CAP-SSSE Tiered State Framework (TSF) Playbook

Version 4.1

November 2023

FEMA

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Version History

Version	Date	Edit
1.0	January 14, 2020	N/A
1.1	January 15, 2020	Submission evidence in characteristic III.D Participating Communities edited to include instructions for those wishing to submit analyses and outreach plans.
1.2	January 28, 2020	Changes to I.A. (Foundational Evidence and Proficient Benchmark); further clarification around Evidence in all characteristics; Adjustments to III.B. to clarify that higher standards will be included in the NOFO and should be incorporated into the SOW, even though it is not being assessed this year; and adjustments to the wording of the benchmarks and evidence in III.D. to further clarify the options for submitting evidence or accepting FEMA-provided data.
2.0	October 2020	Added new TSF Assessment Cycle Calendar to the introduction; New call-out boxes with examples of eligible activities to help states move up a tier for nearly all characteristics; Added consequence for submitting TSF Assessment late as part of I.D; Added more context or clarity to evidence section of characteristics IA, IB, ID, IE, IID, IIE, IVA, IVB, IVC, IVD, and IVE; Added more clarity to benchmarks of characteristics IIA, IIB, and IIC; Added more context around how the performance measure is calculated for characteristics IIIA, IIB, and IIIC; Added caveats and adjustments for requirements for new and returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants.
3.0	October 2021	Added exceptions language for FY20 PoP dates for characteristics I.C and I.D due to COVID-19. Added explanation about when performance measure determinations are made each year to category III. Performance Measures section.
4.0	October 2022	Noted connections to CFR requirements throughout. Added new timeline to the introduction; Added further clarification on below foundational status; Added more clarity to the benchmarks for characteristics IA, IB, ID, IIA, IIB, IIC, IIE, IIIA, IIIB, IIIC, IVB and IVF; Lowered benchmarks for IC, IE, and IIA; Raised or added benchmarks for characteristics IIF, IID, IIIC, and IVF and added characteristics IIC, IIH, III, and IVG. Added new red call-out boxes that summarize changes that will be scored in 2026.

Version	Date	Edit
4.1	September 2023	Reformatted text so that originally noted “upcoming changes” replaced previous language in each characteristic’s table; Clarified characteristics with changes taking effect across the board in 2026 but can be submitted for in the 2024 Off-Cycle; Added additional examples of evidence and clarifications of existing benchmarks.

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Introduction

The Community Assistance Program–State Support Services Element (CAP-SSSE) is a cooperative agreement that provides funding to State NFIP Coordinating Agencies (also referred to throughout this document as "the states") to support communities in implementing the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Through CAP-SSSE, states multiply the NFIP's ability to evaluate local compliance with the NFIP and provide technical assistance to support communities in adopting, administering, and enforcing effective flood loss reduction standards for land use and development. They also work to implement statewide actions that reduce the damage and costs of flooding.

The designation, duties, and responsibilities of State NFIP Coordinating Agencies set forth in Title 44 Part 60.25 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR Section 60.25) encourage states and territories to demonstrate a commitment to the minimum floodplain management criteria of the NFIP (as set forth in Sections 60.3, 60.4, and 60.5) by designating an agency of state government to be responsible for coordinating the aspects of NFIP floodplain management in that state. The annual CAP-SSSE Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) applies CAP-SSSE grant eligibility to these designated agencies. 44 CFR Section 60.25(b) further establishes that State NFIP Coordinating Agencies shall maintain the capability to perform a variety of duties of responsibilities including: enacting enabling legislation for communities to regulate development in the floodplain, promoting NFIP participation, providing technical assistance to support communities in implementing floodplain management regulations, and disseminating program information to other state and local agencies. As such, FEMA further evaluates CAP-SSSE grant eligibility, proposed work activities, and award amounts based on each State NFIP Coordinating Agency's capability, capacity, performance, and statewide coordination of the duties and responsibilities set forth in 44 CFR Section 60.25(b).

CAP-SSSE is a long-standing and effective partnership between FEMA and the states that recognizes the value of state-led community assistance in reducing flood losses and disaster suffering. Since the 1980s, FEMA has partnered with states through cooperative agreements to leverage their unique capabilities, relationships, and land use authorities to ensure that development is guided to reduce risk from flooding and to prevent increases in flooding potential. As such, the characteristics of effective state floodplain management programs has been a subject of considerable interest to FEMA, who has funded studies by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR)in addition to undertaking its own comprehensive evaluation in 2017. The findings from these evaluations, together with the duties of State NFIP Coordinating Agencies set forth in 44 CFR Section 60.25(b) and the definitions and performance requirements set forth in 2 CFR Section 200.1 and Section 200.202 for cooperative agreements, form the foundation of the CAP-SSSE Tiered State Framework (TSF). The TSF brings federal requirements and recognized state/territory best practices together in a set of characteristics and benchmarks that define what constitutes eligibility and exemplary performance for the CAP-SSSE program. The TSF Playbook should be used by states, alongside the

TSF Assessment Tool, to inform and validate evidence to be submitted in support of their desired TSF tier assignment. The TSF Playbook supplements information provided in the CAP-SSSE NOFO.

The Tiered State Framework (TSF)

In response to feedback from state partners highlighting a need for clarity on the goals and performance standards of CAP-SSSE, FEMA created the CAP-SSSE Tiered State Framework (TSF). Feedback from regular engagements every year since 2018 via surveys, workshops, and in-person meetings with State NFIP Coordinators, Regional Community Assistance Program (CAP) Coordinators, and FEMA Regional Floodplain Management and Insurance Leadership (Branch Chiefs) has helped to develop and improve the TSF. The TSF helps FEMA recognize, invest in, and incentivize state efforts to develop and maintain the capabilities necessary to carry out the duties of a State NFIP Coordinating Agency as defined in 44 CFR Section 60.25(b). The TSF and the aligned program funding methodology allow FEMA to:

- Increase transparency around state floodplain management activities and best practices;
- Enable a performance-based program that can fairly and consistently evaluate State NFIP Coordinating Agency strengths and areas of improvement; and
- Establish a level playing field for CAP-SSSE to make judgements about the resources that states may require to deliver upon the goals of the program.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the TSF establishes three tiers that summarizes the strength of the State NFIP Coordinating Agency's floodplain management program: Foundational, Proficient, and Advanced.

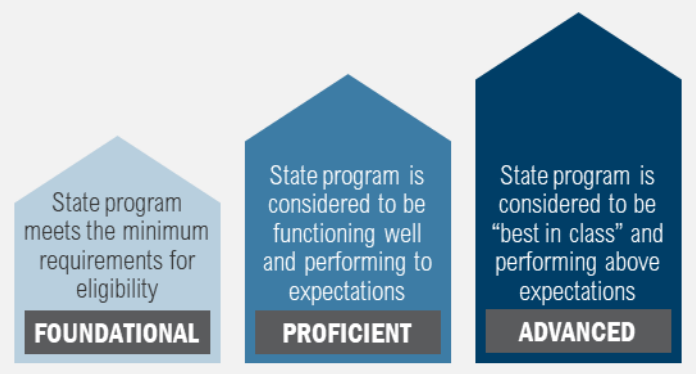


Figure 1: CAP-SSSE State Tiers

A state's tier is based on a two-step assessment of the state's floodplain management program against a series of benchmarks at least every three years. A state's tier assignment influences their annual statement of work (SOW) and their funding. Significant strengths in a state's TSF assessment enable special access to incentives such as additional funding, increased autonomy over workplans and strategies, and funding eligibility of certain non-traditional projects. Conversely, gaps or

deficiencies in a state's TSF assessment, coupled with their state-specific aspirations and goals, should help determine the types of activities the state should perform, their performance metrics, training recommendations, and subsequent funding levels to address those gaps.

FEMA uses characteristics and benchmarks across four categories to assess and assign states to a tier (see Figure 2. and Appendix A).

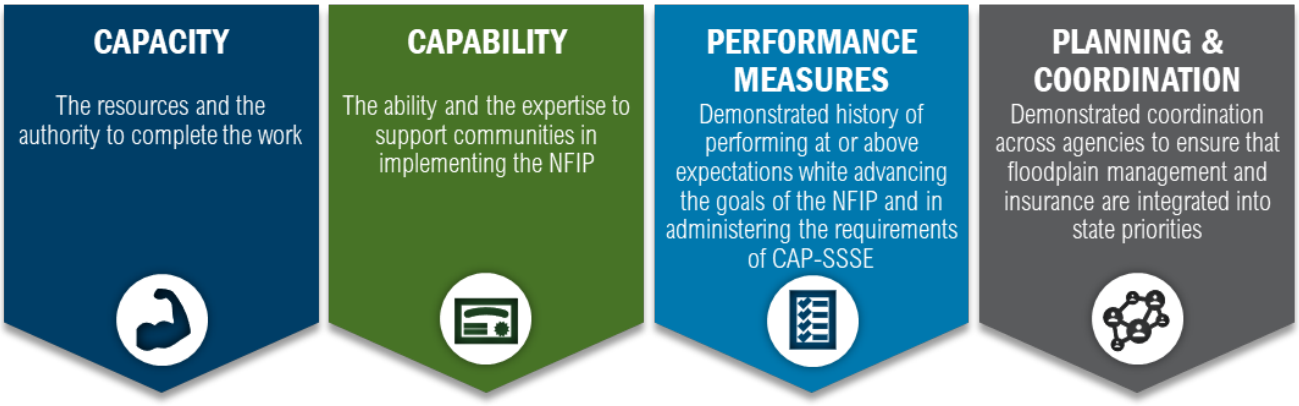


Figure 2: Four Categories of the Tiered State Framework

Each TSF characteristic and benchmark represents a performance outcome which allows for flexibility in how the outcome is achieved by the states. States must provide evidence to demonstrate that they meet the benchmarks in the TSF. In this way, the TSF assessment provides a quantifiable and equitable approach to ensure that each state receiving CAP-SSSE funding possesses the necessary capacity and expertise, a history of satisfactory performance, and adequate plans, strategies, and partnerships to accomplish the work in the most efficient and effective manner.

The Tiered State Framework Assessment and Assignment Process

FEMA requires a full TSF assessment from each state upon first applying for the CAP-SSSE grant and on an established three-year cycle thereafter. The first TSF assessment for all states was conducted in 2020. Subsequent required assessments will be conducted every three years thereafter. States may also request an off-cycle TSF assessment if they desire. This voluntary assessment might be beneficial for a state, for example, if they believe they meet the benchmarks for the next tier and would like to be assigned to that tier earlier than the next required assessment cycle. Off-cycle TSF assessments can be partial, characteristic-specific assessments. States do not need to submit a full assessment during off-cycle years.

As Figure 3 shows, the TSF assessment cycle begins in November of each third year and is integrated into the grant administrative process.

