WILDER STRATEGIES / POLICY WRITING SAMPLE

Emergency and Major Disaster Declarations: What Changes for Florida

Reconstructed from an October 2026 newsletter draft

Policy question

When Florida seeks expanded federal assistance after emergency aid has been approved, what can disaster-response organizations tell affected communities?

Distinguish approval from request

An emergency declaration can authorize specified federal assistance for urgent needs. A request for a major disaster declaration is a separate action. If approved, a major disaster declaration may authorize additional programs, depending on the declaration and later amendments. A request alone does not establish eligibility for those programs.

What nonprofits should verify

Before referring residents or local partners, check the official declaration for designated areas and authorized programs. Distinguish assistance available to households from support for eligible public entities and nonprofits. Date each update and revise referrals when programs or geographic designations change.

FEMA Declaration Process Timelines