

# **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

## **HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM**

**RECOVERY ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

**Agreed-Upon Procedures Report  
for the period July 2024 - June 2025  
Issued September 10, 2025**

**LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
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August 20, 2025

Independent Accountant's Report  
On the Application of Agreed-Upon Procedures

**BRIGADIER GENERAL JASON P. MAHFOUZ, INTERIM DIRECTOR**  
**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

We have performed the procedures enumerated below to assist the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) in confirming the sufficiency of documentation submitted by sub-grantees and technical assistance contractors to GOHSEP (Documentation) during the period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, to support reimbursement requests under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). GOHSEP management is responsible for the Documentation.

An agreed-upon procedures engagement involves the Louisiana Legislative Auditor performing specific procedures that GOHSEP management has agreed to and acknowledged to be appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement and reporting on findings based on the procedures performed. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

GOHSEP specified a threshold of \$500 for reporting exceptions; therefore, we did not report any exceptions noted below this amount.

**OVERALL RESULTS**

For the period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, we performed procedures on the Documentation for 1,218 reimbursement requests totaling \$70,670,381. As a result of applying our procedures, we noted exceptions, which exceed \$500 per reimbursement request, totaling \$8,770,171 (12.41%) in 143 reimbursement requests. The following table presents the overall results of our procedures.



Exceptions				
Finding Type	Number of Occurrences	Exception Amount*	Percent of Total Exceptions	Amount Resolved**
Out-of-Scope	14	\$651,868	7.43%	\$1,803,657
Lack of Support	111	7,029,515	80.15	18,209,384
Procurement Not Documented	12	904,735	10.32	1,164,543
Ineligible Costs	4	141,079	1.61	133,051
Errors	2	42,974	0.49	115,750
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>\$8,770,171</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$21,426,385</b>

\*Does not include exceptions noted in prior periods or exceptions of \$500 or less.

\*\*Includes exceptions noted in prior periods but resolved in the current period.

The procedures and associated findings are as follows:

**PROCEDURE 1:** We confirmed that the work reflected in the reimbursement request is within the scope approved for the project and that the requested amount does not exceed the funding parameters.

**FINDING 1:** We identified 14 reimbursement requests where \$651,868 of the work (7.43% of the exceptions identified) was not within the approved scope of the project.

Through our subsequent application of this procedure on reimbursement requests from the current and prior reporting periods, we noted that the sub-grantees provided approved amended scopes of work to support \$1,803,657 of the exceptions noted for out-of-scope expenses.

**PROCEDURE 2:** We confirmed that the requested amount is supported by invoices, receipts, lease agreements, contracts, labor policies, time records, equipment logs, HUD settlement statements, appraisals, elevation certificates, duplication of benefits verifications, engineer plans, inspection photographs, or other applicable documentation.

**FINDING 2:** We identified 111 reimbursement requests where \$7,029,515 of expenses (80.15% of the exceptions identified) were not supported by sufficient documentation.

Through our subsequent application of this procedure on reimbursement requests from the current and prior reporting periods, we noted that GOHSEP either reduced the requested

amount or the sub-grantees provided sufficient documentation to support \$18,209,384 of the exceptions noted for lack of support.

**PROCEDURE 3:** We confirmed that contracts and purchases totaling more than \$10,000 per vendor per calendar year comply with applicable federal and state procurement requirements.

**FINDING 3:** We identified 12 reimbursement requests for contracts greater than \$10,000 where we could not confirm that applicable procurement guidelines had been followed for purchases totaling \$904,735 (10.32% of the exceptions identified).

Through our subsequent application of this procedure on reimbursement requests from the current and prior reporting periods, we noted that GOHSEP either reduced the requested amount or the sub-grantees provided additional documentation to support \$1,164,543 of the exceptions noted for unsupported procurement.

**PROCEDURE 4:** We confirmed that the work reflected in the reimbursement request complies with applicable FEMA regulations and guidance.

