

Citizenship and Eligibility for FEMA Assistance

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FEMA is committed to helping homeowners and renters in Eaton, Ingham, Ionia, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland and Wayne counties recover from the Aug. 24-26, 2023, severe storms, tornadoes and flooding. Assistance is available to U.S. citizens, non-citizen nationals and qualified aliens.

Who is eligible for assistance?

Usually, you or a member of your household must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien to apply for assistance.

However, if you do not meet the status of either U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien, your household may still apply for and be considered for assistance if:

- Another adult member of your household meets the eligibility criteria and certified their citizenship status during the application process or signs the Declaration and Release form; or
- The parent or legal guardian of a minor child who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien applies for assistance on behalf of the child, if they live in the same household. The parent or legal guardian must apply as the co-applicant, and the minor child must be under the age of 18 at the time the disaster occurred.

Non-citizen nationals

A non-citizen national is a person born in an outlying possession of the U.S. (e.g., American Samoa) on or after the date the U.S. acquired the possession, or a person whose parents are U.S. non-citizen nationals. All U.S. citizens are U.S. nationals; however, not every U.S. national is a U.S. citizen.



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Who falls under ‘qualified alien’ status?

“Qualified alien” status includes:

- A legal permanent resident (“green card” holder)
- An asylee, refugee or an alien whose deportation is being withheld
- An alien paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- An alien granted conditional entry (per law in effect prior to April 2, 1980)
- A Cuban or Haitian entrant
- Aliens in the U.S. who have been abused, subject to battery or extreme cruelty by a spouse or other family/household member or have been a victim of a severe form of human trafficking.

Qualified minor children

The parent or legal guardian of a minor child living in the same household may apply for assistance on behalf of the minor child who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien. The minor child must be under the age of 18 as of the first day of the incident period on Aug. 24, 2023.

Resources

You can find more information on Citizenship and Immigration Status Requirements for Federal Public Benefits in multiple languages at <https://www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/program/citizenship-immigration-status>

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If you are unsure of your immigration status, talk to an immigration expert to learn if your status falls within the immigration status requirements for FEMA disaster assistance.

Residents who do not qualify for state and federal aid may be referred to voluntary agencies. Disaster assistance is available from many different voluntary agencies. Your citizenship or immigration status does *not* matter there. You can call 2-1-1 to obtain a referral to these agencies, including those that offer translation services.

For information about the disaster recovery operation in Michigan, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4757.

