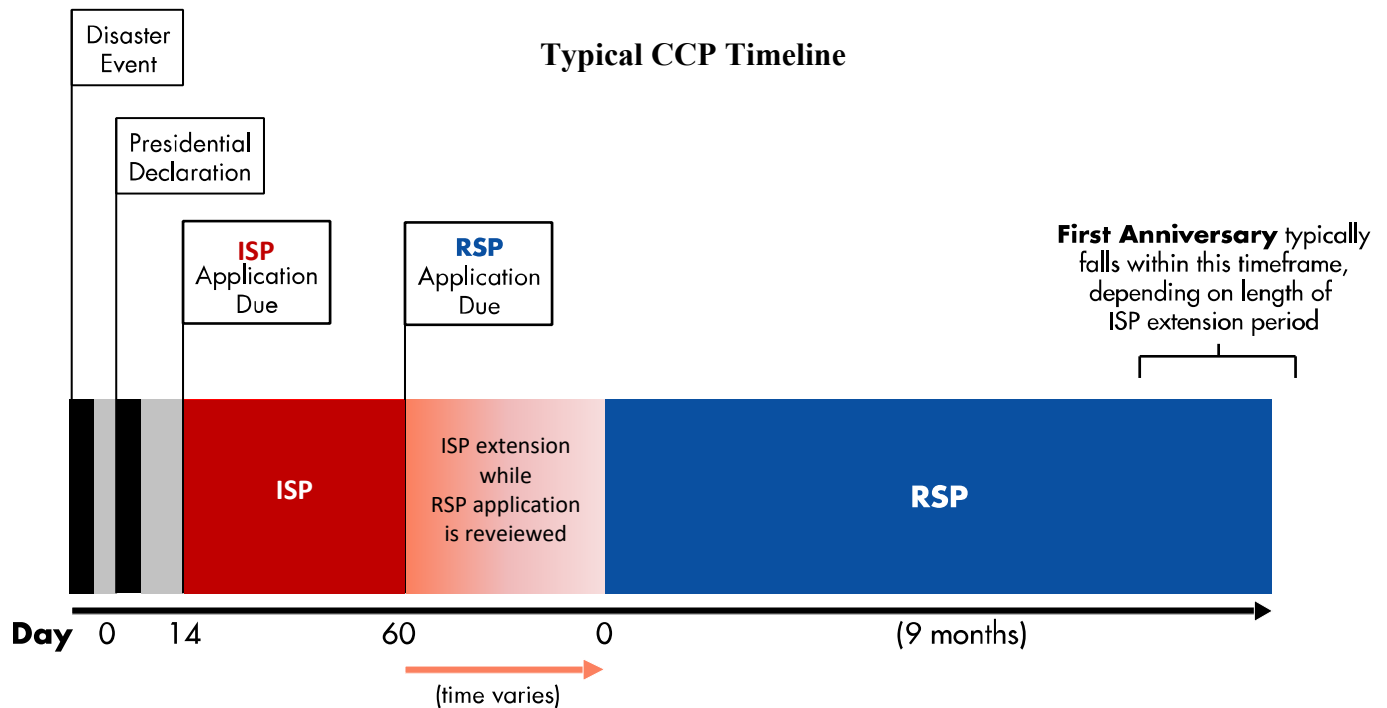


# Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program State and Territory Timeline and Checklist

This timeline and checklist provide state and territory Mental Health Authority (SMHA) staff with recommended action steps required for a typical disaster response effort and application for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP) Immediate Services Program (ISP) and Regular Services Program (RSP). Because each disaster is unique, this document is not intended to capture every unusual circumstance and subsequent action step. Please note that the timeline reflects calendar days, not business days. State and territory staff are encouraged to consult with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) Emergency Mental Health and Traumatic Stress Services Branch (EMHTSSB) for additional guidance.

