



FLASH

Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I qualify for FLASH?

Any property owner within the unincorporated area of Humboldt County is eligible to apply to the FLASH Program.

Fill out an [interest form](#) to be added to the waiting list.

What is considered low-income?

For the purposes of this program, “low-income” is defined as household income at or below the threshold listed in the table below according to household size:

Household Size:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Total Income:	\$39,150	\$44,750	\$50,350	\$55,900	\$60,400	\$64,850	\$69,350	\$73,800

What does the FLASH Technician do?

FLASH Technicians serve as a liaison between the County and the landowner. They have been contracted by the County because of their expertise in fuels reduction and wildfire preparedness. There is no cost to the landowner for their services.

FLASH Technicians are primarily responsible for conducting an initial site visit to do a Home Risk Assessment, identify/make recommendations about hazardous vegetation to be treated, and set up the paperwork (Participation Agreement, Reimbursement Agreement, and W-9 tax form if reimbursement is expected to be more than \$600); and visiting again at the end to ensure the work was completed as agreed. They are not responsible for doing the fuels reduction work or overseeing crews.

Who decides what work is done?

The FLASH Technician will provide a recommended prescription during an initial site visit based on the best available science and will review the types of treatment eligible for reimbursement. Landowner and FLASH Technician will discuss the recommendations and come to mutual agreement about the work to be accomplished as part of the Program. The landowner will then complete the work themselves or hire their own contractor and follow the guidance of the FLASH Technician.

Do you provide a contractor or is that up to me?

The Program does not provide or recommend contractors or crews to do the work. The landowner is responsible for doing the work themselves or contracting and paying their own crew and providing proof of contractor cost.

We have a handyman/renter/neighbor who is well qualified to assist on my behalf. Can they complete the work, or must it be me, the landowner?

The landowner is free to hire whomever they choose so long as the work is completed as agreed. If you choose to hire someone else, it will be your responsibility to track their time and costs using the Landowner Cost Documentation (LCD) form and providing proof of cost (i.e. invoice, receipt) as applicable. Reimbursement is based solely on a per acre rate; however, receiving reimbursement is contingent on providing all completed forms, including the LCD.

If the individual is paid, the same documentation would be required as if they were a contractor. If they are not paid, the value of their work will be based on the number of hours spent multiplied by the state volunteer rate.

What percentage cost share is my responsibility?

Percentage landowner cost share depends on the cost per acre, which varies by fuel density, contractor fees and other variables. Across the entire county and dozens of varied projects, the cost per acre during the last round of FLASH completed in 2018 was about \$1,900/acre TOTAL with about 35% *reimbursed*. The reimbursement rates have since increased to account for rising costs while maintaining an approximate 40% cost-share.

How is the reimbursement amount (cost share) determined?

- Landowners will be reimbursed according to the per-acre rates below. An estimated total reimbursement will be determined by the FLASH Technician and will be agreed upon by both parties prior to the start of work.
- The maximum reimbursement per ownership is \$4,500 (special circumstances may warrant additional funds pending County approval).

Thinning and Limbing

\$280/acre Light
\$560/acre Moderate
\$900/acre Heavy

Managing Grass and Flashy Fuels

\$150/acre Light
\$440/acre Moderate
\$800/acre Heavy

Bonus: +\$100 for work done in the Defensible Space Zone (within 100 feet from structure) that conforms to state guidelines.

How do I receive payment?

Funds are provided on a **reimbursement basis**. To be reimbursed:

- 1) A FLASH Technician will do a final site visit to confirm the work was completed as agreed in the Reimbursement Agreement.
- 2) Participants must provide proof of contractor cost (if one was hired) or certify, by signing a form, that they spent X number of hours on the project. If the participant (or a volunteer) does the work, the state volunteer rate is used.

Once the documentation has been submitted by the FLASH Technician to the County, a check will be issued to the landowner for the amount stated on the final, signed Reimbursement Agreement.

Are any permits required?

Participants are responsible for ensuring the work is completed in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Program does not reimburse tree climbing, use of lifts, or removal of trees over 8" in diameter (removal of trees over 12" generally requires a permit from the Department of Planning & Building).

Pile burning of cut materials requires a burn permit from the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District.

Are any permits required (continued)?

Projects that take place within the county right-of-way are required to obtain an encroachment permit from the Department of Planning & Building. For projects that are intended to improve public safety, the permit fee may be waived by the Department if the nature of the project is noted on the application.

What if program funds run out before it is my turn?

- You will remain on the waiting list until the program ends in early 2025 or additional funding is secured. You will be contacted if an opening becomes available.
- Please know that we will continue to seek additional funds to support this program and our ability to serve the needs of all interested landowners. Knowing that you are ready to participate will help with that effort.
- [Sign-up](#) for the HCFSC email list to stay in the know about future opportunities.
- As you are able, please continue preparing your property for wildfire on your own. Small changes and consistent maintenance of the home and the land around it can make a big difference. Reference the HCFSC's [Fire Safety Resources](#) page for guidance.

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