owner must sign an agreement with FDEM that they accept and agree to the cost share requirement to fund initial inspections.

Program Benefits

Elevating residential properties offers a multitude of advantages for individual property owners, neighborhoods, communities and the entire State of Florida. This proactive approach enhances the safety and value of individual properties while contributing to overall resilience and sustainability.

For property owners:

For property owners:

- **Significant Cost Savings** – Homeowners can save 75–100 percent on the cost of protecting their property from future flood damage, making it a cost-effective alternative to managing the project independently.
 - **Lower Insurance Premiums** – Reduce flood insurance costs with improved property resilience.
 - **Increased Property Value** – Strengthen your home’s value with long-term flood protection.
 - **Comprehensive Support** – Enjoy end-to-end assistance, from application to construction, including contractor services, temporary housing support, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.
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Contact Us

For questions, technical support, or application assistance, submit inquiries through the “Contact Us” page on the portal or email info@elevatefl.org.

You can also call the contact center Monday – Friday from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. ET at 877-ELEV8FL (877-353-8835). TTY services are available by dialing 711.

Additional Resources

Elevate Florida

[Elevate Florida Program Overview](#)

[Subscribe to Updates](#)

[Environmental and Historic Preservation Property Owner Guidance](#)

Public Notices

- **Elevate Florida Cumulative Final Public Notice**
 - A Public Notice is required when states will be using federal funds to conduct activities that may be located within, affect, or be affected by floodplains or wetlands. The Cumulative Final Public Notice for the Elevate Florida Program was published on February 14, 2025.
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About the Division

Executive Director's Office

Meet The Executive Director

Media

Office of the Inspector General

Legal

- Emergency Orders
- Open Government
- 2024-2025 FDEM Regulatory Plan
- Florida Disaster Legal Aid Helpline

Military Liaison

Regional Field Team

Work Opportunities at the Division of Emergency Management

Internships

- Internship FAQs

Financial Management

Budget

Disbursement

Financial Grants Management

Fiscal Operations

Information Technology and Management

Telecommunications Unit

Geographic Information Systems

- US National Grid
- LiDAR and Digital Elevation Data
- ERA Tools

Mitigation

Elevate Florida

Floodplain Management Program

- Community Rating System (CRS)
- Community Resources
- Substantial Damage Resources

Flood Mitigation Assistance Program

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program

Local Mitigation Strategy

State Mitigation Strategy

- State Hazard Mitigation Plan

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program

Watershed Planning Program

Environmental Planning Program

Swift Current

Procurement

How to Do Business With the State

Preparedness

Grants Unit

- Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP)
- State Nonprofit Security Grant Program
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
- Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) Compliance Webinar Recording
- Operation Stonegarden (OPSG)
- State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHGP)
- EM Preparedness and Assistance (EMPA) Grant
- EM Performance Grant (EMPG)

All-Hazards Unit

- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Regional Evacuation Studies

Training and Exercise

Continuity of Operations Planning

Recovery

Fire Management Assistance Grant Program

Individual Assistance

American Rescue Plan Act

Public Assistance Grant Program

Regional Recovery Coordinators

Florida Agribusiness Recovery

- Citrus Recovery Block Grant
- Irrigation Recovery Block Grant
 - Irrigation FAQs and Presentation
- Timber Recovery Block Grant
 - Timber FAQs and Presentation

CARES Act

Disaster Mental Health Resources

Response

Infrastructure

- Shelter Development Reports
- Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan

Logistics

Operations

- State Watch Office
- All Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT)
- EOC Position Credentialing Program
 - Historical Recognition

- EOC Credentialing Program Frequently Asked Questions

Regional Response Coordinators

Technological Hazards

- State Emergency Response Commission
 - Local Emergency Planning Committees
- EPCRA/Tier II Compliance
 - Toxic Release Inventory Program (TRI)
 - Technical Resources
- Risk Management Planning
- Radiological Emergency Program
 - Information for Ingestion Pathway
 - Nuclear Power Plants Emergency Classification Levels

SERT

Library

Mitigation Publications

- State Mitigation Strategy

Preparedness Publications

Public Education Publications

Recovery Publications

Response Publications

Special Projects Publications