

# How to Appeal a FEMA Disaster Assistance Decision

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**Release Date: October 26, 2020**

SALEM, Ore. – Disaster survivors affected by wildfires and straight-line winds may receive a letter from FEMA stating they are ineligible for assistance, but this may not be the final word. If an applicant believes FEMA's decision was incorrect, they can file an appeal with FEMA.

The first step is for applicants to read their determination letter carefully to understand why FEMA decided the application was "ineligible." Many times, it could be something as simple as providing missing documents or information.

## **Important Documents to Include with an Appeal Letter**

Often, applicants need only to submit extra documents for FEMA to process their application. FEMA may find an applicant ineligible if the following documents are missing:

- ? Insurance documents: Provide documents from your insurance company that show your policy coverage and/or settlement is not enough to make essential home repairs, provide a place to stay, or replace certain contents. FEMA cannot duplicate homeowner or renter insurance benefits.
- ? Proof of occupancy: Provide documents that prove the damaged home or rental was your primary residence by supplying a copy of utility bills, driver's license or lease.
- ? Proof of ownership. Provide mortgage or insurance documents, tax receipts or a deed. If you don't have a deed handy, contact your local or county officials about obtaining a copy.
- ? Lost documents? Visit the following website for information on replacing lost documents:



All appeals must be in writing. The appeal letter should explain why the applicant thinks FEMA's decision is not correct. When filing an appeal, it is important to include any documentation FEMA requests and/or that supports the appeal claim. Also, if the person writing the appeal letter is not the applicant or a member of the household, applicants must submit a signed statement that the writer is authorized to act on the behalf of the applicant.

## How to Submit an Appeal

**IMPORTANT:** Be sure to include the cover letter you received from FEMA when you submit your appeal documents.

? Mail documents and your appeal letter within 60 days of receiving your determination letter to: FEMA National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055 Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055

? Fax them to 800-827-8112.

? To set up a FEMA online account or to upload documents online, visit [disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov) and click on "Check Your Application and Log In" and follow the directions.

Applicants will receive a decision letter within 90 days of FEMA's receipt of your appeal.

Those who need help understanding their letter can call FEMA at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585). Those who use a Relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should update FEMA with their assigned number for that service. They should be aware phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number. Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish)

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*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585). Those who use a Relay service such as a*



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*All Oregonians – including those affected by the recent wildfires and straight-line winds – who have questions about repairing disaster damaged homes, building stronger and safer, or want to learn more about creating defensive fire spaces can contact FEMA Mitigation Specialists via email at [FEMA-R10-MIT@FEMA.DHS.GOV](mailto:FEMA-R10-MIT@FEMA.DHS.GOV). This is a free service.*

*Follow FEMA Region 10 on Twitter and LinkedIn for the latest updates and visit [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov) for more information.*