## Immediate Services Program (ISP)



**The ISP is a 60-day grant program.**

**Pre-Disaster (for disasters that have a warning/threat phase such as hurricanes)**

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- ☐ **Carry out alert and notification activities outlined in your organization's mental health/behavioral health all-hazards disaster plan.** For example, ensure that SMHA facilities, offices, and programs are appropriately prepared for the impending disaster event; alert disaster behavioral health response staff that they may be called upon to respond; and coordinate with organizations that will be setting up disaster relief centers/shelters.
- ☐ **If possible, communicate with SMHA leadership staff about the potential eligibility to apply for ISP funds in the event of a Presidential disaster declaration.**
- ☐ **Ensure that you have up-to-date ISP application package and instructions.** Contact the SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) to obtain up-to-date materials (1-800-308-3515, [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov)).
- ☐ **Ensure that systems are in place to document initial disaster behavioral health response efforts.**
- ☐ **Communicate with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), the FEMA Regional Office, and local contacts in the threatened regions.** This will ensure that you will be able to collect needs assessment and damage information quickly following the disaster event.

**Disaster Event (impact and immediate rescue/recovery phase)**

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- ☐ **Carry out acute disaster behavioral health response activities.** Do these according to your organization's all-hazards disaster plan and the needs of the disaster event. Document the initial disaster behavioral health response efforts (this information will be needed for the ISP Application).
- ☐ **Contact SAMHSA CMHS EMHTSSB or SAMHSA DTAC for any technical assistance (TA) needs.**

**Days 0–14: Presidential Declaration of Disaster and Development and Submission of ISP Application**

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The date of the declaration is Day 0; a disaster identification number is assigned to the state by FEMA. The day after the declaration date is Day 1 (for determining application due date).

**Days 0–2**

- ☐ **Communicate with SMHA leadership, the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) or designee, and state fiscal staff to determine if an ISP application package will be submitted.** The GAR is usually located within the SEMA. Ensure that leadership staff understands the basic programmatic, regulatory, and fiscal requirements of a CCP as well as the SMHA staff time that will be needed to administer the program.
- ☐ **Contact your designated FEMA Regional Individual Assistance Coordinator or Disaster Field Office (DFO) to request Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) information.** This will be needed to complete the needs assessment section of the ISP Application. Supplement this with information obtained from local contacts, media reports, and other disaster response organizations such as the American Red Cross. FEMA registrant data, as they become available, may also be used to inform the needs assessment.

- ☐ **Communicate with your SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer.** Typically, he or she will contact the State Disaster Mental Health Coordinator (DMHC) to accomplish the following:
  - Verify receipt of application package and TA materials.
  - Determine if state intends to apply for an ISP.
  - Offer TA on application process, scope, and limits of program.
  - Reinforce application protocols and explain roles of FEMA, SEMA, SAMHSA CMHS, and SAMHSA DTAC.

## **Days 2–9**

- ☐ **Write ISP Application, conduct ongoing needs assessment, and continue disaster response activities.**
- ☐ **Communicate with FEMA to obtain the FEMA Individual Assistance numbers.** These numbers can be used in place of the PDA numbers (refer to pages 4–5 of ISP Supplemental Instructions).
- ☐ **Continue to carry out initial disaster behavioral health response and crisis counseling activities.** Follow your organization's mental health/behavioral health all-hazards disaster plan and the needs of the disaster event. Document all response efforts. The state should carefully track and document the types of allowable CCP services provided in case the state is interested in requesting reimbursement for interim costs from the date of the incident until ISP application package due date, which is Day 14 (refer to the section on interim costs in the ISP Supplemental Instructions).
- ☐ **With SMHA leadership, identify the team that will write the content for the ISP application package.** Ensure that they have the time to complete the task by identifying additional staff to take over other essential duties, if necessary. Identify the team leader responsible for managing the application process. It is essential that a fiscal staff person is a member of the team as fiscal mechanisms will need to be quickly established to process ISP funds.
- ☐ **Develop an ISP application package that meets FEMA and SAMHSA requirements within the 14-day timeframe.** An actual meeting of team members may not be possible or necessary at this time. ISP application package development is a process that goes on for several days. Communication among team members regarding their responsibilities for developing the application package should be managed by the team leader. The activities listed below are not necessarily sequential steps, but they are important and must be completed within the 14-day timeframe.
  - Create a timeline for the application writing process and assign responsibilities to team members to ensure that the ISP application package will be completed within the 14-day timeframe. Discuss how major aspects of the ISP application package and resultant program will be addressed (needs assessment, state and local resources and capabilities, response activities, plan of services including staffing plan and training, and budget).
  - Ensure that the timeline accommodates completing standard grant forms and obtaining signatures of the GAR and SMHA leadership staff.
  - Conduct needs assessment evaluating the disaster situation, state and local resources and capabilities, and response activities to date.
  - Use the available ISP documents. These include the ISP Application, ISP Supplemental Instructions, CCP Quarterly and Final Report Format, CCP Guidance, and required data collection forms.
  - Identify potential providers, determine how the program will be staffed, and decide how staff will be hired in a timely manner.
  - Develop a plan of services including a staffing plan, training, and budget.
  - Provide an orientation to the participating local providers on the scope and purview of the CCP model outlining allowable versus non-allowable services and costs.
  - Determine how and where program staff will receive required 2-day CCP Core Content Training. Contact the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer or SAMHSA DTAC for TA support for recommended qualified instructors.