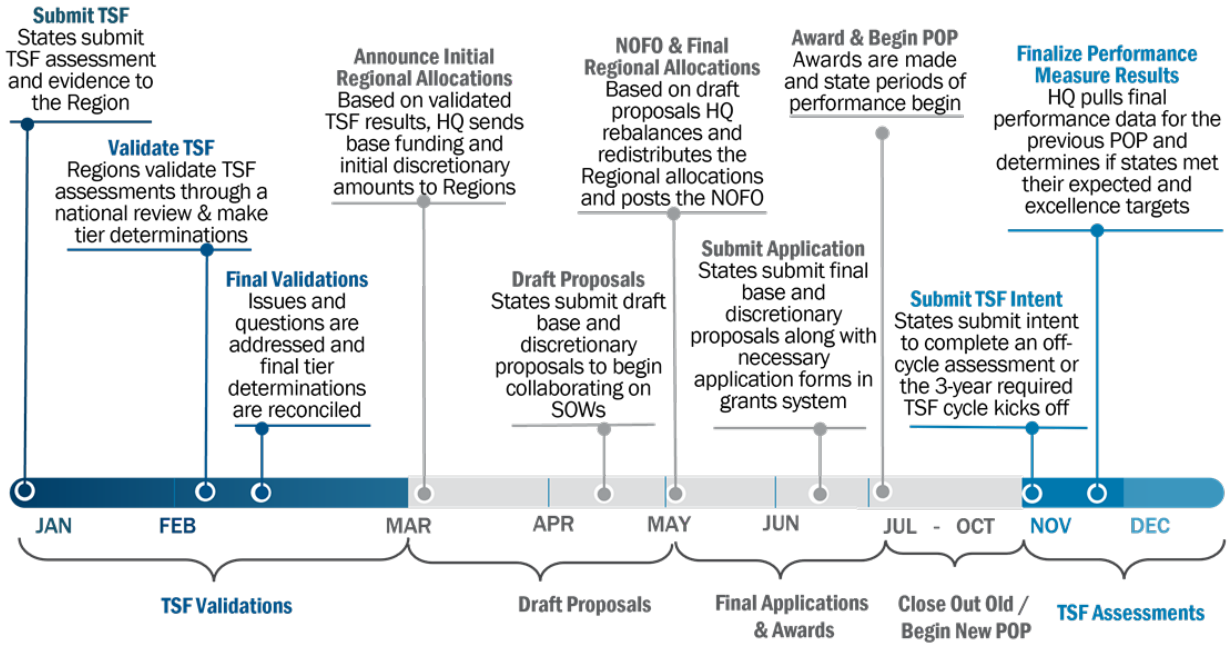


Figure 3: Annual CAP-SSSE Administrative Timeline and Tiered State Framework Milestones

TSF assessments begin with a state self-assessment submitted at the beginning of the year. FEMA then validates the assessment through a comprehensive national review process to ensure the reliability of each state's final TSF tier assignment. This is done through an in-person meeting, in which all of the FEMA Regional CAP Coordinators convene to discuss the evidence received by the states and territories in that region. and the FEMA Regional CAP Coordinators then make tier determinations to ensure national consistency in scoring.

After the Regional CAP Coordinator sends the validated TSF Assessment Tool back to the state in early February, the state has five business days to respond with questions and submit additional evidence to the Region if they feel FEMA's final tier determination is inconsistent with the state's original assessment. The Region will then respond with the final determination within an additional five business days; no additional submission of evidence may be submitted by the state after this.

FEMA and the state use TSF assessments to inform SOW development and award considerations for the upcoming period of performance (PoP), integrating appropriate requirements and incentives driven by the state's tier assignment. Validated TSF assessments and final tier assignments are submitted in the grants system of record as an addendum to the state's SOW with each application.

States utilize the TSF Assessment Tool to perform self-assessments. The TSF Assessment Tool is an interactive Microsoft Excel-based form where a state selects the benchmarks that it meets and provides descriptive details about the evidence submitted for each. Based on the state's benchmark selections, the tool calculates a score that automatically assigns the state to a corresponding tier. Foundational benchmarks receive one point, Proficient benchmarks receive two points, and Advanced benchmarks receive three points. No state will perfectly align to every benchmark in any

one tier, thus score ranges (see Figure 4) determine a state's tier assignment. The score ranges require a state to achieve most, but not all, of the benchmarks in the tier before they are assigned to that tier. The score ranges included here are for the 2023 assessment and consider only those 20 characteristics that will be scored (i.e., does not include new characteristics or exempted characteristics States are encouraged to pursue points for new characteristics that will be scored in future mandatory cycles during off-cycle years if they can provide evidence of achieving the benchmarks.

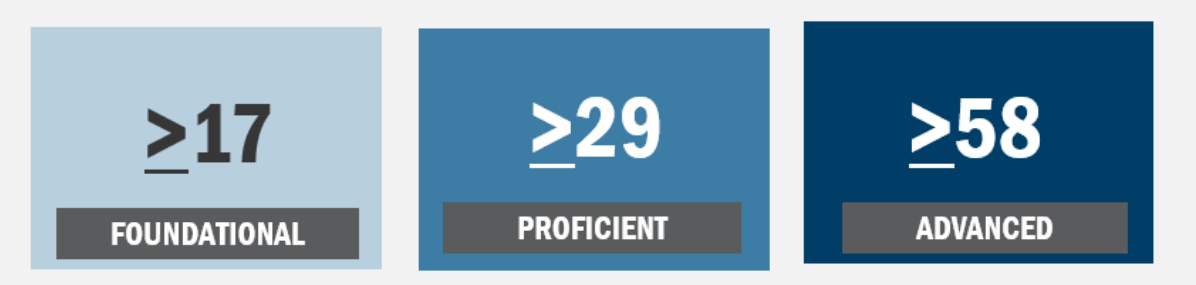


Figure 4: Tiered State Framework Score Ranges for the 2023 Assessment

It is critical to note that if a state scores below the Foundational benchmark in any one single characteristic, and their overall point score places them in at least the Foundational tier, they will be assessed as "Foundational." If a state scores below the Foundational benchmark in two or more characteristics, they will be assessed as "Below Foundational" regardless of their overall point score. These states will not be eligible for incentive funding at the next award even if their overall point score is Proficient or Advanced. Any state that has scored below the Foundational benchmarks in any characteristics is subject to more intervention by FEMA, up to and including more prescriptive requirements for how their federal funding is used and requirements for a formal corrective action plan to address TSF deficiencies expediently. Any state that is not able to demonstrate Foundational performance (i.e., a total score of at least 17), will not be eligible for the CAP-SSSE grant.

Continual Improvement of the Tiered State Framework

In partnership with the State NFIP Coordinating Agencies, FEMA reviews and, as needed, revises the TSF at each three-year required cycle. The purpose of this review process is to continue to incentivize state capability and capacity building, offer better guidance and examples, reduce any complexity or confusion, and align the framework with any emerging priorities or best practices to keep pace with the ever-evolving emergency management discipline. As Figure 5 illustrates, each TSF assessment looks back at the previous three completed PoPs.

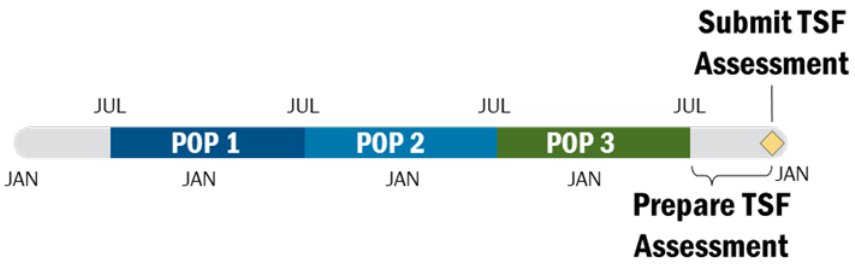


Figure 5: The Three-Year Required Tiered State Framework Assessment Cycle

Clarifications to benchmarks or evidence requirements, or additional assessment guidance, will be implemented and scored in the current cycle and apply to the previous three years. In some instances, lowered benchmarks may also be implemented into the TSF and scored in the current year. Significant changes to the TSF that raise the expectations or score thresholds for states, such as the addition of new benchmarks or characteristics or raising an existing benchmark, will be implemented and scored in the next requirement assessment and apply to the next three years. Therefore, states should begin implementing the activities now to be prepared for scoring in the next assessment.

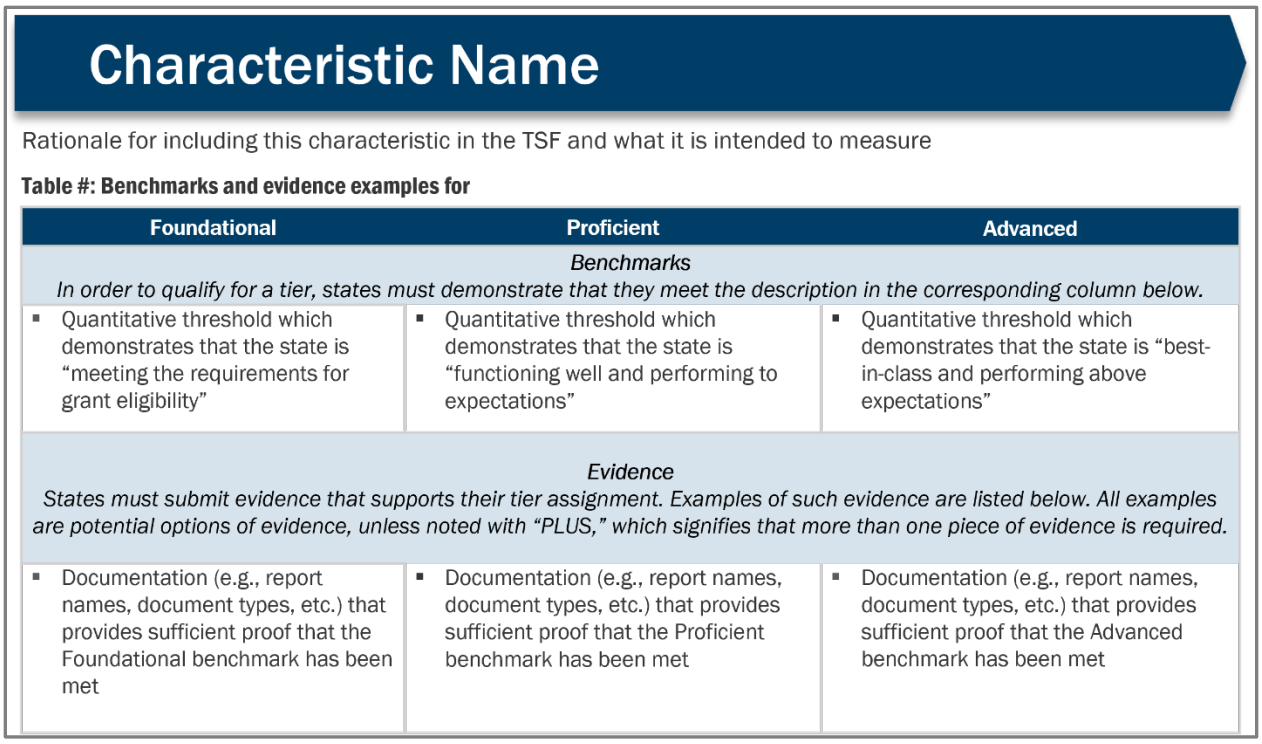
Using this Tiered State Framework Playbook

This TSF Playbook should be used in conjunction with the TSF Assessment Tool. As states perform their TSF self-assessments in the TSF Assessment Tool, they should use the categories and characteristics in this Playbook to validate benchmarks and determine what evidence to submit in support of their desired tier assignment. All applicants should use the playbook, but **New and Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants should refer to the appendix for additional guidance**.

CAP-SSSE Grantee Types

- **Existing Grantees**: grantees that have received the CAP-SSSE grant continuously for the last three or more years.
- **Returning Applicants**: an applicant that was previously a CAP-SSSE grantee but did not apply for the grant within the last year.
- **New Applicants**: an applicant that has never been a recipient of the CAP-SSSE grant.

The playbook has four chapters that align to the four TSF categories. As illustrated in Figure 6, each category chapter provides a detailed overview of each of the characteristics within that category, including the intention behind its inclusion in the TSF, the benchmarks that must be met for each tier, and the type of evidence required to demonstrate that those benchmarks have, in fact, been met. Evidence of submission and SOW development guidance is also included.



Characteristic Name

Rationale for including this characteristic in the TSF and what it is intended to measure

Table #: Benchmarks and evidence examples for

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks *In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.*		
▪ Quantitative threshold which demonstrates that the state is "meeting the requirements for grant eligibility"	▪ Quantitative threshold which demonstrates that the state is "functioning well and performing to expectations"	▪ Quantitative threshold which demonstrates that the state is "best-in-class and performing above expectations"
Evidence *States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required.*		
▪ Documentation (e.g., report names, document types, etc.) that provides sufficient proof that the Foundational benchmark has been met	▪ Documentation (e.g., report names, document types, etc.) that provides sufficient proof that the Proficient benchmark has been met	▪ Documentation (e.g., report names, document types, etc.) that provides sufficient proof that the Advanced benchmark has been met

Figure 6: Tiered State Framework Playbook Benchmark and Evidence Structure for Each Characteristic

Following the benchmarks and evidence, there are examples of eligible activities for states who wish to improve their score in each characteristic marked by the call-out box below.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[1] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

These ideas take the form of a list of CAP-SSSE eligible activities that the state and FEMA Region can consider including in the state's SOW for the current PoP (via formal amendment) or the next PoP.

