



Hurricane Helene Recovery with FEMA Webinar October 7, 2024 Frequently Asked Questions

We have done our best to share accurate answers to the questions as of October 7, 2024. If there are discrepancies between this document and information you receive from FEMA, FEMA's information will be correct. For the most up-to-date information, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/>.

Please note: there is a lot of misinformation being shared about FEMA assistance. For factual information, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricane-helene/rumor-response>.

Is FEMA going to run out of money?

FEMA has enough money right now for immediate response and recovery needs. The FEMA budget is determined by Congress, who is expected to return after the November election. Serious Needs Assistance is not finite – it's built into the budget for the disaster. It is available to all eligible applicants.

What documentation is required to verify an individual's identity?

[Click here](#) for a list of acceptable documentation. If an individual does not have the required documentation, visit a [Disaster Recovery Center](#) or call 1-800-621-3362 for next steps.

How is the Serious Needs Assistance administered?

- \$750 is given per eligible household by direct deposit or a mailed check. This is not the only type of assistance that FEMA provides – they are other forms that you may also qualify for.
- The assistance is limited to those who have indicated they have a need for immediate, emergency assistance.
- It is a grant, not a loan, and does not need to be paid back
- It is not dependent on whether or not you have insurance, although FEMA is designed to be a secondary source of assistance for those who are insured.
- To apply, visit [Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#)
- Once the application is received, serious needs assistance is typically received within 48 hours.
- After applying for FEMA disaster assistance, the file is reviewed to see if they meet the requirements for Serious Needs Assistance. It's expedited in some counties this week, depending on the State's request.
- If you have applied and not heard back, call 1-800-621-3362 to check your status.
- If there is more than one household living at an address, you may need to visit a Disaster Recovery Center or call 1-800-621-3362 to clarify.

- For college students, FEMA will need to determine if they are their own household or part of a household with other family members in another location before providing this assistance.
- Note that FEMA does not cover food loss (i.e. from loss of power, etc.) but the Serious Needs Assistance is meant to provide funds to buy food/medication/fuel while the individual is displaced from their home.
- There is not an official deadline, but most Serious Needs Assistance will be administered in the first 30-60 days, since it is meant to cover immediate emergency needs.

How do individuals without internet and phone service apply for assistance?

FEMA is establishing [Disaster Recovery Centers](#) (DRCs) across the affected areas, and folks can walk into them and have access to apply in-person or receive any access assistance they may need.

Is there a limit on the frequency of individual assistance? For example, two hurricanes hitting the same area in 6-12 months.

There is not a limit, but note that FEMA does not duplicate its own assistance if the subsequent disaster did not impact the applicant's home.

If you have applied for one type of assistance (e.g. house repairs), do you need to apply separately for other types (e.g. serious needs)?

No, once you apply, you will be awarded all assistance that you qualify for.

Are there programs for individuals experiencing homelessness?

Yes, those experiencing homelessness may be eligible for our temporary sheltering programs, as well as assistance to cover expenses arising from disaster-caused medical, dental, funeral needs or personal property damage.

Is there assistance for childcare costs?

In the application process, families may note that they have a need for Child Care Assistance. This type of assistance is limited by the respective state, tribe, or territory.

Should individuals keep receipts for things like chainsaws and generators?

Yes, FEMA may be able to reimburse for those expenses.

What assistance does FEMA provide if a home is a total loss?

Individuals would go through their homeowners insurance first, and then apply to FEMA for housing assistance.

My area was not a part of our Governor's emergency declaration, but we've had serious impacts. What should we do to get added?

Contact your Governor's office for more information.

Are undocumented individuals and families able to apply?

No.

What does the Public Assistance program for nonprofits cover?

Property damage, damage to historical documents, etc. Click here for more information:
[Assistance for Governments and Private Non-Profits After a Disaster | FEMA.gov](#)

Is there assistance for small businesses?

Yes. Visit the Small Business Administration for more information: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>.

Links:

[Get Assistance After a Disaster | FEMA.gov](#)

[Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#) (multiple languages)

[Resource Library for Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#)

[Assistance for Governments and Private Non-Profits After a Disaster | FEMA.gov](#) (multiple languages)

Translations available for Individual Assistance:

- [العربية](#)
- [Bosnian](#)
- [Chamorro](#)
- [Chuukese](#)
- [Deutsch](#)
- [English](#)
- [Español](#)
- [Français](#)
- [Ōlelo Hawaii](#)
- [Hmong](#)
- [Kreyòl](#)
- [Ilocano](#)
- [日本語](#)
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