## CCP State and Territory Timeline and Checklist

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- Ensure that state fiscal mechanisms will be in place to process FEMA funds so that service providers will be able to access funding efficiently.
- As needed, contact the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer and SAMHSA DTAC for TA.

### Days 10–13

- ☐ **Submit a draft ISP application package.** The SMHA may opt to submit draft ISP application package to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer for review. Submission of a draft application can identify issues early, help the state identify the appropriate size of the program, and avoid formal conditions being placed on the ISP grant award. The SMHA must inform the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer that they intend to submit a draft as early as possible so that federal staff can ensure adequate time is scheduled for review.
- ☐ **Incorporate SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer feedback into a final draft for formal submission.** If the state submits a draft ISP application package to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer for review, he or she will return written or verbal comments within 24 hours of receipt of the draft. The state and the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer will work together on a feasible timeline to allow for adequate review and turnaround time to obtain signatures (e.g., holidays and weekends may complicate the timeline).

### Day 14: Final application is due.

- ☐ **Submit the original, signed final ISP Application and supporting materials to the FEMA Regional Office.** Send electronic and hardcopy versions of the application to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer.

### Days 15–60: Program Implementation and Service Delivery

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- ☐ **Address any grant conditions in writing according to the due date indicated in the award conditions letter.** FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS make every effort to review ISP Applications as quickly as possible. Following review, the ISP grant may be awarded as written (without conditions), awarded with conditions attached, or denied.
- ☐ **Formalize state fiscal mechanisms to process ISP funds.** Execute contractual agreements with service providers. Ensure that mechanisms have the capacity to address ISP continuation funding, which often occurs following Day 60 of the ISP up to the award of the RSP grant (should the state choose to apply for an RSP). (Note: In some states, legal operating procedures will allow continuation only upon official notice of additional funding or extension of the grant. Therefore, the SMHA may not be able to ensure uninterrupted continuation of the program without some official notice of the grant award prior to the date that the grant is supposed to start. Consult with the SEMA on disaster emergency waivers.)
- ☐ **Establish clear program branding that is separate and distinct from the regular mental health system to ensure that disaster survivors and affected people can access services.** A program name and logo, outreach or psycho-educational materials, and use of media or hotlines are typical mechanisms for program branding and promulgation.
- ☐ **Conduct a CCP Core Content Training.** A CCP Core Content Training will need to occur to ensure that staff understand the CCP model, are competent with crisis counseling interventions, are able to identify severe reactions to disaster and refer people appropriately, and are able to collect program data.
- ☐ **Implement the plan of services described in the ISP application package, and conduct crisis counseling activities.**
- ☐ **Collect and analyze program data.** Collect data using the required CCP data collection tools specified in the award letter and use the information to target outreach and service delivery, as well as determine and justify the need for an RSP.

## CCP State and Territory Timeline and Checklist

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- ☐ **Communicate with your FEMA Joint Field Office Specialist and SAMHSA Project Officer on the Individual Assistance Routine Use Policy.** Requests for this information must be in writing (see Routine Use Policy section).

