

HELP FOR IMMIGRANTS AFTER A DISASTER

I am an immigrant and a survivor of a natural disaster. What help can I get from FEMA?

If the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) comes to your area after a disaster you can get help. Your immigration status does not matter for these kinds of disaster help:

- Finding lost people
- Emergency shelter, food, and water
- Transportation
- Emergency supplies like medicine, clothing, diapers and formula
- Crisis counseling

You can call 211 after a disaster to find out how to get help.

What other help can I get after a disaster?

There is some long-term disaster help that is only available to U.S. citizens or “qualified immigrants”:

- Temporary rental housing
- Help with lodging expenses
- Repair and replacement of destroyed housing
- Replacement of lost items
- Medical and funeral costs
- Small Business Administration loans

“Qualified Immigrants” who can get this help are:

- Lawful permanent residents (people who have green cards)
- Refugees, asylees, or people granted “withholding of removal/deportation”
- People paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- Cuban or Haitian entrants
- Certain survivors of domestic violence
- Trafficking survivors

What if I’m undocumented, but my child is a U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant?

If your child lives with you and is under 18, you can apply for FEMA benefits for them. Tell FEMA that you want the services only for your child and not for yourself. You are not required to provide your Social Security number. You do not need to provide any information about your immigration status.

Will applying for this help affect my immigration status?

No. Getting disaster help will not make you ineligible for citizenship or lawful permanent residence (getting a green card).

Helpful Tips

- Red Cross can provide assistance and will not ask about your immigration status. Red Cross has its own process to determine whether your home has serious damage or has been destroyed. You can call the Red Cross at (800) 675-5799.
- Ask for an interpreter if you do not speak English. An interpreter should be provided at no cost. Many agencies that help disaster survivors are required to provide interpreters.
- Never provide false information. This can cause you trouble and may affect your chance of getting U.S. citizenship or a green card.

Problems?
Call 800-870-0732
for free legal help