



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
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MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Peter R. Orszag *PO*  
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SUBJECT: Responding to Potential Social Service and Small Business Needs as a Result of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

The purpose of this memorandum is to request your Agency's participation in the development and initiation of a Social Service and Small Business Coordination Plan for Responding to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will serve as the coordination lead for this facet of the Federal effort. This memorandum outlines the plan's parameters and immediate action steps, and requests that you designate a lead Senior Official from your Agency to serve as a key point of contact. The designated Senior Official will in turn be asked to identify additional personnel from your Agency to participate as necessary.

**BACKGROUND**

Since April 20, 2010, the National Incident Command under the direction of the Coast Guard has been working closely with the responsible parties (RPs) and Federal, State, local and tribal partners in anticipating requirements, identifying response options, and rapidly providing response support. In the three weeks since the initial event, it has become increasingly clear that in addition to widespread environmental damage, the adverse economic impact on the Gulf states coastal areas may be significant. The unprecedented nature of this oil spill requires a rapid and comprehensive approach to supporting individuals, families and small businesses even while they pursue claims against the RPs.

The National Incident Command is taking the lead in coordinating the social service and small business coordination effort with the following objectives:

1. In concert with USCG, communicate with the RP to coordinate the RP claims process with the delivery of related government benefits, including establishing procedures to avoid duplicate payments, maintain full RP liability, and maximize the recoupment of all government expenditures.

2. Provide a resource to States to coordinate ad-hoc requests for Federal assistance.
3. Provide coordinated assistance to State efforts to establish “one-stop” virtual and physical service centers in impacted communities.
4. Coordinate communications between the Federal government and the RPs and Federal, State, local and tribal partners to minimize duplication of effort and avoid disruption to normal operations.
5. Provide a rapid source of consolidated data to decision makers at the Federal, State and local levels.

The National Incident Command has tasked FEMA with the benefit coordination role. They will work with your Agency to create an interagency working group. Each Agency will be responsible for complying with FEMA’s requests for assistance and for developing contingency plans to provide adequate staff resources in the event of increased demand. In the near term, we expect Federal Agencies to work within existing budgetary resources to contribute to a small on-site contingent in the Gulf region, with back-up expertise available in the headquarters and regional offices. FEMA is not operating under Stafford Act authorities, and as such, will not be issuing mission assignments to provide funding for required support activities.

FEMA, with the assistance of the interagency workgroup, will coordinate with State, local and tribal partners and the on-site Federal interagency team to develop a comprehensive Social Service and Small Business Coordination Plan to include communications, roles and responsibilities, deployment strategy, and contingency plans.

The Plan is not intended to disrupt ongoing, day-to-day communications between operational Agencies and their State, local and tribal partners. Rather, it will be a critical and timely resource to these partners to help provide a rapid Federal response to the evolving situation and to reinforce the cooperation of the RPs.

This effort to ensure more seamless delivery of claims and benefits to individuals and small businesses is an important step of the Administration’s response to the oil spill. Further steps include anticipating and preparing for the post-incident recovery needs of the Gulf Coast.

## **ACTIONS**

FEMA, with the assistance of the interagency workgroup, will develop a Social Service and Small Business Coordination Plan for Responding to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill within the next 10 days. This plan, to be coordinated with State, local and tribal organizations, will describe:

- A communication plan showing how Federal, State, local and tribal organizations will effectively manage the flow of information to avoid duplication, enable rapid decision making, and efficiently manage the flow of data between these organizations and the RPs.

- A deployment strategy showing how Federal Agencies will support the efforts of States to meet evolving requirements.
- An operational concept of “no wrong door” that will enable individuals, families, and small businesses to easily navigate and apply for the benefits and resources they may need.
- A contingency plan that will enable the Federal government to rapidly and effectively meet surges in demand.

This plan will serve as the framework for guiding future actions.

We are requesting that Agencies take the following immediate actions to support FEMA in this critical role:

1. If your agency has not already done so, identify a single Senior Official to act as the primary point of contact for your Agency. The Senior Officials will form a steering committee that will advise FEMA on how best to carry out the Social Service and Small Business Coordination Plan, including priority setting, strategic planning, and communication.
2. The Senior Official will, in turn, identify a second “tier” of individuals within your Agency to participate in an interagency workgroup. These individuals will represent each stakeholder component of the Agency that may be impacted by the results of the spill, serve as the interface with local officials, and carry out many of the specific activities requested by FEMA and the steering committee of Senior Officials.
3. The Senior Official will also identify a third “tier” of individuals and other staff that may be called upon in the event of increased demand. These individuals should be prepared for deployment in the event of escalating needs.

Please submit the requested information to Tracy Wareing at [Tracy.wareing@dhs.gov](mailto:Tracy.wareing@dhs.gov) and copy to Susan Tynan at [stynan@omb.eop.gov](mailto:stynan@omb.eop.gov).