### Key Dates within Days 25–60

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#### Days 25–40

- ☐ **Ensure that you have up-to-date RSP application package and instructions.** Contact SAMHSA DTAC to obtain up-to-date materials (1-800-308-3515, [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov)).
- ☐ **Within this time period, meet with SMHA leadership to review ongoing needs assessment data and determine if an RSP application package will be submitted.** Ensure that leadership staff understand the basic programmatic, regulatory, and fiscal requirements of an RSP; how it differs from an ISP; and the SMHA staff time that will be needed to administer the program. Be aware that ISP and RSP funds are separate grant awards; therefore, ISP funding does not roll over into the RSP grant.

#### Day 40

- ☐ **Confirm intent to submit an RSP application package.**
- ☐ **Inform the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer and the FEMA Regional Contact of the state's intent to submit an RSP application package.**
- ☐ **Consult with the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer on submitting an ISP extension request.** ISP extension requests are only allowed if the state plans to submit an RSP application package.
- ☐ **Consult with SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer in determining the need for a cost versus no-cost extension.**

#### Days 40–59: Write content for the RSP application package.

- ☐ **Write the RSP application package.** Put together a team to write the RSP Application. Identify a team leader and assign tasks to team members. Review the RSP Application and RSP Supplemental Instructions documents. The RSP Application is similar in format to the ISP Application, but the state is expected to develop a more thorough response appropriate for the longer (9-month) program. Grant reviewers will expect a more detailed needs assessment based on current information, and selection of service providers and targeting of services related to the identified need. As a separate grant, the RSP Application must reflect the need for services for the 9-month program and should not be viewed as just a continuation of the ISP. TA is available from the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer on the requirements and content development of the RSP application package, and from SAMHSA DTAC on resources and materials. (Note: The ISP Midprogram Report is contained within the RSP Application. By completing the RSP Application, you will also be meeting the requirement for the ISP Midprogram Report. States are only required to submit an ISP Midprogram Report if they are applying for an RSP.)

#### RSP Application Package without an ISP

Typically, a state applying for an RSP grant has also had an ISP in response to the disaster. If a state is seeking an RSP without having had an ISP, particular care will need to be given to two sections of the RSP Application: the needs assessment and the section on response activities from date of incident. The state will be expected to provide a detailed justification of need for RSP services. Interim costs are not allowed if only applying for a RSP grant.

- ☐ **Submit ISP extension request letter to the FEMA Regional Contact with a copy to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer.** If submitting an RSP application package, the state must submit a formal letter to the FEMA

## CCP State and Territory Timeline and Checklist

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Region requesting an extension of the ISP to continue services until the time that a decision is rendered on the RSP application package. The state may request a no-cost or cost extension. It is recommended that the state submit the request before the end date of the ISP to avoid a loss in funding and services.

- ☐ **In order to proceed with a cost extension**, the SMHA must submit a justification of continued need, budget narrative table, SF-424 signed by the GAR, and an SF-424a to the FEMA Regional Contact with a copy to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer.
- ☐ **In order to proceed with a no-cost extension**, the SMHA must submit a justification of continued need for a period of 6–8 weeks until the RSP is awarded. No budgetary items are needed for a no-cost extension.
- ☐ **Ensure that state fiscal and contracting mechanisms will enable funds to continue to be disbursed to providers throughout the ISP extension period.** The FEMA Region will provide the state with a letter approving the extension request. If the state is concerned it might be unable to continue services without interruption, staff should notify SAMHSA CMHS and the FEMA Region immediately.

### Day 60: RSP application package is due.

- ☐ **Submit the original, signed, final RSP application, along with the ISP extension request, to the FEMA Regional Office.** Send electronic and hardcopy versions of the application to the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer.

### Day 61-RSP Award: ISP Extension Period

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The ISP will move into an extension period while the RSP application package is under official review at SAMHSA CMHS and FEMA. The ISP will continue in this extension period until the RSP application review process is completed and a decision is rendered on the RSP. This process usually takes 6–8 weeks.

