



State of Mississippi

TATE REEVES
Governor

March 18, 2021

David Bibo, Acting Associate Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472

Through: Regional Administrator Gracia B. Szczech
FEMA Region IV
3005 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

**SUBJECT: February 11-19, 2021 Winter Storm in Mississippi
Request for Extension of Time for Major Declaration Consideration**

Dear Mr. Bibo:

The State of Mississippi requests that FEMA grant an extension of time until April 16, 2021, for the State to submit a request for a Major Federal Declaration for damages that occurred during the Winter Storm on February 11-19, 2021, in the following counties: Adams, Amite, Attala, Choctaw, Claiborne, Copiah, Covington, Franklin, Grenada, Hinds, Jasper, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Kemper, Lafayette, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Leake, Lincoln, Marion, Neshoba, Newton, Noxubee, Pike, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Smith, Tallahatchie, Walthall, Warren, Winston, Yazoo, as well as on behalf of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

On March 3, 2021, the State requested FEMA provide eight (8) Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments teams for Public Assistance. The Joint Damage Assessments commenced on March 9 with local, state and federal members utilizing Virtual Assessments for counties with small damages/projects, and on-site inspections for larger projects. Due to the nature of the winter event, applicants remained in the response phase longer than usual creating a delay in the ability to meet the new rigors of the Damage Assessment criteria. Further contributing to the delay is the comfort level of doing Virtual Assessments without the benefit of face-to-face dialogue. Finally, the speed of Joint Damage Assessments was negatively impacted by other extreme weather events in the State that caused applicants to cancel Assessments. After consultation with the FEMA Damage Assessment Lead, FEMA should be able to complete Joint Damage Assessments no later than April 8, 2021.

Based on the information above, I request that FEMA grant an extension of time until April 16, 2021, for the completion of the Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments for all thirty-three (33) counties and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and for the State to submit its request for a Major Federal Declaration. If you have any questions concerning this request please contact Clayton French, Chief Recovery Officer at 601-933-6782 (office) or cfrench@mema.ms.gov.

Sincerely,

Tate Reeves
Governor