



FEMA **DISASTER SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

DISASTER ASSISTANCE DIRECTORATE

I. TITLE: **Hurricane Katrina/Rita Student Recoupment Criteria**

II. DATE: April 20, 2007

III. PURPOSE:

Establish standard guidance and criteria for rendering recoupment determinations as they apply to disaster-affected students who, at the time of Hurricane Katrina or Rita landfall, resided in university or college-owned dormitories.

IV. SCOPE AND AUDIENCE:

This disaster specific guidance applies only to the following declared disasters: DR 1603-LA, DR-1604-MS, DR-1605-AL, DR-1606-TX, and DR-1607-LA. All personnel are directed to follow this guidance.

V. AUTHORITY:

Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 5174) and 44 CFR 206.117(b)(i) and 206.119(b)(2).

VI. DEFINITIONS:

a. **Emergency Transitional Housing (ETH):** Financial assistance provided to individuals residing in the most severely impacted areas of Hurricane Katrina, based on geospatial mapping and satellite imagery data. The amount of assistance (standardized at \$2,358) represented the nationwide average of the fair market rental rate for a two bedroom unit.

b. **Expedited Assistance (EA):** An accelerated and temporary method of disbursing financial assistance to meet the immediate emergency needs of an eligible disaster victim.

c. **Primary Residence:** The dwelling where the applicant normally lives during the major portion of the calendar year.

VII. DISCUSSION:

Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, many dwellings in areas of maximum devastation could not be inspected in a timely manner using traditional FEMA inspection methods to verify



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damage. To minimize delays in providing urgently needed financial assistance to individuals and families from these areas, FEMA used expedited methods to accelerate financial assistance to these victims. Based on the regulatory definition of primary residence, students residing in a university or college owned dwellings are eligible for temporary housing if they can demonstrate that they were housed in such locations the major portion of the calendar year. Although personal property assistance for students residing in a university or college-owned unit was initially disbursed using expedited methods designed for single/multi-family homes, a review of such assistance will be limited to a reasonable amount for the size, type and content of a typical dormitory room.

VIII. GUIDANCE:

When evaluating the debt collection file of a student residing in a university or college-owned dwelling at the time of the disaster (Hurricane Katrina or Rita), FEMA will employ the following criteria:

A. For Housing Assistance: Students residing in a university or college-owned dormitory will be eligible for, and are not required to repay, Expedited Assistance, Emergency Transitional Housing assistance and other forms of housing assistance if they provide written documentation to FEMA from such university or college that they were housed at that institution for at least 6 out of the preceding 12 months prior to the date of declaration.

B. For Personal Property Assistance: Students residing in a university or college-owned dormitory will only be eligible for personal property assistance for the following line items: electric fan, computer, clothing, television, microwave, school books, telephone, radio, carbon monoxide detector, bathroom (e.g. toiletries), and kitchen (e.g. dishes). Any additional FEMA personal property assistance provided must be returned.

IX. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE**: Disaster Assistance Directorate (Individual Assistance Division).

X. **REVIEW DATE**: This guidance remains effective until superseded or rescinded.

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Disaster Assistance Directorate