**FINDING 4:** We identified four reimbursement requests where \$141,079 of expenses (1.61% of the exceptions identified) were not in compliance with applicable FEMA regulations and guidance.

Through our subsequent application of this procedure on reimbursement requests from the current and prior reporting periods, we noted that GOHSEP either reduced the requested amount or the sub-grantees provided additional documentation to support \$133,051 of the exceptions noted for ineligible expenses.

**PROCEDURE 5:** We confirmed that the expenses uploaded to [gohsepgrants.la.gov](https://gohsepgrants.la.gov) for each reimbursement request do not contain duplicate invoices, incorrect vendor information, and/or incorrect invoice amounts.

**FINDING 5:** We identified two reimbursement requests where \$42,974 of expenses (0.49% of the exceptions identified) were duplicated, included incorrect vendor information, and/or incorrect invoice amounts.

Through our subsequent application of this procedure on reimbursement requests from the current and prior reporting periods, we noted that GOHSEP either reduced the requested amount or the sub-grantees provided additional documentation to support \$115,750 of the exceptions noted for errors.

**PROCEDURE 6:** We accumulated the total potential questioned costs and resolved amounts noted during our analysis of reimbursement requests.

**FINDING 6:** During our analysis of reimbursement requests totaling \$1,669,537,876 for the period April 1, 2008, through June 30, 2025, we identified potential questioned costs totaling \$332,151,805 (19.89%), of which a total of \$260,948,771 (78.56%) was resolved.

We were engaged by GOHSEP management to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with the attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the applicable attestation standards contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We were not engaged to, and did not conduct, an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on the Documentation. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

We are required to be independent of GOHSEP and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our agreed-upon procedures engagement.

The purpose of this report is to present the procedures performed and the results of those procedures and is not intended for any other purpose. This report is intended solely for the information and use of GOHSEP management, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than this specified party. By provision of state law, this report is a public document and has been distributed to the appropriate public officials.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. "Mike" Waguespack, CPA  
Legislative Auditor

MJW/aa

GOHSEP-HM JULY TO JUNE 2025

## BACKGROUND

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The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) is the state agency responsible for responding to, and helping the state recover from, all natural and man-made emergencies and reducing the loss of life and property through an all-hazards emergency management program of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. One of the programs GOHSEP uses to accomplish its mission is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The HMGP assists local governments with funding cost-effective actions that reduce the risk of property damage while simultaneously reducing reliance on federal disaster funds.

Hazard mitigation projects are intended to strengthen facilities and communities, making them less vulnerable to future disaster impacts. Examples of typical mitigation activities include:

- *Elevating flood-prone structures* - physically raising an existing structure above the base flood elevation;
- *Acquiring flood-prone structures* - purchasing structures and converting the land to green space in perpetuity;
- *Localized drainage improvements* - reducing localized flooding by increasing drainage capacity;
- *Safe-room construction* - providing immediate, nearby life-safety protection against either tornado or hurricane winds; and
- *Wind retrofitting structures* - hardening the envelope of a structure to protect against high winds. The envelope is the shell of the structure (including the doors, roof covering, windows, and walls) that maintains a dry, heated, or cooled indoor environment.

Sub-grantees submit reimbursement requests and supporting documentation to GOHSEP for payment through the HMGP. Our engagement with GOHSEP requires the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's (LLA) document review team to perform procedures on the documentation submitted by sub-grantees and technical assistance contractors.

GOHSEP's documentation review process begins when sub-grantees and technical assistance contractors submit reimbursement requests and supporting documentation. The GOHSEP disaster recovery specialists review the requests and gather any additional documentation deemed necessary to fully support them. The disaster recovery specialists document the results of their reviews on requests for advance or reimbursement and then submit the forms and all supporting documentation to the team leads. After the team leads review the requests for advance or reimbursement and all supporting documentation, they submit them to

the LLA document review team to be reviewed under our agreed-upon procedures engagement.

