



MEMORANDUM – INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE GUIDANCE

MEMORANDUM

TO	State of Florida Emergency Management Community
FROM	State Training Officer, Florida Division of Emergency Management
DATE	Thursday, October 23, 2025
SUBJECT	Temporary Acceptance of Alternative Independent Study (IS) Courses

PURPOSE

Due to the ongoing Federal Government shutdown, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues to experience significant disruptions in its normal operations, resulting in the temporary inaccessibility of the FEMA Independent Study (IS) Program website and associated training materials.

Thus, the **Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)** will establish an interim policy and process for the recognition and approval of **Independent Study (IS) Courses** through an alternate state-approved platform, ensuring the continuous progress of Florida's Emergency Management Community training continuity, statewide preparedness, and students' progression.

SCOPE

This temporary policy applies to the following individual(s) and groups:

- All State of Florida Emergency Management Community members, including State Agencies, Local Jurisdictions, University & College Partners, participating in FEMA IS training programs
- Students attempted to take courses that require foundational prerequisites for State and National training, including *G-Series* and *Professional Development Series*

DURATION OF TEMPORARY APPROVAL

This temporary policy and authorization will remain in effect until the Federal Government shutdown is lifted. A formal notice of discontinuation will be issued by the STO when FEMA's Independent Study website and testing system are restored to full functionality.

TEMPORARY IS COURSE APPROVAL

The Florida State Training Officer (STO) will temporarily recognize course completions issued by the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), through their Emergency Management Training System (STEMS), for the following FEMA IS courses:

FEMA IS Course	STEMS Equivalent	Notes
IS-100.c: Introduction to Incident Command System	"On-Demand" IS-100	Aligned with FEMA content and test
IS-200.c: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response	"On-Demand" IS-200	Aligned with FEMA content and test
IS-700.b: National Incident Management System, An Introduction	"On-Demand" IS-700	Aligned with FEMA content and test
IS-800.d: National Response Framework, An Introduction	"On-Demand" IS-800	Aligned with FEMA content and test



These courses are **free offerings that mirror FEMA's official curriculum and assessments**. The successful completion of the approved course above, through STEMS, will result in a Louisiana-issued certificate that shall be recognized by the FDEM STO for Florida training purposes.

Additional prerequisite IS courses are being identified and will be added via additional memoranda until the Federal Government shutdown is lifted, and normal FEMA IS operations are restored.

REGISTRATION & ACCESS PROCESS

Individual(s) or groups may access the Louisiana STEMS system via: <https://stems.gohsep.la.gov>

TO REGISTER:

1. Click the **"Log In"** tab, then select **"Register"**.
2. On the *Account Registration* page, complete all required (red asterisk) fields.
3. For "Parish," select **East Baton Rouge Parish**.
4. For "Region," select **Out-of-State**.
5. Record your username and password for future access.
6. Once registered, navigate to the **"Trainings"** tab (top right) to locate the "On-Demand" IS courses once live.

Upon completion, individual(s) or groups will receive a **Louisiana State Certificate**, which will be automatically emailed and posted to their **STEMS profile**.

TEMPORARY SUBMISSION & CERTIFICATION PROCESS

To maintain transparent records and ensure consistent documentation within Florida's training database, FDEM will implement a **temporary Smartsheet submission process** for all students completing Louisiana-approved IS courses.

Process Overview:

1. Students will visit the **Temporary IS Course Certification Form** hosted via Smartsheet.
 - a. **Link:** [FDEM Certification – IS Form](#)
2. The form will require the student to:
 - a. Provide full name and contact information.
 - b. Identify the IS course completed (IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, or IS-800).
 - c. Upload a copy of the **Louisiana STEMS Certificate** as proof of completion.
3. Once submitted, the Florida State Training Officer (or designee) will review and verify the document within **2-3 business days**.
4. Upon successful verification, students will receive a **Florida-Certified Certificate of Completion** via email for recordkeeping and submission to SERT TRAC.
5. Certificates issued under this temporary process will be stored in a central FDEM Training Repository to ensure proper documentation and validation once FEMA IS systems are restored.

This process ensures that all Florida students maintain compliance with training requirements during the federal system outage and that training records remain consistent across state systems.



ACCEPTANCE & DOCUMENTATION

After receiving the Louisiana State Certificate, the individual(s) or groups will upload the certificate in SERT TRAC and FDEM will do the following:

- **Accept Louisiana STEMS certificates** for the four approved courses in lieu of FEMA IS certificates.
- **Validate completion records** for course prerequisites in SERT TRAC or other state systems upon submission of proof of completion.
- Require that students **retain electronic and/or printed certificates** for upload to SERT TRAC once normal FEMA IS operations resume.

Upon the restoration of the FEMA IS course, students may, at their discretion, complete the FEMA equivalent courses to obtain FEMA-issued certificates; however, **Louisiana STEMS certificates will remain valid** for state training prerequisites during the affected period.

DURATION OF TEMPORARY APPROVAL

This authorization remains active **until FEMA's Independent Study website and testing system are restored** to full functionality. At that time, a formal notice of discontinuation will be issued by the Florida State Training Officer.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any further questions or clarifications, please reach out to the STO at:

Florida State Training Officer (STO)

Bureau of Response – Florida Division of Emergency Management

Email: FDEM.STO@em.myflorida.com