Submission Instructions

TSF Assessments are due to the FEMA Regional CAP Coordinator on the last business day of the first week of January every year. States must email their completed TSF assessment tools to the Region along with all supporting evidence using the file name convention below. Consistent file naming

[1] Subject to Regional approval.

makes for an efficient review process and ensures all evidence is assessed against the appropriate characteristic. It's important to note that there are several characteristics that FEMA provides the evidence for and does not require separate evidence submissions from states.

For certain characteristics, special submission instructions are provided within the TSF Playbook. If no special submission instructions are provided, defer to these default instructions.

XX_Category_Characteristic Letter_Benchmark_title

(where **XX** is your state's abbreviation)

(where **title** is the name of the document being submitted, as determined by you)

Example: MD_Capability_A_Foundational_Resume

I. Capacity

The characteristics in this category demonstrate that states have the capacity to ensure that NFIP requirements are met and maintained and that they manage the CAP-SSSE grant accordingly.

The Capacity category encompasses five characteristics:

A. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for Local Communities

B. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for State-Owned Properties

C. Financial Grant Management

D. Administrative Grant Management

E. Ability to Overmatch

The following subsections discuss each characteristic in detail.

I.A. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for Local Communities

This characteristic intends to measure how a state ensures that participating communities adopt and enforce minimum NFIP requirements. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(1) which sets forth state duties related to land use authorities.

Table 1: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic I.A State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for Local Communities.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state has enacted legislation enabling communities to regulate development within flood-prone areas that meet minimum NFIP and state standards	▪ The state meets the Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ The state has policies and procedures in place that define the point at which a community moves from the "follow-up" phase to the "enforcement" phase of compliance and the case is referred to FEMA for enforcement action	▪ The state meets the Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ The state has written laws or policies and procedures in place that provide for state-led enforcement actions (e.g., penalties or restrictions that are within the state's authority, grants withholding actions, etc.) prior to referring compliance cases to FEMA for suspension or probation ▪ The state has an executive order (EO)/law/statute reflecting higher standards (i.e., standards and ordinances that exceed NFIP minimum requirements regarding land use and development) and applicable enforcement authority
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. Examples of such evidence are listed below. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement once over the course of the three PoPs. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
One of the following: ▪ Official citation of the law, executive order, or other legal action meeting at least minimum NFIP standards and a PDF or link to it ▪ State model ordinance that meets the NFIP minimum standards and has an enforcement component or enforcement language	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** one or more of the following: ▪ A standard operating procedure (SOP) for identifying and mitigating community NFIP violations, with milestones/ thresholds for state follow-up and details for when and how enforcement referrals are handed off to FEMA ▪ Evidence in writing of CAV/CAC records or correspondence sent to FEMA after the state follow-up period with a community (via email or other method) ▪ Letter templates advising a community of violation, corrective action, and timelines for action by state or by FEMA	▪ Foundational and Proficient evidence ▪ Official citation of the law, executive order, or other legal action reflecting higher standards (i.e., standards and ordinances that exceed NFIP minimum requirements) and enforcement authority **AND** ▪ PDF or link to it **PLUS** one or more of the following: ▪ Evidence that state-led enforcement actions have occurred in the last 3 years (e.g., penalties or restrictions that are within the state's authority, grants withholding actions, etc.) ▪ An SOP for identifying and mitigating community NFIP and/or state higher standards violations with milestones/ thresholds for follow-up and enforcement by the state ▪ Letter templates for state-initiated compliance action, advising a community of violation(s) and future enforcement action(s) by the state

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Regular coordination with the state legislature to establish a “seat at the table” for providing technical floodplain management/NFIP input and influencing legislative priorities.
- Development and implementation of a standard operating procedure (SOP) for (1) Identifying potential violations or program deficiencies and (2) Taking enforcement action and referring to FEMA.
- Development and implementation of template enforcement products (e.g., letters, memos, etc.).
- Development and implementation of communications plans, templates, and/or key messaging that help communities and other state agencies understand their floodplain management responsibilities.
- Coordination with legal specialists/authorities within the state to establish enforcement procedures.
- Conducting reviews of state department of transportation (DOT) projects for floodplain management impacts.

I.B. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for State-Owned Properties

This characteristic intends to measure how a state enforces NFIP requirements for all state-owned (and managed, as applicable) properties. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(9), and 44 CFR Section 60.12 which set forth state duties for coordinating floodplain management across state agencies and complying with the floodplain management criteria set forth in 44 CFR Sections 60.3, 60.4, and 60.5.

Table 2: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic I.B. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for State-Owned Properties.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state has enacted legislation requiring at least NFIP minimums for state-owned or -managed development activities, including in non-participating communities ▪ We recognize there are three ways to demonstrate state compliance with the NFIP. 44 CFR Section 60.12(a) outlines that states shall either (1) comply with the floodplain management requirements of all local communities participating in the program in which state-owned properties are located ("community-administered"); or (2) establish and enforce floodplain management regulations which, at a minimum, satisfy the criteria set forth in Section 60.3, 60.4, and 60.5 ("state-administered"). (3) States that are self-insured must meet the requirements defined in Section 75.	▪ The state meets the Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ The state has the authority and written policies and procedures in place to monitor permitting and enforce compliance of state-owned or managed development actions ▪ The state has a process for how permits for state-owned or -managed development in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) are issued, including a central agency or point of contact for coordination within the state	▪ The state meets the Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ The state has a statewide higher standard for state-owned or managed development and a record of mitigating non-compliant state-owned or managed structures

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. Examples of such evidence are listed below. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement once over the course of the three PoPs. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required. In 2024, FEMA will utilize evidence from the State Assessment effort, which states may supplement if they desire.		
No submission is required in 2024 ▪ This data will come from the State Assessment Tracker (which is filled out by the Regions) and will thus be provided by FEMA **OR** ▪ Official citation of the law, executive order, or other legal action requiring state agencies, institutions, and properties to meet at least minimum NFIP standards **AND** ▪ A PDF or link to it	No submission is required in 2024 ▪ This data will come from the State Assessment Tracker (which is filled out by the Regions) and will thus be provided by FEMA **OR** ▪ Foundational Evidence **PLUS one or more of the following:** ▪ A standard operating procedure (SOP) for identifying and mitigating community NFIP violations, with milestones/ thresholds for state follow-up and details for when and how enforcement referrals are handed off to FEMA ▪ State Assessment Data Call records or other records of alerting FEMA Regional office about violations connected to state activities	▪ Official citation of the law, executive order, or other legal action reflecting higher standards (i.e., standards and ordinances that exceed NFIP minimum requirements) and enforcement authority **AND** ▪ A PDF or link to it **PLUS one or more of the following:** ▪ Evidence that state-led enforcement actions have occurred in the last three years (e.g., penalties or restrictions that are within the state's authority, grants withholding actions, etc.) ▪ An SOP for identifying and mitigating community NFIP and/or state higher standards violations with milestones/ thresholds for follow-up and enforcement by the state

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[2] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Regular coordination with the state legislature to establish a "seat at the table" for providing technical floodplain management/NFIP input and influencing legislative priorities.
- Development and implementation of a standard operating procedure (SOP) for (1) identifying potential violations or program deficiencies and (2) taking enforcement action and/or referring to FEMA.
- Development and implementation of template enforcement products (e.g., letters, memos, etc.).
- Development and implementation of communications plans, templates, and/or key messaging that help state agencies understand their floodplain management responsibilities.
- Coordination with legal specialists/authorities within the state to establish enforcement procedures.
- Conducting reviews of state DOT projects for floodplain management impacts.

[2] Subject to Regional approval.

I.C. Financial Grant Management

This characteristic intends to measure that the state has the capacity to meet the financial requirements of the CAP grant. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 2 CFR Section 200.206(i) financial stability and (iii) history of performance, which all set forth requirements related to managing the finances of a grant. Percentages listed are based on actual trends from FEMA's systems of record (Community Information System, ND Grants, Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS)).

Table 3: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic I.C. Financial Grant Management.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state has deobligated 10% or less of its cumulative funding over the past three years[a] (i.e., the total deobligated funds divided by the total awards over the past three years does not exceed 10%)[b]; PoP extensions over the past three years do not exceed twelve months in any one year[b]	▪ The state has deobligated 4% or less of its cumulative funding over the past three years[a] (i.e., the total deobligated funds divided by the total awards over the past three years does not exceed 4%)[b]; PoP extensions over the past three years do not exceed nine months in any one year[b]	▪ The state has deobligated no more than 2% of its cumulative funding over the past three years[a]; PoP extensions over the past three years[b] do not exceed a cumulative total of six months.
Evidence FEMA will pull supporting evidence from government databases and share it with the state for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
Payment and Reporting System (PARS) Report from ND Grants	PARS Report from ND Grants	PARS Report from ND Grants
Special Submission Instructions The Regional CAP Coordinator will provide this data to states via the IFMIS reports that denote obligations and deobligations.		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
No submission is required		
IFMIS, Community Information System (CIS), PARS, and ND Grants are all official FEMA systems of record up to fiscal year (FY) 2022. For FY22 and beyond, FEMA GO, CIS, (and PARS/IFMIS) are the systems of record. Though it is FEMA's intention to use only the records in these systems to demonstrate performance at these benchmarks, we do realize that data entry errors or other reporting limitations could be present. If you find an error in your FEMA-provided data, you may submit evidence to support this claim: ▪ Email evidence to support its position to the Regional CAP Coordinator ▪ Use the subject line: I.C: Financial Grant Management Discrepancy ▪ List the information provided by FEMA, the tier the state believes it should be, and the supporting evidence		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE applicants will not have a CAP-SSSE grant financial management history and will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last two years will be assessed using those grants for their tier determination.

[b] Exceptions for deobligation and extension benchmarks will be granted for the July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 PoP, the July 1, 2020 – June 30 2021 PoP, and the July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 PoP due to planning uncertainty with regard to COVID-19. These exceptions are reflected in the TSF score ranges on page iv and in the TSF Assessment Tool.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[3] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of process documentation and point of contact (POC) information for key process steps, review/decision points, and handoffs for how grant funds are received, drawn down, documented, and closed out.
- Regular coordination with the grants/finance office/division of the state.
- Participation in Grants Management training/courses.

[3] Subject to Regional approval.

I.D. Administrative Grant Management

This characteristic intends to measure that the state can meet the administrative requirements of the grant, primarily related to timely and accurate applications and reporting. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 2 CFR Section 200.329, which sets forth expectations for monitoring and reporting program performance.

Table 4: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic I.D. Administrative Grant Management.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state submits NOFO application, quarterly performance reports, a final ND grants application, a TSF Assessment (as applicable) and satisfies other grant award administrative requirements (as needed) by deadlines with no more than three late submissions	▪ The state submits a NOFO application, quarterly performance reports, a final ND grants application, a TSF Assessment (as applicable) and satisfies other grant award administrative requirements (as needed) by deadlines with no more than one late submission	▪ The state submits a NOFO application, quarterly performance reports, a final ND grants application, a TSF Assessment (as applicable) and satisfies other grant award administrative requirements (as needed) by deadlines
Evidence – See Appendix D for due dates The Regional CAP Coordinator will pull supporting evidence from ND Grants and other government databases and share it with the state for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
▪ All quarterly report submission dates over the last three years[a] **PLUS** ▪ Grant application submission date **PLUS** ▪ TSF assessment submission dates (as applicable) over the last three years[a]	▪ All quarterly report submission dates over the last three years[a] **PLUS** ▪ Grant application submission date **PLUS** ▪ TSF assessment submission dates (as applicable) over the last three years[a]	▪ All quarterly report submission dates over the last three years[a] **PLUS** ▪ Grant application submission date **PLUS** ▪ TSF assessment submission dates (as applicable) over the last three years[a]

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Special Submission Instructions The Regional CAP Coordinators will provide this data to the states via records from ND Grants. States also have access to this information and may verify it.		
No submission is required IFMIS, CIS, PARS, and ND Grants are all official FEMA systems of record and are the only evidence that will be accepted.		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants will not have an administrative grant history. They must submit their TSF Assessment on-time to enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory assessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants to determine their tier for this characteristic.

