

FINANCE GROUP

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Finance Group is to provide oversight of disaster-related financial affairs, in order to assure that city purchasing policies are followed prior to and throughout the disaster period, including the recovery stage.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

During the period of disaster operations, the City government must continue to operate, addressing the day-to-day business of running a city. At the same time, there will be new demands upon the personnel and systems, with some new priorities. One significant area where that is true is in the area of finances. The purchasing system must be responsive to the need to procure equipment and services on very short notice, at times bypassing some traditional restrictions. That is not to say that there are no rules. It only means that the rules must be written to accommodate disaster-related purchasing needs. As in the day-to-day operation of the City, the Finance Director still stands as one of the checks and balances of the purchasing system.

City purchasing policies must be written to accommodate disasters which may create extreme situations, both in dollars spent and the time-frame allotted to give approval to purchasing requests. A mechanism must be in place which allows the Finance Director latitude in approving requests which might otherwise be contrary to normal protocol. While the Mayor and City Council are identified as part of the policy group, the nature of the situation may make their direct involvement in individual spending issues impractical.

GENERAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Finance Director. The Finance Director is responsible for assuring that disaster-related purchasing policies are in place which will allow a higher degree of spending latitude, in addition to expediting the approval process. During a disaster, the Finance Director is responsible for oversight of the purchasing procedures to assure that the rules are adhered to, while at the same time assuring that procurements are handled swiftly and efficiently.

Accounting Clerk. Other Emergency Management Groups will be submitting disaster-related financial information. The Accounting Clerk will assist the Finance Director in registering and tracking expenses incurred as direct or indirect results of the emergency incident. Records of all disaster-related spending should be kept to assure that an accurate accounting can be made. Submission of records for federal reimbursement or other purposes will require collaboration with the Analysis Group.

Purchasing Agent. If the scope of the procurement process gets to be unwieldy, the assignment of a purchasing agent may serve to expedite the process. This person is responsible for ordering materials requested by other groups and assuring that materials are delivered, when and where directed.

FINANCE GROUP PREPAREDNESS PHASE CHECKLIST

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- ___ Assures that city purchasing policies permit appropriate amount of latitude and control to facilitate authorization for purchase of goods and services in an expedited manner during times of declared emergencies.
- ___ Establishes a system of tracking expenses related to the disaster, including but not limited to goods, services, and personnel costs.

FINANCE GROUP RESPONSE PHASE CHECKLIST

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- ___ Maintains on-going dialogue with those individuals who have responsibilities involving expenditures related to the disaster.
- ___ Assures that disaster-related expenditures are made within city purchasing policy guidelines.
- ___ Notes any deviations from city purchasing policy guidelines for review.
- ___ Tracks disaster-related expenditures, as much as possible, on a daily basis. Makes periodic reports to City Administrator.
- ___ Collaborates with organization group leaders to track reimbursable expenses for goods and services.

ACCOUNTING CLERK

- ___ Records disaster-related expenses for personnel, equipment, and services.
- ___ Reports financial information to Finance Director, or as directed to the Policy Group

PURCHASING AGENT

- ___ Assists Finance Director in procurement process in response to purchasing requests for disaster response activities.
- ___ Assures prompt delivery of critical items to locations as directed by those needing the goods.

FINANCE GROUP RECOVERY PHASE CHECKLIST

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- ___ Accumulates financial data related to the disaster, as reported by group leaders.
- ___ Collaborates with Disaster Analysis Group to formulate damage assessment estimates;
Satisfies government agency/insurance company damage claim information requirements.
- ___ Reports financial information to City Administrator.