

# Remote Home Inspections in Tennessee

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To protect the safety and health of disaster survivors and agency personnel, FEMA is conducting remote inspections of homes reported to be severely damaged by the March 25 to April 3 severe storms, tornadoes and flooding in Tennessee's Davidson, Williamson and Wilson counties.

Remote inspections are a new way of recording damage. They are comparable to traditional, in-person assessments.

This policy will help protect everyone's health and safety while also ensuring that eligible disaster survivors receive assistance from FEMA.

## The Remote Inspection Process

- To conduct or schedule a remote damage inspection, FEMA inspectors telephone survivors who reported when they applied for assistance that they may not be able to – or cannot – live in their damaged homes.
- Inspectors verify they have reached the right applicant by asking for the last four digits of the applicant's FEMA registration number. The inspector provides the first four digits of the applicant's registration ID. Applicants receive the nine-digit registration number when they complete a FEMA application.
- An inspection phone call takes about 30 minutes. The inspector will ask questions about the type and extent of the damage. In some cases, remote video inspection may occur.
- FEMA provides reasonable accommodations for applicants, including translators and American Sign Language interpreters via Video Relay Service. This ensures easy communication with those with limited English proficiency, applicants with disabilities, and individuals with access and functional needs. Users of a relay service such as a videophone, Innocaption or CapTel should give FEMA the specific number assigned to that service when they apply. If the applicant and inspector speak via Apple FaceTime or Zoom video communications, the applicant may request an interpreter through FaceTime. You can also request an interpreter and captioning through Zoom. Applicants can request inspection accommodations when they call to apply with FEMA. If



necessary, after applying with FEMA, you can call the **FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)** to add your accommodation needs.

- Applicants may ask a relative or friend to be on the call to help them communicate with the inspector.
- In some cases, the inspector will schedule an in-person inspection of a damaged home's exterior. The applicant or co-applicant will need to meet with an inspector to provide a photo ID. The meeting will take place outdoors and the inspector will maintain a distance of at least 6 feet. No additional in-person contact will occur once the inspector has viewed the photo ID.
- Applicants who report that their home was damaged but that they can continue to live in the home will not be scheduled for a home inspection. If these applicants later discover that their homes sustained more costly damage than originally reported, they may file an appeal to FEMA requesting additional assistance. They may also then request an inspection.

## Video Inspections

- Video streaming may be used for the remote inspection. This will ensure that applicants' needs are met and it will give FEMA the ability to record disaster-caused damage.
- The inspector will initiate the video inspection process by contacting the applicant at the telephone numbers listed in the application. The inspector will ask if the applicant would like to perform the inspection via [FaceTime](#) or [Zoom](#). FEMA inspectors are trained to help the applicant with downloading and/or signing on to Zoom, if needed. Applicants who require an accommodation to use such services should tell the inspector so that service will be available for the inspection.
- During the video streaming, the applicant will have the opportunity to show the inspector areas of concern such as the roof, windows, floor, ceiling, basements, access points, rooms, furniture and appliances. You may also point out items such as ramps and grab bars that help people with disabilities.
- In some cases, a video assessment may be combined with an exterior-only inspection.

## After the Inspection

- Inspectors record damage. They do not determine an applicant's eligibility for assistance or the amount or type of assistance that FEMA can offer.



- Based on responses from the applicant, the exterior-only inspection and/or video inspections, FEMA determines whether the applicant meets eligibility criteria to receive awards for rental assistance and home repair or replacement assistance. Each person's situation is different, and awards are determined individually. The amount of the award for home repair depends on the type of residence and the level of damage sustained, as indicated by the inspection.



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