

FEMA Rental Assistance May Help Renters and Homeowners Who Need a Place to Stay

Release Date: May 26, 2022

SANTA FE, N.M. – For New Mexico renters and homeowners who cannot live in their homes because of damage due to the wildfires, FEMA rental assistance may help. The initial rental award is for two months and may be reviewed for further assistance.

FEMA rental assistance is a temporary grant to residents to pay for somewhere to live while they repair or rebuild their home. For renters, it may provide a solution while their lodging is under repair or while they look for a new place to rent.

Options include renting an apartment, home or travel trailer that can keep residents near their jobs, schools, homes and places of worship.

Funds can be used for security deposits, rent and the cost of essential utilities such as electricity, gas and water. They may not be used to pay for cable or Internet.

Residents who live in Colfax, Lincoln, Mora, San Miguel or Valencia counties, follow these steps if your home is not safe, sanitary and livable and you need a place to stay:

- File a claim with your insurance company. Your homeowners or renters' insurance company will provide a settlement document that you will need to provide to FEMA. It may take time to get this document, so file your claim as soon as possible. Also, check with your insurance agent to see if your policy covers additional living expenses (ALE). ALE may pay for relocating to a temporary residence.
- Apply for FEMA assistance right away. If you have insurance, tell FEMA and submit your settlement documents for review once you receive them. FEMA cannot determine your final eligibility status until this information is complete. If



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

your policy does not include ALE, or if you use up this coverage and you still cannot live in your home, you may be eligible for rental assistance from FEMA. You can apply by going online to disasterassistance.gov, by downloading the FEMA app or by calling the Helpline at 800-621-3362. If you use a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service. Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).

A FEMA inspector may contact you to make an appointment to assess the damage on the outside of the home and to record your information of any damage inside. Inspectors may look through windows to see visible damage but will not go inside.

Keep your receipts for three years to show how you spent FEMA grants. If grant money is not used as outlined in the letter, you may have to repay FEMA and could lose eligibility for further federal assistance.

Rental assistance extensions may be granted for three-month periods up to a maximum of 18 months from the date of the FEMA disaster declaration if you continue to have a need for assistance and meet eligibility criteria. FEMA is prohibited from duplicating benefits provided by other sources for the same loss. While FEMA grants do not have to be paid back, if you receive assistance from another source for the same need you may be required to repay FEMA.

To address many of the common myths and rumors during the New Mexico wildfires, FEMA activated a rumor/myth webpage on the disaster homepage. Visit the FAQ/Rumor page at fema.gov/nm-rumors.

For the latest information on the wildfires, visit fema.gov/disaster/4652 Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/FEMARegion6 and like us on Facebook at facebook.com/FEMARegion6/.