I.E. Ability to Overmatch

This characteristic intends to measure that the state funds additional floodplain management program capacity outside of CAP-SSSE funded activities and staff. In this context, in-kind matches refer to state-funded labor hours, travel costs, or other direct costs that are incurred in direct support of eligible CAP-SSSE activities and costs. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 2 CFR Section 200.306 which allows for cost matching as a method for determining award eligibility. Furthermore, this characteristic represents best practices proposed by Principles 1 and 9 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attribute effectiveness to stable and adequate state resources.

Table 5: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic I.E. Ability to Overmatch.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The three-year average cost match is equal to 25% as required by the grant	▪ The three-year average cost match is greater than 25%[a]	▪ The three-year average cost match is greater than 40%[b]
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. *PLEASE NOTE that while there is no restriction on the types of costs allowed for the non-federal cost match requirement, in-kind contributions must specifically adhere to the "Funding Restrictions" and "Eligible Activities" sections of the CAP-SSSE NOFO.*		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
This data will come from ND Grants and be provided by FEMA If a state can demonstrate a cost match above the benchmark (outside of what is tracked in ND Grants), they may provide supplemental financial documentation (e.g., time sheets, payroll reports, closeout documentation, quarterly reports) as evidence that clearly demonstrates the following details: ▪ Resource (e. g., employee name/number, contract) ▪ Hours spent on floodplain management activities in the last three years, (including a description of those activities) ▪ Hourly pay rate, and ▪ Calculation of the total dollar amount relative to their federal CAP award (i.e., the percent match) Part of this data will come from ND Grants and be provided by FEMA		
Special Submission Instructions		
No submission is required		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants will not have a cost match history, so the current year's anticipated cost match will be considered for assessing this characteristic and will be reconfirmed at the time of awarding the grant. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants to determine their tier for this characteristic.

[b] The Advanced benchmark is reduced from 50% state match to 40% state match for the period of July 2022 to June 2025, to offset the impact of increased CAP-SSSE funding.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[4] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a standardized manner for tracking and reporting all overmatch/in-kind contributions.

[4] Subject to Regional approval.

II. Capability

The characteristics in this category demonstrate that states enhance the professional expertise of their staff and can adequately educate communities on floodplain management topics.

The Capability category encompasses nine characteristics:

A. Investment in Professional Development

B. Communication with Communities on NFIP Topics

C. Basic Floodplain Management Training Coverage (Mandatory in 2026)

D. Ability to Deliver a Variety of Training

E. Process for Reviewing and Improving Model Floodplain Management Regulations

F. Substantial Damage Program

G. Percent of Participating Communities

H. Addressing Equity in Floodplain Management (Mandatory in 2026)

I. Improving Resilience to Climate change and Future Conditions (Mandatory in 2026)

The following subsections discuss each characteristic in detail.

II.A. Investment in Professional Development

This characteristic intends to measure that the NFIP State Coordinator and floodplain management program staff are investing in continual capability building, learning, and upskilling. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(12) and Principle 9 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs, which include details and requirements around training participating, capability building, and professional growth.

Table 6: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.A. Investment in Professional Development.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The designated State NFIP Coordinator has education/ experience in the floodplain management profession	▪ The state must show 8 verifiable hours of floodplain management-related training (i.e., floodplain management and other related trainings) per three-year cycle, for every 1 full-time equivalent (FTE). To calculate the requirement, the state should consider the total personnel hours spent performing activities that are funded by CAP (federal share plus state match)[a]	▪ For every FTE covered by the CAP grant (including new hires), the state can show the same number of CFMs and/or advanced professional certifications in sciences, engineering, planning, building construction, architecture, program management, or related discipline **OR** ▪ 7 or more years of experience in floodplain management plus a bachelor's degree (instead of certification) **AND** ▪ Eight hours of continuing education per FTE per year
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS", which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
One of the following: ▪ Degree/certification in land, water, or environmental management; building sciences; public works; geography; hydrology; or engineering related field (submit photocopy of degree, certification, or transcript) ▪ Proof of at least two years of experience in any field listed above ▪ Resume or proof of employment with job description	One of the following: ▪ Documentation of continuing education units (CEUs)/continuing education courses (CECs) from a relevant certification organization, totaling 8 for each FTE covered by the CAP grant for the most recent assessment cycle ▪ Flyers or materials stating continuing education credit (CEC)/continuing education unit (CEU) information for trainings attended or led, totaling 8 for each FTE covered by the CAP grant ▪ Hours spent being a mentor or mentee in a formal mentoring program (e.g., ASFPM mentoring program or CAP Knowledge Leader [b]) totaling 8 for each FTE covered by the CAP grant ▪ A combination of the above totaling 8 for each FTE covered by the CAP grant	▪ Proficient evidence totaling 8 hours for each FTE covered by the CAP grant per year **PLUS** ▪ Documentation of one certification from a certification organization OR advanced degree paperwork (submit photocopy of degree, certification, or transcript) for each FTE funded by the CAP grant **OR** ▪ Resume or proof of employment with job description for each FTE funded by the CAP grant

NOTES:

[a] An FTE equals 1912 hours per year worked by permanent full or part-time state staff. Every 5,736 hours (1912 X 3) spent on activities covered by the grant requires 8 hours of training to occur during the three-year period. Any combination of staff can contribute to the 8 verifiable hours of training per FTE. This includes one individual taking all hours of training. This characteristic does not require that training be split evenly across staff or across years. Refer to the personnel list in the State Activity Planning and Pricing Tool to verify hours.

[b] Keep emails/screenshots/detailed notes to document an active role as a CAP Knowledge Leader.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[5] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Participation in trainings that offer CECs.
- Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam preparation and exam costs.
- Development of an internal training plan and staff professional development tracker.
- Development of a list of preferred trainings based on job profile that the state program will support for professional development.
- Participation in mentoring relationships/programs with other land use professionals.

[5] Subject to Regional approval.

II.B. Communication with Communities on NFIP Topics

This characteristic intends to measure how a state broadly pushes information to communicate about floodplain management, mitigation, and flood insurance and remains connected with all NFIP participating communities within the state on a frequent basis. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3), 60.25(b)(4), and 60.25(b)(5) which set forth state duties for disseminating flood risk and floodplain management information and guidance to community officials.

Table 7: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.B. Communication with Communities on NFIP Topics.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency communicates broadly with participating communities at least once each year	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency communicates with all participating communities in the state on at least a quarterly (four times per year) basis each year	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has a strategic communications plan and can provide documentation that the plan is implemented
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. Examples of such evidence are listed below. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement in each of the three PoPs. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with “PLUS”, which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
▪ If a state does not qualify for Proficient or Advanced, FEMA will pull supporting evidence from FEMA records and previously submitted quarterly reports to support the Foundational tier for this characteristic	▪ Evidence of four or more state-designed and deployed push communications (e.g., newsletters, email announcements, etc.) occurring at least once per quarter with all participating communities in the state. FEMA can pull data from CIS to support the proficient benchmark unless the state would like to submit their own evidence.	▪ Proficient evidence **PLUS** ▪ State's written communications plan (developed or updated within at least the last three years), inclusive of at least the target audience, objectives, and tactics. **PLUS** ▪ Evidence of implementing activities listed in the Plan, including the implementation schedule and/or communications products such as, brochures, a website, newsletters, outreach calendar, etc.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[6] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development and dissemination of a recurring (e.g., quarterly) newsletter that reaches all communities.
- Creation of NFIP-related content that is integrated (documentation required into other recurring communications that are pushed out by the state (within or outside of the NFIP Coordinator's office).
- Development of a communications plan/strategy, including a detailed implementation plan.
- Delivery of "CAC-light" or other type of phone survey in every community.
- Development and execution of public art or signage projects.
- Development and dissemination of virtual reality or application-based outreach.
- Development and execution of a social media strategy/campaign (e.g., utilizing listserv)

[6] Subject to Regional approval.

II.C. Basic Floodplain Management Training Coverage (New)

This characteristic intends to measure that the state has the capability and expertise to deliver basic floodplain management training to communities on a regular cycle. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3), 60.25(b)(4), and 60.25(b)(12) which set forth state duties and expectations for providing guidance to communities. Furthermore, this characteristic represents best practices proposed by Principle 8 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attribute effectiveness to how states provide training and technical assistance to communities. **This characteristic will be mandatory in 2026 and voluntary for states who can meet the benchmark in the 2024 Off-Cycle.**

Table 8: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.C. Basic Floodplain Management Training Coverage.

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column listed below:		
▪ At least 10% of the communities in the state have received a basic floodplain management training[a] (e.g., E/L273, abridged 273, floodplain management "101", etc.) from the state[b] at some point in the last five periods of performance	▪ At least 30% of the communities in the state have received a basic floodplain management training (e.g., E/L273, abridged 273, floodplain management "101", etc.) from the state at some point in the last five periods of performance	▪ At least 65% of the communities in the state have received a basic floodplain management training (e.g., E/L273, abridged 273, floodplain management "101", etc.) from the state at some point in the last five periods of performance
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the previous five PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS", which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to "Floodplain Management" workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles	One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to "Floodplain Management" workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles	One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to "Floodplain Management" workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles

NOTES:

[a] Basic floodplain management trainings must include at least overviews of the following elements: using flood hazard maps, floodplain management regulations, substantial improvement and substantial damage, administering and enforcing the local floodplain management ordinance, permitting, and basic flood insurance rating concepts. *One-on-one conversations/trainings with a community also satisfy this requirement (enter it as a workshop with one community in CIS instead of a GTA),*

[b] Training taught by others is allowable as long as it is directed, reviewed, and/or co-instructed by the NFIP Coordinating Office. Note, training led by FEMA or FEMA contractors, including Community Engagement and Risk Communication (CERC) and Production and Technical Services (PTS), is not eligible, because the characteristic is specifically measuring the State NFIP Coordinating Agency's capability and expertise. Training conducted under the Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) Grant is also not eligible.

New CAP-SSSE grant applicants will not have a history of providing basic training, so the training plan for the current year will be the basis of the assessment with a mandatory reassessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants, including the training plan for the current year, to determine their tier for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[7] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a training plan.

[7] Subject to Regional approval.

II.D. Ability to Deliver a Variety of Training

This characteristic intends to measure that the state has the capability and expertise to deliver a variety of trainings covering a range of topics (beyond basic training which is the focus of characteristic II.C). Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3), 60.25(b)(4), and 60.25(b)(12) which set forth state duties and expectations for providing guidance to communities. Furthermore, this characteristic represents best practices proposed by Principle 8 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attribute effectiveness to how states provide training and technical assistance to communities.

Table 9: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.D. Ability to Deliver a Variety of Training

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column listed below: *Note: Multiple, shorter classes on the same topic can be used to reach the 6 hour topic minimum*		
▪ The state coordinator's office[a] initiates, directs, and pays for training topics covering at least 6 training hours[b] for two topics[c] in the three-year cycle[d]	▪ The state coordinator's office[a] initiates, directs, and pays for training covering at least three different NFIP topics (6 hours each) in the three-year cycle	▪ The state coordinator's office[a] initiates, directs, and pays for training covering at least five different NFIP topics (6 hours each) in the three-year cycle
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below.		
One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles	One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles	One of the following: ▪ Training plan which corresponds to workshop entries in CIS ▪ Records of training classes held, including attendee sign-in sheets (or similar) with dates and topic titles

NOTES:

[a] Training taught by others is allowable as long as it is directed, reviewed, and/or co-instructed by the NFIP Coordinating Office. Note, training led by FEMA or FEMA contractors, including CERC and PTS, is not included. Training conducted under the CTP Grant is also not eligible.

[b] To get credit for a training topic, the state must demonstrate that it has conducted training for six hours on that topic. It may demonstrate that those six hours have been achieved through a combination of methods including 1-hour webinars devoted to the topic, portions of lengthier agendas devoted to that topic, etc. (such as mapping, insurance, Community Rating System (CRS), etc.).

[c] Each training topic is defined as six hours on a specialized floodplain management topic (e.g., substantial damage, higher standards, CRS, no-rise analyses, etc.) or other related topic (e.g., mapping, insurance, etc.)

