

Remote Home Inspections in Alabama

Release Date: Dec 15, 2020

Disaster survivors who applied to FEMA and reported that they cannot live at home due to damage from Hurricane Zeta will be contacted by FEMA to schedule a remote or exterior-only inspection.

In both instances, FEMA inspectors will complete an interview over the phone. Applicants will answer questions about the type and extent of damage sustained.

If you use a relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel, make sure FEMA has the specific number assigned to the service.

The inspector will ask the applicant to verify the last four digits of their FEMA registration ID; a 9-digit number generated at the completion of the application. The inspector will complete the verification process by providing the applicant with the first four digits of the registration ID.

When an exterior inspection is scheduled, the applicant or co-applicant will need to meet with an inspector to provide a photo ID. The meeting will take place outdoors and the inspector will maintain a distance of at least six feet. No additional in-person contact will occur once the inspector has viewed the photo ID.

Reasonable accommodations, including translation and ASL interpreters will be available to ensure effective communication with applicants with limited English proficiency, applicants with disabilities, and other individuals with access and functional needs. This can be done by having the applicant provide a relay service number such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel as part of the application. If you are communicating through Zoom or FaceTime, you can request an interpreter through Facetime or an interpreter and captioning through Zoom.

You may invite a designated party, such as a household member, relative or friend, to assist in communicating with the inspector.

Based on responses from the applicant, [the exterior-only inspection when applicable](#) and existing eligibility criteria; awards may be generated for Rental



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Assistance, Home Repair Assistance and Replacement Assistance.

Home Repair Assistance may be provided based on type of residence, [the exterior-only inspection when applicable](#) and the applicant's responses during the remote inspection to determine level of damage sustained.

This interim policy will help protect the health and safety of the American people while also ensuring that eligible disaster survivors receive assistance from FEMA.

Video Inspection Process

To ensure applicants' needs are met while increasing FEMA's ability to record disaster-caused damage, FEMA implemented the use of video streaming to the remote inspection process in September 2020.

The inspector will initiate the video inspection process by contacting the applicant via the telephone numbers listed in the application. The inspector will ask the applicant if they would like to perform the inspection via video streaming using Apple FaceTime or Zoom Video Communications. FEMA inspectors are trained to help the applicant with downloading and/or signing-on to Zoom Video if necessary. If the applicant needs an accommodation, please let the inspector know so accommodation can be available for the inspection.

The inspector will initiate the video streaming to the applicant's device and ask questions about the type and extent of the damage sustained.

During the video streaming, the applicant will have the opportunity to show the inspector areas of concern such as roof, windows, floor, ceiling, basements, access points, habitability, rooms, furniture, appliances, Americans with Disabilities Act items (such as ramps and grab bars), etc.

[A video assessment can be combined with an exterior-only inspection when necessary.](#)

While video streaming inspections are being conducted in a limited capacity, applicants who do not have the ability to participate with video through Zoom or Facetime will speak with inspectors by phone.

Applicants can request accommodations on the phone when they call to register with FEMA. That number is **800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)**.

