

FEMA Region 3 Updates Guidance on COVID-19 Funeral Expense Aid

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PHILADELPHIA – The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on all Americans, especially those who suffered loss due to the virus. FEMA Region 3 remains committed to easing the financial burden on the thousands of families in the mid-Atlantic region who incurred funeral expenses due to the virus.

FEMA has amended the agency’s COVID-19 funeral assistance policy to assist with COVID-19 related fatalities that occurred in the early months of the pandemic. This policy change will allow applicants to submit a statement or letter from the death certificate’s certifying official, medical examiner, or coroner that attributes the death to COVID-19 fatalities that occurred between Jan. 20 and May 16, 2020.

A new video, available by clicking <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jWCIQK7BQs>, explains the changes.

“The Biden-Harris administration is committed to supporting those who suffered losses as a result of COVID-19,” said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. “FEMA and our partners are working together to make sure everyone who is eligible for funeral assistance can access and receive it.”

Applicants who incurred COVID-19-related funeral expenses between Jan. 20 and May 16, 2020, will be able to submit a death certificate that does not attribute the death to COVID-19 along with a signed statement from the certifying official listed on the death certificate, coroner, or medical examiner linking the death to COVID-19. The written statement must show an explanation linking the cause of death listed on the death certificate to the virus and should be submitted with the death certificate.

Applicants also retain the option of contacting the individual who certified the death to request a death certificate amendment if they can provide justification demonstrating the death should be attributed to COVID-19. The certifying individual’s name and address should be on the death certificate.



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For deaths occurring after May 16, 2020, COVID-19 funeral assistance documentation must include a copy of a death certificate that attributes the death to COVID-19.

Individuals who would like to apply for assistance should call the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Helpline tollfree, at 844-684-6333 | TTY: 800-462-7585 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday. Applicants who use a relay service, such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should provide FEMA with the specific number assigned to them for that service so agency representatives are able to contact them. Phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number.

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For questions about FEMA, please contact FEMA Region 3 Office of External Affairs at (215) 931-5597 or femar3newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov??

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