[d] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants will not have a history for training variety, so the training plan for the current year will be the basis of the assessment with a mandatory reassessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants, including the training plan for the current year, to determine their tier for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[8] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a training plan.
- Development and delivery of a new training topic.
- Development of a training assessment and update cycle to ensure training topics and content are up to date and relevant to state/community needs.
- Creation of an assessment plan that identifies which trainings are effective in the state, through the development and deployment of pre- and post-training surveys/knowledge checks.

[8] Subject to Regional approval.

II.E. Process for Reviewing and Improving Model Floodplain Management Regulations

This characteristic intends to measure that the state has a process in place to ensure that, through the use of appropriately updated and tailorable model ordinances, it is satisfying the requirement from 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(3) to guide and assist county and municipal public bodies and agencies in developing, implementing, and maintaining local floodplain management regulations.

Table 10: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.E. Process for Reviewing and Improving Model Floodplain Management Regulations

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency provides a model ordinance that meets at least minimum NFIP standards	▪ The state meets the Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ The state maintains and updates one or more model ordinances which take into account any changes in the state or local regulatory environment **AND** ▪ The state performs model ordinance review and updates (if needed) at least every five years	▪ The state meets Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ The state maintains and updates a collection (e.g., digital/electronic collection – files, folders, or more interactive tools that can be given to communities via email or the internet to help them construct their ordinance) of model ordinances which take into account any changes in the state or local regulatory environment. This collection of model ordinances must specifically include model ordinances with higher standards **AND** ▪ The state performs model ordinance review and updates (if needed) at least every three years

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. Examples of such evidence are listed below. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS", which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		
▪ A state model ordinance that meets NFIP minimums, with date of last update and instructions to communities included in document	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ Process documentation/SOP that shows a five-year update cycle, including the dates, findings, and descriptions of updates performed during the last model ordinance review ▪ Proof of review/update on a five-year cycle, such as signed and dated review checklists, and previous dated versions of the model ordinance, etc.	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ Process documentation/SOP that shows a three-year update cycle and integration of higher standards, including the dates, findings, and descriptions of updates performed during the last model ordinance review ▪ Proof of review/update on a three-year cycle, such as signed and dated review checklists, and previous dated versions of the model ordinance, etc.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[9] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Coordination with state legislature to incorporate an update/development cycle for model ordinance(s) into state regulations/requirements.
- Development of a standardized process/SOP for reviewing and updating model ordinances on a recurring cycle.
- Creation and facilitation of a review panel/body of federal, state, and local representatives to conduct reviews and updates to model ordinances.
- Development and execution of a monitoring process for ensuring that new state legislative proposals comply with the NFIP.

[9] Subject to Regional approval.

II.F. Substantial Damage Program

This characteristic intends to measure that the state is working towards or has implemented statewide Substantial Damage Plan(s) and encourages communities to do the same. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3) and 60.25(b)(5) which set forth state duties for guiding communities and individuals to develop in a manner that complies with the local floodplain management ordinance and the NFIP minimum standards. Furthermore, this characteristic represents best practices proposed by Principle 6 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attribute effectiveness to state flood mitigation and recovery strategies.

Table 11: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.F. Substantial Damage Program

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ State must have a documented plan for substantial damage (SD) (in any template the state desires) with goals, objectives, and activities.	▪ State must have a documented plan with sufficient detail to ensure it is implementable and operational (e.g., includes specific processes and responsibilities, timelines, templates, tools, etc.)	▪ The state meets Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ The State's SD Plan includes advanced elements such as a list of target communities and areas and tailored processes for those communities, including conducting Substantial Damage Administrative Procedures (SDAP) Workshops and Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) 1206) Workshops for communities.
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS", which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Documented Substantial Damage Plan, with ▪ Goals ▪ Objectives ▪ Activities	State Substantial Damage Plan that answers the following five questions and includes detailed planning and process documentation for: ▪ How and when do you communicate with communities on Substantial Damage in an active disaster? ▪ What training do you provide for communities and other State Officials on Substantial Damage Pre-Disaster/Post-Disaster? ▪ How do you support/validate communities' depiction of market value, repair cost, depreciation and other values used in Substantial Damage determinations? ▪ What is the follow-up mechanism for enforcement of substantial damage determinations? ▪ How do you coordinate with the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) on Substantial Damage?	▪ Proficient evidence ***PLUS*** ▪ Local Substantial Damage Plans for targeted communities which should include community profiles, characterizes the potential for SD, and any community-specific support needs and/or processes for executing SD/substantial improvement (SI) activities after a disaster

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[10] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a state SD plan and coordination to incorporate it into the state hazard mitigation plan.
- Development of SD plans for non-flood hazards (e.g., earthquakes).
- Development and execution of an SD pilot project that could help determine a statewide process for state or local SD plan/SOP development.
- Development and delivery of SD training/mentoring to Foundational or Below Foundational SD states.
- Participation in SD training/mentoring from Advanced SD states.
- Development and implementation of SD plans for all communities, not just targeted communities.
- Development and dissemination/roll out of SD quick guide for communities to use.
- Coordination and integration of SD within the state disaster response team (DRT)/emergency response team (ERT)/community emergency response team (CERT) for ensuring that new state legislative proposals comply with the NFIP.

[10] Subject to Regional approval.

II.G. Percent of Participating Communities

This characteristic intends to measure that the state is actively working to increase the percentage of communities with mapped risk that participate in the NFIP. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(2) which focus on promoting and guiding community participation in the NFIP.

Table 12: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.G. Percent of Participating Communities

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the target via the FEMA-provided data in bullet A. OR they can meet the descriptions outlined in both bullets B. and C.		
This characteristic has no Foundational benchmark.	Use A, or prove both B and C ▪ A. At least 80% of communities with mapped risk are participating in the NFIP at the time the data is pulled (FEMA-provided data) ▪ B. The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has completed an analysis of the non-participating communities within the last three years ▪ C. The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has conducted outreach to all non-participating communities at least once in the last three years	Use A, or prove both B and C ▪ A. At least 90% of communities with mapped risk are participating in the NFIP at the time the data is pulled (FEMA-provided data) ▪ B. The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has completed an analysis of the non-participating communities within the last three years ▪ C. The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has a written action plan for expanding community participation and conducts outreach to all non-participating communities at least once per year
Evidence States may choose to use the FEMA-provided data and not submit anything OR they may submit sufficient evidence as outlined. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
This characteristic has no Foundational benchmark.	▪ Use CIS participating communities report (provided by FEMA) as of October 1 of each year **OR submit all of the following:** ▪ Analysis of the non-participating communities and their reasoning for not joining the NFIP, including the date that the analysis was conducted ▪ Documentation of outreach (email blasts, letters, etc.) to all non-participating communities in the state in the last three-year period (can be pulled from CIS-general technical assistance (GTA) Report)	▪ Use CIS participating communities report (provided by FEMA) as of October 1 of each year **OR submit all of the following:** ▪ Analysis of the non-participating communities and their reasoning for not joining the NFIP, including the date that the analysis was conducted ▪ A state action plan for expanding NFIP participation ▪ Documentation of outreach (email, letters, etc.) to all non-participating communities in the state in the last year (can be pulled from CIS-GTA Report)
Special Submission Instructions FEMA HQ will provide CIS report data to states. Email all supplemental documentation to the Regional CAP Coordinator using the following naming convention.		
This characteristic has no Foundational benchmark.	**No submission is required** if a State uses the tier assignment from the FEMA-provided data. Those who do not meet the percent benchmark may choose to submit the analysis and outreach documentation outlined above. Example: MD_Capability_G_Proficient_Outreach	**No submission is required** if a State uses the tier assignment from the FEMA-provided data. Those who do not meet the percent benchmark may choose to submit the analysis and outreach documentation outlined above. Example: MD_Capability_G_Advanced_ActionPlan

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[11] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of an assessment of all non-participating communities.
- Development and implementation of an outreach plan/strategy for all non-participating communities

[11] Subject to Regional approval.

II.H. Addressing Equity in Floodplain Management (New)

This characteristic intends to measure if and how the State NFIP Coordinating Agencies are considering equity and assisting vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted by disasters. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with Goal 1 of the FEMA Strategic Plan: Instill Equity as a Foundation of Emergency Management and more specifically, Objective 1.3: Achieve Equitable Outcomes for Those We Serve. Furthermore, this characteristic reflects the Justice 40 goals in Executive Order 14008. This characteristic will be mandatory in 2026 and voluntary for states who can meet the benchmark in the 2024 Off-Cycle.

Table 13: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.H. Addressing Equity in Floodplain Management

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ State incorporates equity[a] data (e.g., Climate and Environmental Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZs)) into planning and prioritization. State use of the Community Engagement Prioritization Tool (CEPTool) to inform annual SOWs satisfies this benchmark	▪ The state meets Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ State prioritizes and tracks assistance for disadvantaged/underserved[b] communities and measures[c] the impact	▪ The state meets Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ State has implemented equity-focused initiatives intended to tailor floodplain management activities to vulnerable populations and their communities and/or can demonstrate that has invested[d] a cumulative total of at least 40% of its federal awards in the last three periods of performance in disadvantaged/ underserved communities
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with “PLUS”, which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
▪ Evidence of consistent use of the CEPTool, which utilizes SVI data, such as a highlighted list of communities targeted for outreach/activities in certain SVI ranges ▪ One or more documents highlighting the inclusion of equity data[a] in plans, staff training, guidelines, or other internal materials ▪ Established feedback channels, such as surveys, central feedback collector, message board, etc. for underserved communities to offer feedback and ask for help	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ Documented metrics (e.g., target percent of activities provided to communities with an SVI of 0.5 or higher, identified as "disadvantaged" in CEJST, or identified as a CDRZ), with methods for tracking progress ▪ Documented "equity strategy" that includes how the state measures and defines "underserved" and its plan to improve equitable resilience outcomes for underserved communities	▪ Foundational and Proficient evidence **PLUS** ▪ Documentation describing the goals, vision, and expected outcomes of equity-focused initiatives that the state has implemented. This can be a formal plan, briefing slides, an informal write-up, etc.

NOTES:

[a] Equity is defined in Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (Jan. 20, 2021) as the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities of color, persons who belong to communities that may face discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity (including members of the LGBTQ+ community); persons with disabilities, persons who may face discrimination based on their religion, national origin and persons with limited English proficiency, and persons who live in rural areas that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. FEMA uses this definition of equity and aims to assess and address barriers to equity within its programs and policies with respect to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, advancing Goal 1 of the 2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan to Instill Equity as a Foundation of Emergency Management.

[b] FEMA's definition of disadvantaged/underserved communities is consistent with the White House's 2021 Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative. In the absence of a state-preferred index or approach that incorporates appropriate data and variables to determine whether a given community is disadvantaged, FEMA prefers the use of CEJST, CDRZs, or the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) to identify disadvantaged communities. Communities identified as "disadvantaged" in CEJST, are identified as a CDRZ, or has an average SVI score higher than 0.5 or where more than 50% of its census tracts have a score higher than 0.5, are considered disadvantaged. Average SVI is calculated by averaging the census tract scores within the SFHA (or the entire jurisdiction if there is no digital SFHA available).

[c] To meet the proficient benchmark, the state can track assistance and measure impact using its chosen methodology as long as it can clearly show which communities in the state are disadvantaged and if/how they have benefited from the states' assistance.

[d] In alignment with the White House's 2021 Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and other FEMA program benefits methodologies, investments are defined as those CAP-SSSE activities that the state plans and executes, including mapping coordination assistance, other ordinance assistance and reviews, community training/workshops, compliance audits, outreach, and other direct technical assistance such as CRS support, compliance assistance, or general program support. To demonstrate that the state has met the 40% threshold, it must track the staff hours/personnel costs or contract costs spent on activities in disadvantaged communities.

II.I. Improving Resilience to Climate Change and Future Conditions (New)

This characteristic intends to measure if and how the State NFIP Coordinating Agency is taking into account and incorporating future conditions into its planning, operations, and programming to prioritize community resilience. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with Goal 2 of the FEMA Strategic Plan: Lead Whole of Community in Climate Resilience. This characteristic is mandatory by 2026 and voluntary for states who can meet the benchmark in the 2024 Off-Cycle.

