

Be Alert to Fraud After a Disaster

Release Date: December 16, 2023

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Disaster survivors should be aware that con-artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud or identity theft after a disaster. In some cases, thieves try to apply for FEMA assistance using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from survivors.

If a FEMA Inspector comes to your home and you did not submit a FEMA application, your information may have been used without your knowledge to create a FEMA application. If so, please inform the inspector that you did not apply for FEMA assistance so they can submit a request to stop further processing of the application.

If you did not apply for assistance but receive a letter from FEMA, please call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. The Helpline will submit a request to stop any further processing of that application.

If you do wish to apply for FEMA assistance after stopping an application made in your name without your knowledge, the Helpline will assist you in creating a new application.

Scams

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams, housing inspectors and other officials will be working in areas impacted by the Dec. 9, 2023, severe storms and tornadoes. [They carry official identification badges with photo IDs. FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration representatives **never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections or help in filling out applications.**](#)

Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant in return for payment.

Be wary of unexpected phone calls or visits to your home from people claiming to be FEMA housing inspectors or people claiming they work for FEMA. FEMA inspectors will have your FEMA application number.



Don't give your banking information to a person claiming to be a FEMA housing inspector. FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect your personal financial information.

If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department. Consumers may also file a fraud complaint with the Tennessee Attorney General's Office here: [File a Complaint \(tn.gov\)](#).

If you have knowledge of fraud, waste, abuse, or allegations of mismanagement involving FEMA's disaster relief operations, you can report this to FEMA or DHS. You may request confidentiality or register your complaint anonymously at:

- FEMA Fraud Branch, email: StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov, fax: (202) 212-4926 or write to: FEMA Fraud and Internal Investigation Division, 400 C Street SW Mail Stop 3005, Washington, DC 20472-3005.
- DHS Office of Inspector General, online through their [allegation form](#) (Recommended), call: (866) 720-5721, fax: (202) 254-4297, or write to: DHS Office of Inspector General / MAIL STOP 0305, Attn: Office of Investigations – Hotline, 245 Murray Lane SW, Washington, DC 20528-0305.

If you suspect identity theft, please visit [Identity Theft | FTC Consumer Information](#) or [IdentityTheft.gov](#).

