

Citizenship and FEMA Disaster Assistance

Release Date: 12? 29, 2021

Citizenship and FEMA Disaster Assistance

To be potentially eligible for assistance from FEMA's Individuals and Households Program, you or a member of your household must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified noncitizen. However, undocumented families with diverse immigration status only need one family member (including a minor child) who is a U.S. citizen, non-U.S. citizen national or qualified noncitizen who has a Social Security number to apply. The minor child must live with the parent or guardian applying on his or her behalf.

U.S. Citizen

A person born in one of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or the Northern Mariana Islands; a person born outside of the U.S. to at least one U.S. parent; or naturalized citizen.

Non-citizen National

A person born in an outlying possession of the U.S. (e.g., American Samoa or Swain's Island) 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.

Qualified Noncitizen

A qualified noncitizen includes:

- Legal permanent resident ("green card" holder);
- An asylee, refugee, or an noncitizen whose deportation is being withheld;
- A noncitizen paroled into the U.S. for at least one year for humanitarian purposes;



- A noncitizen granted conditional entry (per law in effect prior to April 1, 1980);
- A Cuban/Haitian entrant;
- Noncitizens 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;
- Noncitizens whose children have been abused and noncitizen children whose parent has been abused who fit certain criteria.

[U.S. Code Definitions of qualified noncitizens](#)

Qualified Minor Children

For adults who don't qualify under one of the categories above, including the undocumented, the household may still apply for and be considered for FEMA assistance if:

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

Resources for Help

See Citizenship and Immigration Status Requirements for Federal Public Benefits for more information in multiple languages at fema.gov/assistance/individual/program/citizenship-immigration-status.

If you're 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.

Additionally, voluntary agencies provide help regardless of citizenship or immigration status.



All individuals, regardless of status, affected by a major disaster may be eligible for other non-monetary, in-kind emergency disaster-relief programs. These include medical care, shelter, food and water.

Apply for FEMA Disaster Assistance

Survivors in **Shelby** and **Jefferson** counties can apply for FEMA disaster assistance.

You can apply online at DisasterAssistance.gov by calling 800-621-3362, or by using the FEMA mobile app. If you use a relay service, such as video relay (VRS), captioned telephone or other service, give FEMA the number for that service. Assistance for eligible individuals and small businesses might include funds for temporary housing and necessary home repairs, individual and household grants, disaster unemployment assistance, low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration and other programs.

The deadline to apply for FEMA disaster assistance is Feb. 21, 2022.

For more information about Alabama disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4632.

