After the Storm

How departments, federal staff, and Cabinet advisers respond

USG.C.4.2.C "Describe the function of executive departments and the federal bureaucracy, including the authority and influence of the President's Cabinet."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the three executive departments, underline two actions by federal staff, and put a star beside one way Cabinet secretaries can influence the President.

Who Does What After a Hurricane?

1. After a hurricane floods homes and highways, federal help does not arrive from one desk. Congress has created executive departments to carry out laws in specific areas. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) handles disaster response through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA staff work with state and local officials to assess damage and deliver aid authorized by law. These workers are part of the federal bureaucracy, the agencies and employees that put federal policies into practice.

2. Flooded roads and contaminated water create different problems. At the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Federal Highway Administration helps states repair damaged highways that qualify for federal support. At the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), public health staff may help states track illness after flooding. Staff in these agencies bring specialized knowledge to daily decisions. Because many remain in their jobs across presidential terms, their work can continue even when a new president takes office.

3. Each department's secretary leads that department and usually serves in the President's Cabinet, a group of top advisers. Secretaries can brief the President about storm needs, recommend priorities, and guide their departments' work. The President can set executive priorities and direct department leaders within the law, but Cabinet advice is not a vote that binds the President. Congress sets laws and funding, so neither the President nor the Cabinet can simply promise unlimited aid. Cabinet advice can shape choices, while department leaders can carry out lawful plans.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do DHS and FEMA work together in disaster response?

2. What different storm problems do DOT and HHS address?

3. How does the federal bureaucracy turn disaster-aid laws into action?

4. How can Cabinet secretaries shape the President's response, and what limits their power?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A widespread power outage closes clinics and blocks medicine deliveries. In 3 or 4 sentences, explain how an executive department and federal staff could respond, how a Cabinet secretary could influence the President, and one legal limit on the response.

After the Storm

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the three executive departments, underline two actions by federal staff, and put a star beside one way Cabinet secretaries can influence the President. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do DHS and FEMA work together in disaster response?	**DHS handles disaster response through FEMA. FEMA staff work with state and local officials to assess damage and deliver aid authorized by law.**
2	What different storm problems do DOT and HHS address?	**DOT helps states repair qualifying damaged highways. HHS public health staff may help states track illness after flooding.**
3	How does the federal bureaucracy turn disaster-aid laws into action?	**Agency employees put the laws into practice, such as when FEMA staff assess damage and deliver authorized aid.**
4	How can Cabinet secretaries shape the President's response, and what limits their power?	**They can brief the President, recommend priorities, and guide their departments. They must act within the law and funding set by Congress.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Department of Health and Human Services could help states identify clinics that urgently need support. Its public health staff could share information about patients' needs with state officials. The HHS secretary could advise the President to make restoring access to care a priority. The response would still have to follow federal law and use funding provided by Congress.

Accept other plausible department and staff actions in Part 3 if the response explains Cabinet influence and a legal or funding limit. Do not require students to name an agency that the passage does not identify.