

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION


OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DATE: OCT 28 2008

TO: Sharon Mar
Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

THROUGH: James Hyler
Information Collections Coordinator
Regulatory Information Management Services (RIMS)
Office of Management

FROM: Cheryl A. Oldham 
Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Postsecondary Education

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Clearance of Pre-Application for FY 2009 Higher Education Disaster Relief Program

The U. S. Department of Education (the Department) requests that OMB grant an emergency clearance of the application package for the FY 2009 Higher Education Disaster Relief Program. On September 30, 2008 in the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act (2009), Congress provided \$15 million for awards to institutions of higher education located in an area affected by hurricanes, floods, or other natural disasters occurring during 2008 for which the President declared a major disaster under title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974. The law provides that awards be made within 60 days of its enactment, which means by November 30, 2008.

The Department intends to follow the same procedures used in FY 2006 and FY 2007 to allocate funds in the Hurricane Education Recovery Awards grant program. The proposed collection for the 2009 Higher Education Disaster Relief program is nearly identical to that approved in 2006 and 2007 (OMB No.1840-0789) and would include the following quantitative measures:

- Revenue lost as a result of natural disasters;
- Expenses already incurred by the institution in remediation of the effects of 2008 natural disasters;
- Estimated construction costs to repair or replace campus buildings damaged by the natural disaster; and the
- Estimated amount to be reimbursed by insurance or other Federal agency, foundation or charitable outlays for disaster relief.

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The proposed Pre-Application Information Form is attached. Once notified by the Department of their allotments (based on information provided in the Pre-Application), applicants will use already approved standard forms to apply for the allotted amount of funding via Grants.gov.

The Department must collect the needed information quickly in order to meet the legislative requirements in the continuing resolution and to provide assistance as soon as possible to institutions affected by natural disasters. Clearance of the Higher Education Disaster Relief collection is requested within two weeks or by November 6.

Attachments:

Authorizing Legislation for Higher Education Disaster Relief
Information Collection Request (IC Data Part I)
Supporting Statement for Information Collection