The LLA document review team performs procedures on the documentation submitted by sub-grantees and technical assistance contractors under the HMGP. Unsupported costs exceeding \$500 are considered exceptions and are reported. The LLA document review team communicates the results of their review to GOHSEP management via Findings of Review. When exceptions are noted, GOHSEP management decides whether to correct the exceptions or fund the requests. If GOHSEP management decides to correct the exceptions, the disaster recovery specialists gather additional documentation. Then, LLA's document review team performs the same agreed-upon procedures on the additional documentation. This process allows GOHSEP the opportunity to correct exceptions prior to final payment, thus eliminating questioned costs.

## **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE**

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**Governor's Office of Homeland Security And Emergency Preparedness**  
**State of Louisiana**

JEFF LANDRY  
GOVERNOR



JASON P MAHFOUZ  
BRIGADIER GENERAL  
DIRECTOR

September 4, 2025

Mr. Michael J. "Mike" Waguespack, CPA  
Legislative Auditor  
Office of Legislative Auditor  
1600 North Third Street  
Post Office Box 94397  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9397

RE: Management's Response - Agreed-Upon Procedures  
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Report July 2024 – June 2025

Dear Mr. Waguespack:

The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) has reviewed the draft agreed-upon procedures report, prepared by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's (LLA) Recovery Assistance Division for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), covering the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. We appreciate the continued efforts of your team and value the observations and recommendations provided during this engagement.

During the review period, GOHSEP processed 1,218 HMGP reimbursement requests for a total of \$70,670,381 from eligible subrecipients. The current agreed-upon procedures report reflects an overall exception rate of 12.41% (\$8,770,171), requiring additional documentation for or correction to 143 reimbursement requests, prior to GOHSEP releasing payment, as per GOHSEP's process. Also noted in the report is that \$21,426,385 worth of exceptions that were identified over prior reporting periods were resolved in the current period, demonstrating GOHSEP's success in issue resolution and adherence to our policy prior to release of funds.

The majority of exceptions (80.15%) were related to lack of supporting documentation. Four high-dollar reimbursement requests, totaling \$3,321,261, accounted for a significant portion of the Lack of Support category. These findings highlight the importance of ensuring that reimbursement requests are fully supported by appropriate records and point to opportunities for continued improvement in documentation practices across the program, both at the local and state level. Importantly, these findings represent reimbursement requests that were identified and returned prior to payment disbursement. In nearly all cases, the exceptions were resolved through additional documentation or corrective actions before funds were released. This reflects the strength of GOHSEP's internal review and oversight process and demonstrates our proactive approach to refining front-end reviews to further reduce the number of exceptions identified.

Mr. Michael J. "Mike" Waguespack, CPA  
September 4, 2025

GOHSEP continues to make progress in this critical area by providing increased support to HMGP participants through outreach by the State Applicant Liaisons (SALs), by providing technical assistance, and by leveraging other GOHSEP staff expertise. Training and education are top priorities for GOHSEP, and these reports are instrumental in ensuring that both internal and external stakeholders receive proper guidance. The information and insights your staff provides are instrumental in this effort, helping guide our outreach to subrecipients and improve the accuracy and efficiency of our subsequent reviews. GOHSEP values this partnership and remains committed to working collaboratively to ensure program compliance and accountability.

GOHSEP remains fully committed to the responsible administration of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. We continue refining internal controls, expanding technical assistance, and reinforcing clear guidance to subrecipients to reduce recurring issues and improve program delivery. We value the continued partnership with your office and the guidance your team provides, which supports our ongoing improvement and strengthens Louisiana's ability to reduce disaster risk and protect its citizens.

Sincerely,

**Sandra D. Gaspard** Digitally signed by Sandra D. Gaspard  
Date: 2025.09.04 16:24:10 -05'00'

Sandra D. Gaspard  
Assistant Director  
Hazard Mitigation & Preparedness Grants Division

SG:bb