Table 17: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic II.I. Improving Resilience to Climate Change and Future Conditions

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency utilizes future conditions data[a] to inform planning and prioritization decisions	▪ The state meets Foundational benchmark **AND** ▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency promotes climate literacy through incorporating climate/future conditions information into engagement, assistance, and educational outreach to communities	▪ The state meets Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has established, or is a party to, state programs and initiatives to mitigate future risk
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. Examples of such evidence are listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS", which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
▪ Documentation of how future conditions data[a] is used to drive prioritization of engagements like community assistance visits (CAVs), technical assistance, auditing, training, etc. with communities. This could include annual specific workplans for communities facing future risks	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ Evidence of communicating future risks to citizens, such as a publicly accessible website, future risk visualization tools, or outreach materials (e.g., fact sheets, flyers, newsletters, etc.) ▪ Evidence of participating in the development and/or implementation of state hazard mitigation plans and/or climate action plans that integrate future flood conditions, such as planning meeting minutes, authorship credit/citation in a published plan, etc.	▪ Foundational and Proficient evidence **PLUS** ▪ Evidence of participation in implementing programs or initiatives that address future risks, such as managed retreat, rebates for mitigation activities, nature-based solutions, etc., through documented meeting minutes, enforcement authority, involvement in funding decisions, etc. ▪ Evidence of promotion of adoption of higher standards at the community level, such as letters to community officials, other outreach materials outlining the benefits of adopting higher standards, email communications discussing higher standards adoption, etc.

NOTES:

[a] Future conditions data is not prescriptively defined in recognition of the rapidly evolving and emerging data, tools, and scientific approaches that are influencing this subject matter. Some examples of future risk data and tools could include use of the climate-informed science approach to floodplain management as depicted in the implementing instructions for the Federal Flood Risk Management Standards (FFRMS), NOAA's digital coast tools such as the Sea Level Rise (SLR) Viewer, FEMA's 500-year/0.2 percent annual chance floodplain delineation, comprehensive future land use plans, coastal and riverine erosion data, and/or long-term weather and climatology forecasts from either federal or state sources.

III. Performance Measures

The characteristics in this category demonstrate that the State NFIP Coordinating Agency has a history of performing at or above expectations while advancing the goals of the NFIP and effectively administers the programmatic requirements of the CAP grant.

The Performance Measures category encompasses four characteristics:

A. Communities Engaged

B. Higher Standards Adoption

C. Community Compliance Improvement

D. Map Adoption (New)

These characteristics represent the national Floodplain Management Program's primary performance measures and are included in the TSF per 2 CFR Sections 200.202 and 200.206, which set forth requirements for grantee performance measurement and reporting. The following subsections discuss each characteristic in detail.

States are allowed four months after the end of each CAP-SSSE Period of Performance (PoP) to close out the grant and make final inputs into CIS. All CIS entries must be made by October 28th in order to count towards final performance measure determinations, which are made in November each year.

Performance targets must be met within the one-year PoP (July 1 – June 30) even if the state receives an extension. FEMA recognizes that circumstances could arise during a state's PoP that may necessitate a revision to the state's agreed upon performance targets. In general, unanticipated events, schedule delays, or levels of resource intensity are acceptable reasons for target revisions. If a state would like to request a revision to one or more performance targets, it may be done once per PoP and must be received by the Regional Office prior to April 30.

III.A. Communities Engaged

This characteristic intends to measure the number of engagements executed by the state with an agreed-upon number of communities annually. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b) which set forth requirements for engaging communities in floodplain management issues.

This measure is calculated by counting each community (both participating and non-participating) that has been engaged by the state at least once during the period of performance. The national communities engaged measure considers all types of engagement except the "Other" and "Outreach Inquiry" technical assistance types which are counted as part of characteristic II.B. Additionally, Regions may have specific goals for certain types of engagements that must be incorporated into states' plans and efforts to meet their annual targets.

Table 18: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic III.A. Communities Engaged

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state meets the "Expected" target for Communities Engaged in at least two of the past three years[a]	*There is no Proficient benchmark for this characteristic*	▪ The state meets the "Excellence" target for Communities Engaged in at least two of the past three years[a]. This target should be 10% above the "Expected" target
Evidence FEMA will pull supporting evidence from FEMA records and provide it to the Region for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
▪ CIS data reports (combined CAV/CAC, GTA, Ordinance Review, and Training/Workshop reports to determine number of communities engaged in the FY)		
Special Submission Instructions FEMA HQ will provide state performance targets and final results from the CAP Dashboard.		
No submission is required		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants will not have a communities engaged history so they will enter the program as Foundational, with a mandatory reassessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants to determine their tier for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[12] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Delivery of additional core activities that contribute to the metric (e.g., CAVs, CACs, trainings, ordinance reviews, and general technical assistance).

[12] Subject to Regional approval.

III.B.Higher Standards Adoption

This characteristic intends to measure that the state influences an agreed-upon number of communities to take action to exceed the minimum regulatory requirements each year. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3) and 60.25(b)(5) which set forth state requirements for guiding communities in implementing land use and development standards. Furthermore, this characteristic represents best practices proposed by Principles 5 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attributes effectiveness to states guiding development away from flood prone areas.

This measure is calculated by counting the number of participating communities with "more restrictive ordinance" selected in CIS, indicating the community adopted higher standards. It is the responsibility of the State Coordinator to verify on a community-by-community basis that each community has adopted the higher standard(s) in their local ordinance.

Table 19: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic III.B. Higher Standards Adoption

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state meets the "Expected" target for Higher Standards Adoption in at least two of the past three years[a]	*There is no Proficient benchmark for this characteristic*	▪ The state meets the "Excellence" target of 75% for Higher Standards Adoption in at least two of the past three years[a]
Evidence FEMA will pull supporting evidence from FEMA records and provide it to the Region for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
▪ Workshop Assistance Report (CIS)	*There is no Proficient benchmark for this characteristic*	▪ Workshop Assistance Report (CIS)
Special Submission Instructions FEMA HQ will provide state performance targets and final results from the CAP Dashboard.		
No submission is required		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants entering the program in or after 2023 will not have a history with this measure, so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory assessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants in or after 2023 with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[13] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a strategy for higher standards outreach and promotion
- Development of higher standards outreach and education products (e.g., guides, fact sheets, website content, etc.)
- Development of standard processes for integrating higher standards promotion into mapping coordination activities

[13] Subject to Regional approval.

III.C.Community Compliance Improvement

This characteristic intends to measure that a state is auditing and providing technical assistance to communities on a regular five-year cycle. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3) and 60.25(b)(8) which set forth the state's duties related to assessing community compliance with the NFIP.

This measure is calculated based on the number of NFIP communities that have been assessed in the last five years by the state (i.e., a Community Assistance Contact (CAC) or Community Assistance Visit (CAV) was opened or closed with findings in the last five years).

Table 20: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic III.C. Community Compliance Improvement

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state has audited at least 10% of its communities in the last five periods of performance[a]	▪ The state has audited at least 25% of its communities in the last five periods of performance[a]	▪ The state has audited at least 55% of its communities in the last five periods of performance[a]
Evidence FEMA will pull supporting evidence from FEMA records and provide it to the Region for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
▪ CAV/CAC Findings Report from CIS	▪ CAV/CAC Findings Report from CIS	▪ CAV/CAC Findings Report from CIS
Special Submission Instructions FEMA HQ will provide state performance targets and final results from the CAP Dashboard		
No submission is required		

NOTES:

[a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants entering the program in or after 2023 will not have a history with this measure, so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory assessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants in or after 2023 with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[14] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a five-year compliance strategy
- Delivery of additional CACs and CAVs

[14] Subject to Regional approval

III.D. Map Adoption (New)

This characteristic intends to measure how states are supporting communities in adopting updated flood risk information. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(3) and 60.25(b)(6) which set forth the state's duties related to assisting with the development and local adoption of updated flood risk information and measuring and reporting performance.

This measure is calculated based on the number of communities within the state that adopt new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) by the effective date.

Table 21: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic III.D. Map Adoption

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The state meets the "Expected" target for Map Adoption at 93% of communities adopting new FIRMs on time in at least two of the past three years[a]	*There is no Proficient benchmark for this characteristic*	▪ The state meets the "Excellence" target for Map Adoption at 98% of communities adopting new FIRMs on time in at least two of the past three years[a]
Evidence FEMA will pull supporting evidence from FEMA records and provide it to the Region for validation before assigning a corresponding tier for this characteristic. For this characteristic, evidence from each PoP must show overall achievement across the three PoPs.		
▪ Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Effective Date in the Mapping Information Platform (MIP) + community ordinance adoption date in CIS	*There is no Proficient benchmark for this characteristic*	▪ FIRM Effective Date Data in the MIP + community ordinance adoption date in CIS
Special Submission Instructions FEMA HQ will provide state performance targets and final results from the CAP Dashboard		
No submission is required		

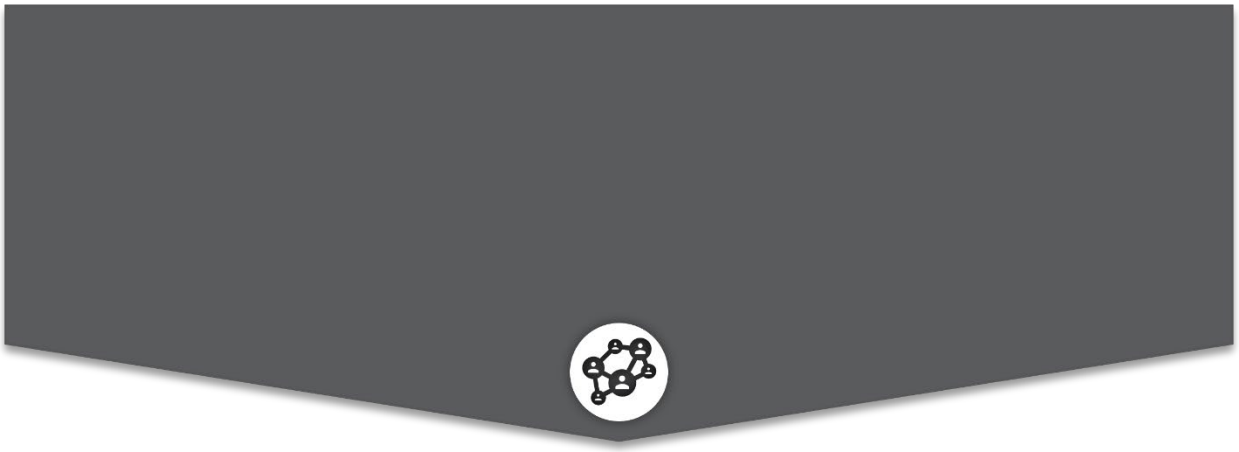
NOTES: [a] New CAP-SSSE grant applicants entering the program in or after 2023 will not have a history with this measure, so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory assessment after one year. Returning CAP-SSSE grant applicants in or after 2023 with any active grants in the last three years will be assessed using those grants for this characteristic.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[15] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development and delivery of outreach and education for communities with Letter of Final Determination (LFD) dates that increases their understanding of the adoption requirements.
- Delivery of additional technical assistance, outreach, or training to communities with scheduled map releases

[15] Subject to Regional approval



IV. Planning and Coordination

The characteristics in this category demonstrate that the State NFIP Coordinator's Agency successfully coordinates across agencies to ensure that floodplain management and insurance is integrated into the state's priorities.

The Planning and Coordination category encompasses seven characteristics:

A. Promotion of Flood Risk Awareness Products

B. Coordination and Integrated Planning Across the State

C. Coordination with OFAs (other than FEMA)

D. Coordination with Insurance Professionals

E. Coordination and Integration into State Emergency Operations

F. Optimized Use of Mitigation Funding for Priority Structures

G. Strategic Planning (Mandatory in 2026)

The following subsections discuss each characteristic in detail.

IV.A. Promotion of Flood Risk Awareness Products

This characteristic intends to measure that the state increases awareness and understanding of flood risks in its communities by participating in the delineation of riverine and coastal flood-prone areas, whenever possible, and disseminating flood risk data and information. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b) which sets forth several state's duties related to raising flood risk awareness among communities.

