



FEMA

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Fact Sheet

FEMA Recovery Strategy: Mass Sheltering and Housing Assistance

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) "*Mass Sheltering and Housing Assistance*" recovery strategy outlines guidance and protocols for providing sheltering and housing assistance in support of a mass evacuation in connection with a Presidentially declared emergency or disaster. While this strategy focuses on assistance associated with large hurricane evacuations, the procedures and underlying processes also may apply to no-notice events, such as major earthquakes generating a subsequent need for mass sheltering and housing.

- Congregate Shelters are facilities used for sheltering large groups of people, but that normally serve other purposes (e.g., schools, stadiums, churches, or church-sponsored facilities).
- Transitional Shelters are facilities that provide short-term lodging and additional privacy, such as hotels or motels.
- Temporary Housing facilities are intended to provide living accommodations for an extended period of time, to include single- and multi-family homes, apartments and manufactured homes.

Key Strategy Elements

Shelter Registration Protocol: FEMA's *Shelter Registration Protocol* will allow FEMA field registration personnel and new Mobile Registration Intake Centers to proactively register evacuees at designated congregated shelter locations and organized evacuee reception sites, including those out-of-state.

Transitional Sheltering Protocol: For sheltering post-landfall, FEMA may, if warranted, authorize the use of 'transitional shelters,' such as hotels and motels. This *Transitional Sheltering Protocol* may be implemented when large numbers of evacuees are being housed in congregated shelters and will not be able to return to their homes for an extended period of time. The initial period for staying in a transitional shelter will be established by FEMA, but it will not be more than 30 days, with an extension of up to six months in unusual circumstances.

Authorization Codes for Transitional Sheltering: Disaster victims who register and are identified as evacuees will be assigned a unique code that will validate their eligibility for federally subsidized transitional housing. If the Transitional Sheltering Protocol is implemented, the authorization code will allow evacuees (with positive photo identification) to check into hotels or motels on a temporary, subsidized basis.

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Expedited Assistance: FEMA’s Expedited Assistance program will, if implemented, allow eligible applicants to receive financial assistance for serious emergency needs and necessary expenses. Allotments will not exceed \$500. The program will be implemented only in catastrophic disasters, and will require state approval. The cost for the program will be shared 75-25 between the federal government and the affected state.

Evacuee Return Transportation: If FEMA, in support of the affected state, coordinates the out-of-state evacuation of state residents, and the evacuees are able to return to and occupy their homes within a short period of time, FEMA will organize a reverse, mass relocation effort. If evacuees are not able to return to their homes for an extended period of time, eligible evacuees may be reimbursed for independently obtained return transportation.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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