- ☐ **Arrange tentative date(s), trainer(s), and location(s) for the Transition to RSP Training.** The state is encouraged to arrange tentative dates for the Transition to RSP Training; however, the state will need to wait for the formal RSP grant award to confirm and fund the training. If the state anticipates hiring a significant number of new crisis counselors for an RSP, it will also need to repeat the CCP Core Content Training for the new staff, which is usually conducted by the Program Director. If the state did not receive an ISP grant, they will need to conduct a Core Content Training instead of the Transition to RSP Training.
- ☐ **Prepare to implement RSP when awarded.** While the state will need to wait for the formal RSP grant award to fund RSP activities, they may prepare drafts of outreach and education materials, develop drafts of job ad postings for new CCP staff, review additional data collection and reporting requirements for an RSP, and otherwise prepare to implement the program quickly and effectively immediately following Notice of Award (NOA).
- ☐ **Communicate with the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer on the status of the grant application and the NOA issuance.**
- ☐ **Work with SAMHSA CMHS and FEMA to select a start date for an RSP.** When it becomes clear that the RSP grant has been approved and will be awarded, there is some flexibility to select a start date that will allow for a smooth programmatic and fiscal transition from the ISP to RSP. Before a NOA is issued to the state, the state and the SAMHSA CMHS Project Officer should work together on identifying the start date for an RSP, which will be reflected on the NOA. The state should advise SAMHSA CMHS of any problems regarding uninterrupted continuation of services between ISP and RSP.

## Regular Services Program (RSP)

The RSP is a 9-month grant program organized into three quarters.

### RSP Quarter 1

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#### RSP Quarter 1: Days 1–15

- ☐ **Address any grant conditions in writing according to the due date indicated in the award conditions letter.** FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS make every effort to review RSP application packages as quickly as possible. Following review, the RSP grant may be awarded as written (without conditions), awarded with conditions attached, or denied.
- ☐ **Formalize state fiscal mechanisms to process RSP funds.** Execute contractual agreements with service providers. Ensure that mechanisms have the capacity to address RSP funding issues. For example, some RSP grant awards will be disbursed in two separate allotments of funds.
- ☐ **Conduct outreach to ensure that disaster survivors and affected people can access services.** Ensure that community stakeholders, special populations, and affected survivors are aware of the RSP and can access services easily. (Note: Outreach is conducted throughout the RSP, but is much more intense in the first and second quarter. In the third quarter, it is typical to shift from individual to more community-based group services in preparation for the phasedown part of the RSP.)
- ☐ **Recruit and hire new staff (if indicated).**
- ☐ **Conduct Transition to RSP Training and address evaluation and data collection issues.** In addition to the required RSP data collection forms, the state has the option to use additional tools designed for the RSP. Ensure that mechanisms are in place to facilitate data collection and evaluation and that staff have been trained on the use of the data collection tools.
- ☐ **Implement the plan of services described in the RSP application package and conduct crisis counseling activities.**

#### RSP Quarter 1: Days 16–90

- ☐ **Continue to deliver services.** Carry out crisis counseling activities, conduct ongoing needs assessment, meet regularly with staff and providers, monitor quality of services and data collection, and ensure that staff stress management opportunities exist.
- ☐ **Complete ISP closeout.** The ISP Final Program Report and Federal Financial Report (FFR) 425 will be due to FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS 90 days following the end date of ISP funding (i.e., the day before the start of the RSP). The state is encouraged to begin working on ISP closeout soon after the end of program funding to ensure that it makes the reporting deadline. This process includes data collection and analysis, fiscal accounting, report writing, and financial voucher preparation. States must use the CCP Quarterly and Final Report Format for the ISP Final Program Report. States must use the SF-425 FFR for the ISP Final Fiscal Report.

