

FAQ: Citizenship Status and Eligibility for Disaster Assistance

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1. What help is there for people who are not United States citizens?

If you are not a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National or Qualified Alien, you may still be eligible for assistance if you are the parent or guardian of a minor child, who resides with you and who is a United States Citizen, Non-Citizen National, or Qualified Alien. You can register for assistance using the child's Social Security number. If your child is a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National or Qualified Alien, but does not have a Social Security number, you can still apply for FEMA assistance by obtaining your child a Social Security number and calling FEMA to register within 60 days of the disaster declaration date. If you have any questions concerning your right to apply, or need assistance locating volunteer agencies to help you, you may call the application number at (800) 621-3362 (FEMA).

2. What are FEMA's citizenship/immigration requirements?

You must be a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National, or a Qualified Alien in order to be eligible for FEMA cash assistance programs: Individuals and Households Program Assistance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

A Qualified Alien includes anyone with legal permanent residence ("green card"), refugee or asylum status, withholding of deportation, conditional entry, parole into the U.S. for at least 1 year for humanitarian purposes; is a Cuban-Haitian Entrant; or has a pending or approved petition for relief based on battery or extreme cruelty by a family member.

You do not have to be a U.S. Citizen or a Qualified Alien for Crisis Counseling or Disaster Legal Services or for other short-term, non-cash emergency assistance.

3. If I am an undocumented immigrant, am I eligible for assistance for disaster-related needs?



Yes, you may be eligible under many different programs run by state and local agencies and voluntary agencies for various types of cash assistance.

4. If I am an undocumented immigrant, am I eligible for any assistance from FEMA?

You may be eligible for short-term, non-cash, emergency aid provided by FEMA.

You will not be personally eligible for FEMA cash assistance programs (Individuals and Households Program Assistance); however, you may apply on behalf of your U.S. citizen child, or another adult household member may qualify the household for assistance.

5. If I am an undocumented immigrant, can I apply on behalf of my child who was born in the United States?

You can apply on behalf of your minor child (under 18 years of age) for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program Assistance) if you live together.

You will not have to provide any information on your immigration status or sign any documents regarding your status.

6. Do I need a social security number to register for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program Assistance)?

If you are applying on behalf of your minor child, you should provide his or her social security number.

7. Will my registration information be shared with immigration or other law enforcement agencies?

FEMA will not proactively provide applicant information to immigration or law enforcement organizations. However, in rare circumstances, based on a specific request, a FEMA applicant's personal information may be shared within Department of Homeland Security. The Department includes Federal Emergency Management Agency, Customs and Border Protection, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Transportation Security Administration, United States Coast Guard, United States Secret Service



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Page 2 of 5

and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

8. Are foreign students studying in the United States eligible for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program Assistance) as "Qualified Aliens"?

While foreign students may qualify for non-cash, in-kind disaster relief (such as search and rescue, provision of food, water, sheltering, or emergency medical assistance), they do not qualify for cash assistance because their authorization to reside in the United States is based in part on the existence of an in-country support system.

9. If I have a social security number, am I eligible for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program Assistance) as a "Qualified Alien"?

Not necessarily, because having a Social Security number does not automatically mean that you are a Qualified Alien. You may be legally present in the U.S. and have a social security number, but not be a Qualified Alien.

Individuals and Households Program Assistance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance Eligibility Chart

STATUS	ELIGIBILITY
U.S. Citizens	YES
Lawful permanent residents "green card"	YES
Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals "DACA"	NO



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One household member is a citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien (can be a minor child on behalf of the household)	YES
Social Security Card Holders	MAYBE**
Temporary or seasonal agricultural workers	NO
Foreign Students	NO
Non-Citizen Nationals (Some individuals from American Samoa or CNMI)	YES
Asylee Refugee Alien whose deportation is being withheld	YES
Alien paroled into the United States for at least one year aka: Humanitarian or Significant Public Benefit Parole	YES
Alien granted conditional entry	YES
Cuban/Haitian entrant	YES
Battered alien spouse, battered alien children, the alien parent of battered children, and alien children of battered parents who fit certain criteria	YES



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Victim of a severe form of trafficking	YES
Temporary Tourist Visa Holders	NO
Temporary Work Visa Holders (There are approximately 22 different visa categories that fall under this classification.)	NO
Temporary Resident Cards	NO
Citizens of the Compact of Free Association countries	NO

* Per USCIS.

**Having a Social Security Number does not automatically mean that an individual is a Qualified Alien. The person may be legally present in the U.S. and have a Social Security Number, but not be a Qualified Alien.

Types of Federal disaster assistance available regardless of immigration status.	Emergency Assistance (e.g., sheltering); Disaster Legal Services; Crisis Counseling; Disaster Case Management; Disaster Food Stamps.
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