Table 22: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.A. Promotion of Flood Risk Awareness Products

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below. *Note: It is acceptable for the state to submit evidence of activities conducted by contractors so long as the activities were state led/directed.*		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency participates in providing FEMA Risk Analysis products to communities	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency coordinates/collaborates with other state programs/ agencies to utilize data	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency provides flood risk data to the public and communities using state-facilitated GIS technology
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
One of the following: ▪ Meeting minutes/summary (CCO/Open House/Resilience/ or other meeting where products are presented to communities) with the date, location, and attendee list ▪ Project documents showing NFIP Coordinator Office representation in mapping projects ▪ Social media posts, newsletters, fact sheets, and other outreach materials that incorporate flood risk products and information.	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ A document that includes a list of data (with descriptions) from other state agencies/programs utilized in flood hazard mapping products (e.g., erosion mapping, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) gauges)	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** ▪ The link to the state website that disseminates flood risk data for public consumption

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[16] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a plan/strategy to promote flood risk products (e.g., FIRMs, non-regulatory flood risk products).
- Creation and dissemination of other products (not already funded by Risk MAP/CTP) aimed at increasing community and public awareness of flood risk (e.g., public information webpage, social media campaign)
- Participation and collaboration in the development and execution of mapping meetings such as Discovery, Flood Risk Report (FRR), Consultation Coordination Officer (CCO), Open House, etc.

[16] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.B. Coordination and Integrated Planning Across the State

This characteristic intends to measure that the State NFIP Coordinating Agency is integrated with hazard mitigation planning activities across the state. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(10) and 60.25(b)(11) which set forth state duties to coordinate with other state agencies, particularly in identifying and implementing flood hazard mitigation recommendations.

Table 23: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.B. Coordination and Integrated Planning Across the State

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency reviews/provides information as requested by the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) to influence mitigation	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency participates in writing and/or submits recommendations to the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and other related plans integrating floodplain management issues	▪ The state's floodplain management priorities (i.e., high-risk properties such as substantially damaged structures, repetitive loss/severe repetitive loss (RL/SRL) properties, floodway structures, and violations) are integrated into the State Hazard Mitigation Plan
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
One of the following: ▪ Meeting minutes/participant lists ▪ Email correspondence that specifically illustrates that the NFIP Coordinator's Office is providing floodplain management expertise to the SHMO in response to state floodplain management issues and risks	One of the following: ▪ Evidence of formal input into State Hazard Mitigation Plan, which could be in the format of emails, letters, or feedback submitted ▪ A list of meetings attended (with dates) where floodplain management input was provided to a plan ▪ A letter from the primary authoring agency of the plan that details the input that they received	▪ The most recent state plan (or opportunity to submit updates) with floodplain management priorities highlighted ▪ High-risk property inventory

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[17] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Travel, planning, participation, and/or facilitation of working sessions with the SHMO.
- Development of an inventory of high-risk structures.

[17] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.C. Coordination with Other Federal Agencies (OFAs) (other than FEMA)

This characteristic intends to measure that the State NFIP Coordinating Office is building relationships with OFAs in advance of and outside of flood events. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with Section 60.25(b)(10) which set forth state duties related to coordination with other agencies.

Table 24: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.C. Coordination with OFAs (other than FEMA)

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency coordinates annually with two federal agencies[a] other than FEMA on floodplain management issues	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency coordinates annually with three federal agencies other than FEMA on floodplain management issues	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency coordinates annually with more than three federal agencies other than FEMA on floodplain management issues
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement in each of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below:		
For each federal agency a State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency coordinates with, submit a document with the following: ▪ Date of last meeting with the agency ▪ The agency name ▪ Full name, title, and email address of your primary POC ▪ Agenda/Meeting minutes demonstrating active NFIP Coordinator participation (e.g., listed as a speaker or presenter)		

Notes:

[a] *Different agencies under the same department can be counted individually. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) are both under DHS and would count separately. However, programs under the same agency (e.g., FEMA Risk Analysis and FEMA Floodplain Management) do not count separately.*

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[18] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Participation in the state Silver Jackets chapter.
- Regular coordination with federal Department of Transportation (DOT) and Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Development of a strategy/plan and tracker for OFA engagements and goals.
- Development of project applications for Federal funding such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
- Coordination with OFAs to develop a single document of all available funding sources for communities and their residents to reduce risk/increase resilience.

[18] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.D. Coordination with Insurance Professionals

This characteristic intends to measure that the State NFIP Coordinating Agency encourages and supports the flood insurance aspects of the NFIP within the state. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with Section 60.25(b)(10) which set forth state duties related to coordination with other agencies.

Table 25: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.D Coordination with Insurance Professionals

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency actively collaborates with Regional Flood Insurance Liaison (RFIL)	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency collaborates with insurance professionals on joint flood insurance initiatives or actively engages in insurance agent training and professional development at least once per PoP for the last 3 PoPs	▪ The state meets Proficient benchmark *AND* ▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency collaborates on a statewide initiative with state flood insurance commissioner's office at least once per PoP for the last 3 PoPs
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states meeting Foundational are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs; states meeting Proficient or Advanced are required to submit evidence showing achievement in each of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
▪ Documentation of state-led collaboration with the RFIL (emails, call logs, meeting minutes, etc.) which illustrate that the NFIP Coordinator's Office is collaborating on specific projects or initiatives or providing NFIP insurance technical assistance to stakeholders	▪ Foundational evidence **PLUS** one or more of the following: ▪ Insurance agent training records ▪ Meeting minutes/summaries and dates of collaborative efforts with insurance professionals, including organization name and contact information ▪ Deliverables, pamphlets, or materials developed in conjunction with insurance professionals	▪ Foundational and Proficient evidence **PLUS** one or more of the following: ▪ Meeting minutes/summaries and dates ▪ Deliverables developed jointly ▪ Email correspondence on the initiative ▪ Letter from the state insurance commissioner on the initiative, which details the collaborative effort and state NFIP role ▪ Deliverables, pamphlets, or materials developed in coordination with state insurance commissioner

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[19] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of a joint communications campaign/public service announcement or other hazard insurance-focused initiative with state insurance professionals (e.g., associations) or State Insurance Commissioner's office.
- Support for executing Information Sharing and Access Agreements (ISAAs).
- Coordinating the development and delivery of information/training to insurance professionals on NFIP changes.
- Regular coordination/meetings with the FEMA RFIL on insurance initiatives in the state.

[19] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.E. Coordination and Integration into State Emergency Operations

This characteristic intends to measure that the State NFIP Coordinating Agency understands if/when/how it fits into the state's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations and procedures. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Section 60.25(b)(10) and Goal 3 of the FEMA Strategic Plan which set forth the expectation that State floodplain management programs should coordinate with other state functions to promote a ready nation.

Table 26: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.E. Coordination and Integration into State Emergency Operations

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Agency has regular coordination with the Emergency Management Office (EMO) and collaborates in a post-disaster environment	▪ State floodplain management participates at the EOC, is used as a resource, and/or provides subject matter expertise as part of emergency operations or post-disaster support
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	One of the following: ▪ Meeting minutes/summary and a participant list demonstrating active NFIP Coordinator participation (e.g., listed as a speaker or presenter) ▪ Email correspondence that illustrates that the NFIP Coordinator's Office has collaborated or provided technical assistance during a specific disaster ▪ Other documented evidence of coordination with EMO, for example: a signed letter from someone at the EMO which details the collaboration with the State NFIP Coordinating Agency	Documentation of a designated position in the EOC (for example: a plan/annex that assigns the role, screenshot from WebEOC, etc.)

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[20] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Provision of technical inputs and participation in state exercises.
- Provision of floodplain management technical assistance to Federal Coordinating Officer/State Coordinating Officer (FCO/SCO).
- Regular coordination with the state EM office to identify an appropriate role in the EOC and develop the role description.
- Development of a communications plan with the SHMO or state EM office (e.g., one that identifies different triggers and actions and different emergency level).

[20] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.F. Optimized Use of Mitigation Funding for Priority Structures

This characteristic intends to measure that funding is prioritized and used to mitigate priority structures impacted by flooding in the state. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF is aligned with 44 CFR Sections 60.25(b)(10) and 60.25(b)(11) which set forth state duties to coordinate with other state agencies, particularly in identifying and implementing flood hazard mitigation recommendations.

Table 27: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.F. Optimized Use of Mitigation Funding for Priority Structures

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	▪ The State NFIP Coordinating Office Agency participates with the SHMO in activities to mitigate state priority properties, such as substantially damaged structures, repetitive loss/severe repetitive loss (RL/SRL) properties, floodway structures, violations, compliance and mitigation of state-owned structures, etc., and creates annual reports of these mitigation activities.	▪ State must meet Proficient Benchmark **PLUS** ▪ Demonstrate that they either lead or have shared responsibilities for prioritizing grant funding (e.g., participate in application selections or lead a grant like Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) for the state).
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement in each of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	▪ Demonstration that grants (from FEMA, and from other relevant grant sources) are mitigating priority flood prone properties or areas. For example: ○ A table listing the state's current priority properties, and any active/recently completed grants relevant to such properties ○ For each relevant grant, a recent quarterly report or the grant's SOW to support the grant linkage to priority properties or areas **PLUS** ▪ Three annual reports (one for each year) of the mitigation activities	▪ Proficient evidence **PLUS** ▪ Evidence of leading or sharing responsibilities for prioritizing grant funding such as selection committee charters with named NFIP Coordinator staff, department/office organization charts demonstrating grant responsibilities, etc.

Examples to Help Improve Your Score

Listed below are examples of eligible activities under the CAP-SSSE grant that a state may consider incorporating into their next SOW and grant application[21] to help improve their score in this characteristic:

- Development of an assessment of the state's priority structures (SD, RL, SRL) and identification of appropriate mitigation funding sources (e.g., Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)).
- Development and implementation of an FMA strategy, integrated with the state HM plan.
- Annual evaluation of the state HM plan to identify gaps and strategies to address structures (SD, RL, SRL).

[21] Subject to Regional approval.

IV.G. Strategic Planning (New)

This characteristic intends to measure if and how the State Coordinating Office is assessing performance of the program, planning for the future, and tracking success of strategic planning efforts. Inclusion of this characteristic in the TSF represents best practices proposed by Principle 10 of ASFPM's Guiding Principles for Effective State Programs which attribute effectiveness to evaluations and documented successes. This characteristic will be mandatory in 2026 and voluntary for states who can meet the benchmark in the 2024 Off-Cycle

Table 28: Benchmarks and evidence examples for characteristic IV.G. Strategic Planning

Foundational	Proficient	Advanced
Benchmarks In order to qualify for a tier, states must demonstrate that they meet the description in the corresponding column below.		
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	▪ The State Coordinating Office has developed a strategy with a clear future vision, goals, objectives, measures, and planned initiatives/ activities	▪ The state meets Proficient benchmark **AND** ▪ The State Coordinating Office has implemented their strategy/plan and can show results
Evidence States must submit evidence that supports their tier assignment. For this characteristic, states are required to submit evidence showing achievement over the course of the three PoPs. An example of such evidence is listed below. All examples are potential options of evidence, unless noted with "PLUS," which signifies that more than one piece of evidence is required:		
There is no Foundational benchmark for this characteristic	▪ A final, published strategic plan outlining the future of the program, with clear metrics for measuring progress against goals and determining successes[a]	▪ Proficient evidence **PLUS** ▪ Evidence of progress-tracking of strategic initiatives and activities and their impact, such as an analysis of previously outlined metrics, for at least one year of implementation

[a] The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) provides a template strategic plan that can be leveraged and tailored for this purpose.

Appendix A. Summary Tables of Characteristics and Benchmarks

The table below includes changes that will be mandatory in 2026, or voluntary for states who can meet the benchmark in the 2024 Off-Cycle.

Capacity

Intent: States ensure minimum NFIP requirements are met and enforced. States meet grant requirements of 2 CFR 200 and the NOFO.