## RSP Quarter 2

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- ☐ **Continue to deliver services.** Carry out crisis counseling activities, conduct ongoing needs assessment, meet regularly with staff and providers, monitor quality of services and data collection, and ensure that staff stress management opportunities exist.
- ☐ **Complete the RSP First Quarterly Report.** The RSP First Quarterly Report is due to FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS 30 days after the end of the first quarter of RSP services. States must use the CCP Quarterly and Final Report Format for RSP Quarterly Reports.
- ☐ **Complete the letter requesting second allotment of RSP funds.** If RSP funds were disbursed in two allotments, a written request for the second allotment of funds, including demonstration of continued need and accounting of funds spent to date, is required. Use the Budget Disbursement Request Template form to complete the written request. The request is typically submitted at the same time as the RSP First Quarterly Report.
- ☐ **Administer the Participant Feedback Survey (required).** The Participant Feedback Survey is a data tool that is administered to individuals who receive individual or group crisis counseling. It is administered twice during a typical RSP, once at 6 months post-disaster and a second time at 12 months post-disaster. A week in which to administer the survey is selected. The CCP should consider selecting a week in the second quarter for the first administration of this survey, although it may be administered within a different time period if preferred.
- ☐ **Administer the Service Provider Feedback Survey (required).** The Service Provider Feedback Survey is a data tool that allows crisis counseling staff and their supervisors to rate quality of services as well as their reactions to the work. It is administered 6 months after the disaster event. CCPs should administer the survey as close to 6 months after the disaster event as possible. If a CCP lasts more than 12 months, the survey should be administered again at approximately 12 months after the disaster.
- ☐ **Conduct RSP Midprogram Training.** The RSP Midprogram Training is typically presented near the midpoint of the 9-month RSP, and focuses on increasing staff morale and addressing staff stress, adjusting services to meet emergent survivor and special population needs, and continuing outreach and service delivery while beginning to contemplate eventual phasedown.

## RSP Quarter 3

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- ☐ **Continue to deliver services.** Carry out crisis counseling activities, conduct ongoing needs assessment, meet regularly with staff and providers, monitor quality of services and data collection, and ensure that staff stress management opportunities exist.
- ☐ **Complete the RSP Second Quarterly Report.** The RSP Second Quarterly Report is due to FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS 30 days after the end of the second quarter of RSP services. States must use the CCP Quarterly and Final Report Format for RSP Quarterly Reports.
- ☐ **Conduct Disaster Anniversary Training.** The Disaster Anniversary Training is typically presented 6–8 weeks prior to the first anniversary of the disaster event. It is sometimes combined with either the RSP Midprogram or RSP Phasedown Training should the timeline of the CCP allow for this. It addresses survivor and community needs related to the anniversary, and allows for planning for any resultant changes in service delivery.
- ☐ **Conduct RSP Phasedown Training.** The RSP Phasedown Training is typically presented 2–3 months prior to the end of RSP services. It addresses staff, individual survivor, and community needs, leaving a legacy of resilience-building materials and training, and deals with final program reporting issues related to the end of CCP services.



## CCP State and Territory Timeline and Checklist

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- ☐ **Phase down program services.** Begin to phase down the program by informing community partners that services are coming to an end, engaging natural support systems to continue any support still needed, and leaving a legacy of educational and self-help materials in the community.
- ☐ **Conduct staff recognition activities.** Most RSPs prepare staff recognition activities (e.g., presentation of appreciation certificates) or informal events (e.g., potluck gatherings) to promote closure and validate successes.
- ☐ **Administer the Participant Feedback Survey a second time (optional, but strongly recommended).**
- ☐ **Administer the Service Provider Feedback Survey a second time (optional, but strongly recommended).** If the CCP runs longer than 12 months after the disaster, administer the Service Provider Feedback Survey a second time.

### RSP Closeout (Post-Quarter 3 Activities)

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- ☐ **Complete RSP closeout.** The RSP Final Program Report and FFR 425 will be due to FEMA and SAMHSA CMHS 90 days after the end date of RSP funding. The state is encouraged to begin working on RSP closeout soon after the end of program funding to ensure that it makes the reporting deadline. This process includes data collection and analysis, fiscal accounting, report writing, and financial voucher preparation. It is important to note that States must drawdown funds from SAMHSA no later than 90 days after the end date of RSP funding. States must use the CCP Quarterly and Final Report Format for the RSP Final Program Report. States must use the SF-425 FFR for the RSP Final Fiscal Report.
- ☐ **Integrate lessons learned from your CCP into state disaster preparedness activities.** Integrate lessons learned from your CCP into state disaster behavioral health and emergency management preparedness activities and plans to inform disaster response and future CCPs.
- ☐ **Stay connected with the disaster behavioral health field.** Contact SAMHSA DTAC for continued TA and support on any and all disaster behavioral health preparedness and response issues at 1-800-308-3515, [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov), or <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>.