

Renters may be eligible for FEMA Disaster Assistance

Release Date: mars 8, 2021

DENTON, Texas –If you are a renter in one of the 16 counties designated for individual assistance and sustained damage or losses from the Oklahoma severe winter storms, you may be eligible for federal disaster assistance.

The counties are Canadian, Carter, Cherokee, Comanche, Cotton, Hughes, Jefferson, Le Flore, McIntosh, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Osage, Pittsburg, Stephens, Tulsa, and Wagoner.

If the house or apartment you are renting is your primary residence and is in one of these counties, you should register with FEMA to apply for grants to help with disaster-related expenses. If you have renter's insurance, you should call your insurance agent to start the claims process before you contact FEMA. By law, FEMA cannot duplicate benefits for losses covered by insurance or grants from state, local or tribal governments.

Expenses for renters can include:

- Renting a different dwelling when the formerly occupied one is unsafe to live in due to the winter storms;
- Storm-related medical and dental expenses;
- Increased cost of child-care expenses;
- Moving and storage fees;
- Replacement or repair of necessary personal property lost or damaged in the winter storm, such as appliances and furniture, textbooks and computers used by students, and work equipment or tools used by independent contractors;
- Repair or replacement of storm-damaged vehicles;
- Storm-related funeral and burial expenses, and
- Other serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other sources.



Rental grants may be used for security deposits, rent and the cost of essential utilities—such as gas or water. The grants may not be used to pay for separate cable or Internet bills. The grants are not loans, and don't have to be repaid. They are not taxable income and won't affect eligibility for Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

To apply for federal disaster assistance:

- Visit DisasterAssistance.gov, or
- If you cannot register online, call the disaster assistance helpline at 800-621-3362 (TTY) 800-462-7585 from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are available. Those who use a relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should update FEMA with their specific number assigned to that service.

Renters who face eviction or have been evicted from their storm-damaged apartment complex—whether their unit had damage or not—may be eligible for disaster assistance. Renters who have already registered for federal assistance and were evicted after they registered due to damage to other parts of their complex should call the FEMA Helpline.

Renters may also qualify for long-term, low-interest loans of up to \$40,000 from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans may be used to cover the cost of repairing or replacing essential storm-damaged personal property.

For information, visit SBA.gov/disaster, call 800-659-2955 (TTY 800-877-8339) or email DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov. To apply for an SBA loan, visit disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