Characteristic	FOUNDATIONAL Benchmark	PROFICIENT Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	Evidence Provided by
I.A. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for Local Communities	Regulations meet minimum standards and state works with communities to address violations	Enforcement sent to FEMA	Statewide higher standards. Enforcement is state-led	State
I.B. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for State-Owned Properties	Regulations meet minimum standards	Enforcement sent to FEMA	Statewide higher standards. Enforcement is state-led	FEMA in 2023
I.C. Financial Grant Management Benchmark raised after 2023 assessment	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): <10% deobligations and extensions <12 months over three years	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): <4% deobligations and extensions <9 months over three years	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Extensions <6 months over three years	FEMA
I.D. Administrative Grant Management	No more than 3 late submissions	No more than 1 late submission	All on-time documents	FEMA
I.E. Ability to Overmatch Advanced benchmarks temporarily reduced Jul 2022 – June 2025	Equal to 25% as required by the grant No change	>25% No change	>40% 40% for the period of July 2022 to June 2025	FEMA & State if desired

Capability

Intent: States enhance professional development of their staff and communicate and train communities on floodplain management topics.

Characteristic	FOUNDATIONAL Benchmark	PROFICIENT Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	Evidence Provided by
II.A. Investment in Professional Development	Education and/or experience in floodplain management	8 hours of training per FTE covered by CAP grant per three-year cycle	8 hours of training + advanced degree/certification per FTE covered by CAP grant OR 7+ years' exp in FPM and a bachelor's degree	State
II.B. Communication with Communities on NFIP Topics	Communication occurs broadly each year	Communication to all communities at least quarterly	Quarterly communications + communication plan (with evidence of implementation)	FEMA & State if desired
II.C. Basic Floodplain Management Training Coverage To be scored in 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle)	>10% of communities received the training in last 5 years	>30% of communities received the training in last five years	>65% of communities received the training in last 5 years	FEMA & State

Characteristic	FOUNDATIONAL Benchmark	PROFICIENT Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	Evidence Provided by
II.D. Ability to Deliver a Variety of Training	2 Different Topics, 6 hrs each	>3 Different Topics, 6 hrs each	>5 Different Topics, 6 hrs each	State
II.E. Process for Reviewing and Improving Model Floodplain Management Regulations	Provide model ordinances that meet minimum standards	Review and update model ordinances on five-year cycle	Review and update model ordinances on three-year cycle + integrate higher standards	State
II.F. Substantial Damage Program Benchmark raised after 2023 assessment	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle: Statewide plan in place	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Statewide plan in place which is implementable and operational	Statewide plan in place and targeted communities have individual plans in place	State
II.G. Percent of Participating Communities	No Foundational requirement	>80% mapped communities participate or non-participating communities are understood and engaged	>90% mapped By 2026: No change communities participate or non-participating communities are understood and engaged with an action plan in place	FEMA & State if desired
II.H. Addressing Equity in Floodplain Management To be scored in 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle)	Incorporates equity data into planning	Prioritizes and tracks assistance to underserved communities	Equity-focused initiatives tailored to underserved communities	State
II.I. Improving Resilience to Climate Change and Future Conditions To be scored in 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle)	Utilizes future conditions data to informing planning and decisions	Incorporates future conditions into outreach and engagements	State program has (or is party to) initiatives to mitigate future risk	State

Performance Measures

Intent: States identify performance measure targets that encompass floodplain management activities including CAV, CAC, GTA, Training, and Outreach to build local capability for managing the floodplain and reducing risk.

Characteristic	FOUNDATIONAL Benchmark	PROFICIENT Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	Evidence Provided by
III.A. Communities Engaged	Meets “Expected” Target	No Proficient requirement	Meets “Excellence” Target at 10% above Expected Target	FEMA
III.B. Higher Standards Adoption	Meets “Expected” Target	No Proficient requirement	Meets “Excellence” Target at 75%	FEMA
III.C. Community Compliance Improvement Benchmark raised after 2023 assessment	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Audited >10% of its communities	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Audited >25% of its communities	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Audited >55% of its communities	FEMA
III.D. Map Adoption	Meets “Expected” Target at 93%	No Proficient requirement	Meets "Excellence" Target at 98%	FEMA

Planning and Coordination

Intent: States develop a working relationship with SHMO and other state and federal offices that have impact on floodplain management to create a coordinated effort for communities before, during, and after disasters.

Characteristic	FOUNDATIONAL Benchmark	PROFICIENT Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	Evidence Provided by
IV.A. Promotion of Flood Risk Awareness Products	Provide FEMA Risk Analysis products to communities	Utilize data from other agencies	Delivers data via state-facilitated GIS technology	State
IV.B. Coordination and Integrated Planning across the State	Coordinates with SHMO	Submits formal input to State Hazard Mitigation Plan	Floodplain management targets included in State Hazard Mitigation Plan	State
IV.C. Coordination with Other Federal Agencies (OFAs)	Coordinate with 2 agencies	Coordinate with 3 agencies	Coordinate with >3 agencies	State
IV.D. Coordination with Insurance Professionals	State-led RIFL coordination	Agent training or collaboration	Collaborate on statewide initiative with state flood insurance commissioner	State
IV.E. Coordination and Integration into State Emergency Operations	No Foundational requirement	Coordinate with EMO	Integrated into emergency operations	State
IV.F. Optimized use of Mitigation Funding for Priority Structures Benchmark raised after 2023 assessment	No Foundational requirement By 2026: No Change	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Floodplain management targets funded for mitigation	By 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle): Lead or have shared responsibilities for prioritizing grant funding	State
IV.G. Strategic Planning To be scored in 2026 (or 2024 Off-Cycle)	No Foundational requirement	Strategy with vision, goals, objectives, measures, and activities	Implemented strategy with results	State

Appendix B. Considerations for New or Returning State NFIP Coordinating Agencies

Characteristic	New Program Never received CAP-SSSE grant before		Returning Program Have CAP-SSSE history but may have taken a hiatus for one year or more	
	Benchmarks	***Evidence***	***Benchmarks***	***Evidence***
All	Must submit a full TSF assessment upon applying for the grant. For all new grantees, there will be a required follow-up assessment after one year regardless of the established three-year cycle.		Must submit a full TSF assessment upon reapplying for the grant. If more than three years has passed since they last had an active PoP, then the state will be subject to the same requirement as a brand-new grantee/program.	
I.A. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for Local Communities	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs, however, they will not be able to produce CIS evidence so they will have to provide SOPs and/or letter templates	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs, however, they will not be able to produce CIS evidence for recent years so they will have to provide SOPs and/or letter templates
I.B. State Land Use Authority and Enforcement for State-Owned Properties	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
I.C. Financial Grant Management	New programs will not have a CAP financial management history so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will not have a CAP financial management history.	No adjustments to the benchmark criteria. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.
I.D. Administrative Grant Management	New programs will not have a three-year history. They will enter the program as Foundational (assuming they submit their TSF Assessment on time) with a mandatory reassessment after one-year.	TSF Assessment must be on-time to enter as Foundational.	No adjustments to the benchmark criteria. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.
I.E. Ability to Overmatch	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. New programs will not have a three-year history, so the current year's anticipated cost match will be considered and reconfirmed at award.	New programs will not have a three-year history, so the current year's anticipated cost match will be considered and reconfirmed at award.	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.
II.A. Investment in Professional Development	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
II.B. Communication with Communities on NFIP Topics	No adjustments for new programs	New programs can provide evidence from outside CIS to prove that they have been engaging their communities about NFIP topics such as managing development in the SFHA.	No adjustments for returning programs	Can provide evidence from outside CIS to prove that they have been engaging their communities about NFIP topics during years that they did not have an active CAP grant.

Characteristic	New Program Never received CAP-SSSE grant before		Returning Program Have CAP-SSSE history but may have taken a hiatus for one year or more	
II.C. Basic Floodplain Management Training Coverage	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. New programs will not have a three-year history, so the training plan for the current year will be the basis of the assessment with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will likely not be able to provide training records so they will have to submit training plans.	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the training plan for the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the training plan for the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.
II.D. Ability to Deliver a Variety of Training	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. New programs will not have a three-year history, so the training plan for the current year will be the basis of the assessment with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will likely not be able to provide training records so they will have to submit training plans.	No adjustments to benchmark criteria. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the training plan for the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years, including the training plan for the current year, will be used as the basis for the determination.
II.E. Process for Reviewing and Improving Model Floodplain Management Regulations	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
II.F. Substantial Damage Program	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
II.G. Percent of Participating Communities	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
II.H. Addressing Equity in Floodplain Management	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
II.I. Improving Resilience to Climate Change and Future Conditions	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
III.A. Communities Engaged	New programs will not have a performance metric history so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will not have a performance metric history.	No adjustments for returning programs. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.
III.B. Higher Standards Adoption	New programs will not have a performance metric history so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will not have a performance metric history.	No adjustments for returning programs. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.
III.C. Community Compliance Improvement	New programs will not have a performance metric history so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will not have a performance metric history.	No adjustments for returning programs. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.
III.E. Map Adoption	New programs will not have a performance metric history so they will enter the program as Foundational with a mandatory reassessment after one year.	New programs will not have a performance metric history.	No adjustments for returning programs. Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.	Any active CAP-SSSE grants in the last three years will be used as the basis for the determination.

Characteristic	New Program Never received CAP-SSSE grant before		Returning Program Have CAP-SSSE history but may have taken a hiatus for one year or more	
IV.A. Promotion of Flood Risk Awareness Products	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
IV.B. Coordination and Integrated Planning Across the State	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
IV.C. Coordination with OFAs (other than FEMA)	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for new programs	No adjustments for returning programs	No adjustments for returning programs
IV.D. Coordination with Insurance Professionals	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.
IV.E. Coordination and Integration into State Emergency Operations	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.
IV.F. Optimized Use of Mitigation Funding for Priority Structures	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.
IV.G. Strategic Planning	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for new programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.	No adjustments for returning programs.

Appendix C. Glossary

CAC	Community Assistance Contacts
CAP-SSSE	Community Assistance Program – State Support Services Element
CAV	Community Assistance Visits
CEC	Continuing education course
CEPTool	Community Engagement Prioritization Tool
CEU	Continuing education unit
CFM	Certified Floodplain Manager
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIS	Community Information System
CRS	Community Rating System
DRRA	Disaster Recovery Reform Act
EMO	Emergency Management Office
EO	Executive Order
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FFRMS	Federal Flood Risk Management Standard
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GIS	Geographic Information System
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
MIP	Mapping Information Platform

ND Grants	Non-disaster grants
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
OFA	Other Federal Agency
PARS	Payment and Reporting System
POC	Point of contact
PoP	Period of Performance
RFIL	Regional Flood Insurance Liaison
RL/SRL	Repetitive loss/severe repetitive loss
SDAP	Substantial Damage Administrative Procedures
SI/SD	Substantial improvement/Substantial damage
SHMO	State Hazard Mitigation Officer
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SOP	Standard operating procedure
SOW	Statement of Work
SVI	Social Vulnerability Index
TSF	Tiered State Framework
USGS	United States Geological Survey

Appendix D. Relevant Dates for 2024 Off-Cycle Assessment for Characteristic I.D. Administrative Grant Management

Relevant dates from the last three PoPs can be found below.

	Quarterly Report Submission Dates (30 days after the end of the quarter)	Grant Application Submission Date Deadline	TSF Assessment Submission Dates
FY20	QR1: October 30, 2020 QR2: January 30, 2021 QR3: April 30, 2021 Final: September 30, 2021[a]	June 14, 2020	January 4, 2021 (Off-cycle)
FY21	QR1: October 30, 2021 QR2: January 30, 2022 QR3: April 30, 2022 Final: October 30, 2022[a]	June 28, 2021	January 3, 2022 (Off-cycle)
FY22	QR1: October 30, 2022 QR2: January 30, 2023 QR3: April 30, 2023 Final: October 30, 2023	June 18, 2022	January 5, 2023

NOTES:

[a] Some regions may require a QR4 report that is separate from the final closeout report, due July 30. This is not required for the TSF Assessment, unless a state has an extension, in which case, a QR4 report would be due at the date listed above, and subsequent QRs for any additional quarters of the grant would be required as well as a final closeout report.