

Understanding Your FEMA Letter

Release Date: October 13, 2020

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Florida residents who applied for assistance from FEMA after sustaining damage from Hurricane Sally will receive a letter from FEMA in the mail or via email.

The letter will explain your application status and how to respond. It is important to read the letter carefully because it will include the amount of any assistance FEMA may provide and information on the appropriate use of disaster assistance funds.

Applicants may need to submit additional information for FEMA to continue to process an application. Examples of missing documentation may include:

- Proof of insurance coverage
- Settlement of insurance claims
- Proof of identity
- Proof of occupancy
- Proof of ownership
- Proof that the damaged property was the applicant's primary residence at the time of the disaster

If you have questions about your letter go online to DisasterAssistance.gov or call the disaster assistance helpline at **800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)**.

A FEMA inspection may be required to determine whether a home is safe, sanitary and functional. Currently, such inspections are being conducted remotely, by telephone, following COVID-19 guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control.

FEMA considers the following factors when determining whether an applicant may be eligible for assistance:



- The exterior of the home is structurally sound, including the doors, roof and windows.
- The electricity, gas, heat, plumbing and sewer or septic systems function properly.
- The interior's habitable areas are structurally sound, including the ceiling and floors.
- The home is capable of functioning for its intended purpose.
- There is safe access to and from the home.

FEMA assistance is not the same as insurance. FEMA assistance only provides funds for basic work to make a home habitable, including toilets, a roof, critical utilities, windows and doors.

Appealing FEMA's Decision

Applicants who disagree with FEMA's decision, or the amount of assistance, may submit an appeal letter and documents supporting their claim, such as a contractor's estimate for home repairs.

FEMA cannot duplicate assistance provided by another source, such as insurance settlements. However, those who are underinsured may receive further assistance for unmet needs after insurance claims have been settled by submitting insurance settlement or denial documents to FEMA. FEMA does not provide assistance for insurance deductibles.

Appeals must be in writing. In a signed and dated letter, explain the reason(s) for the appeal. It should also include:

- Applicant's full name
- Disaster number (4564 in Florida)
- Address of the pre-disaster primary residence
- Applicant's current phone number and address
- The FEMA registration number on all documents



If someone other than an applicant or co-applicant writes the appeal letter, that person must sign it and provide FEMA with a signed statement authorizing the individual to act on behalf of the applicant.

Letters must be postmarked within 60 days of the date of the determination letter. Appeal letters and supporting documents may be submitted to FEMA by fax or mail or via a FEMA online account. To set up an online account, visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/assistance), click on “Apply Online” and follow the directions.

By mail:

FEMA

National Processing Service Center

P.O. Box 10055

By fax:

800-827-8112

Attention: FEMA

Hyattsville MD 20782-7055

Understanding Your Letter video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1a6lYO5hgY&feature=youtu.beNR>



FEMA