



SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM NATURAL DISASTER QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- 1. Q. Are we allowed to pay displaced participants whose host agency sites are affected by natural disaster emergencies?**

A. Grantees may not pay participants wages unless they are working at a community service assignment or in paid training. However, during natural disasters you may assign participants to perform community service training with temporary host agencies, including disaster assistance organization such as the Red Cross. If temporary assignments are not available, you may allow participants to make up lost time when the host agency reopens. The opportunity to make up time does not have to be limited to the next payroll period.
- 2. Q. May we provide emergency transportation or other kinds of supportive services to displaced participants?**

A. Grantees are permitted to use “Other Program Cost” (OPC) funds to pay for supportive services, such as the payment of reasonable costs of transportation; health and medical services; special job-related or personal counseling; incidentals; child and adult care; housing, including temporary shelter; follow-up services; and needs-related payments which are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the SCSEP. For further information, please refer to 20 CFR 641.545.
- 3. Q. In lieu of host agency community service activities, can participants engage in permissible training activities such as online tutorials or SCSEP meetings?**

A. Yes. Any training or supportive services activity that would normally be allowable under SCSEP can be used in emergency situations. Grantees should be reasonable in what is allowed, and document the participants’ training related activity. If the grantee provides or refers SCSEP participants to attend disaster related workshops, this can be considered permissible training and should be noted in case notes. However, keep in mind that specialized training activities must be aligned and consistent with the participant’s Individual Employment Plan.

4. Q. If participants are able to continue working in their current or reassigned community service assignment and the payroll system is not available, how can the participants be paid?

A. Grantees may consider creating backup paper timesheets or other forms of documentation capturing the hours worked. Grantees should also document why the normal payroll process is not available and document what procedures will be used to ensure accurate payment.

5. Q. Where can I find additional federal resources that are available to displaced workers and SCSEP participants?

A. DisasterAssistance.gov provides access to a range of resources, contact information, and aid applications for both short-term and long-term recovery from storms, floods and other disasters. [Click here](#) to access information regarding resources for disaster response.

6. Q. Can we enroll individuals who are already SCSEP participants?

A. Relocated disaster victims may be enrolled in your program even if they are already enrolled in another grantee's program and are unable to provide any documentation. You as the grantee must verify the participant is not receiving wages from the former grantee. SPARQ records may be used to establish enrollment status and documentation of age and income. Also, a grantee can request a discretionary transfer in lieu of enrolling and exiting participants.

7. Q. Are individuals who are not residents of our state eligible to be in the program?

A. All low-income, unemployed individuals 55 and older who relocate to your state from disaster-affected areas are eligible to participate.

8. Q. How will they prove they are eligible if they do not have any paperwork?

A. For disaster victims who have lost their documentation, grantees may accept self-attestation of age and income in lieu of official documentation for 90 days while the applicants obtain new documentation.

9. Q. If an applicant has earned income from a National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) assignment, will that be considered in determining income eligibility for SCSEP?

A. No. Consistent with the guidelines in TEGL No. 12-06, income from any employment and training program is disregarded for purposes of SCSEP eligibility. Employment in DWG temporary jobs and DUA benefits are specifically excluded in determining SCSEP eligibility. Other forms of disaster or relocation assistance will be determined by DOL on a case-by-case basis.

10. Q. What happens to equitable distribution (ED)?

A. Grantees that under-serve a county because a natural disaster disrupts host agency or program operations or that over-serve a county because of an influx of disaster victims will not be penalized in meeting ED requirements.

11. Q. Will negotiated performance goals be relaxed to accommodate disasters?

A. The Department will consider requests for adjusting an affected grantee's goals after the recovery has taken place and the effects of the disaster have been assessed.

12. Q. What happens if a grantee is unable to complete SPARQ data entry before the close of a quarter or the program year?

A. The Department will assist affected grantees to complete essential data entry in areas impacted by a natural disaster. Contact SCSEP Help for assistance (help@scsep-help.com).

13. Q. Should the grantee provide a disaster recovery status update to DOL?

A. Yes, the Department appreciates updates and information about the status and circumstances of the grantees, host agencies, and SCSEP participants. Please reach out to your FPO to provide status updates as you have them and to ask any questions.

14. Q. What if a participant has not made contact with the grantee?

A. Grantee should make an effort to contact the participant's emergency contacts and possibly the host agency supervisor. If all efforts fail and you are unable to reach anyone, you should place the participant on an approved break in service until their status is confirmed.