



FEMA

Recovery FAQ Sheet

Separated Households and IHP Assistance

Generally, FEMA recovery programs expect that households will remain together when they temporarily relocate. However, as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, thousands of families relocated to locations across the country and in some circumstances required families to temporarily separate.

1. How is FEMA addressing families that have been separated by the disaster?

FEMA authorized temporary housing awards under the Individuals and Households Program (IHP) for household members residing in separate geographical areas. This allows the separated household member to register with FEMA and, if eligible, receive assistance to meet the immediate disaster-related temporary housing need.

Each additional application made from the household will be considered a separate case file required to meet a disaster-related housing need at the time.

2. What does FEMA consider to be a “Separated Household”?

FEMA defines a household as all persons (adults and children) who lived in the pre-disaster residence – this includes the head of household and any dependents. A dependent is someone who would normally be claimed on the Federal tax return of the other, according to the Internal Revenue Code.

To be considered eligible for rental assistance for a separated household, the above definition of a household must be met, the separation must be due to disaster, the applicant must be living in a different geographical location from the other and the circumstances for the separation must be beyond the applicant’s control. Couples living together before the disaster that choose not to relocate together after the disaster are not eligible for two residences under this policy.

3. Can a minor child living with an extended family member/guardian because of the disaster be registered as a separated household member?

Yes, many minor children have been separated from their parents and are currently housed with extended family or guardians who may or may not have been directly affected by Hurricane Katrina or Rita. Family members or guardians who have minor

Hurricane Katrina or Rita victims in their care may register on behalf of the child and receive an award to provide for the child's immediate needs.

4. What Type of Assistance is available to Separated Households?

To meet an eligible disaster related housing need for all portions of a separated household, FEMA may provide each separated component of the pre-disaster household Temporary Housing assistance. The assistance may be in the form of money to rent a different place to live, or, if rental properties are not available, the provision of a temporary housing unit.

When households reunite, either on their own, or with help from FEMA's Facilitated Relocation Program, the first application from the household will be treated as the "head of household," from which all subsequent IHP assistance will be awarded.