

# Rental Assistance and Continued Rental Assistance FAQ

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FEMA Rental Assistance is available for eligible San Diego County renters and homeowners who cannot live in their homes because of damage due to the Jan. 21-23, 2024, severe storm and flooding disaster. In addition, they may also be eligible for continued Rental Assistance.

## **What Is Rental Assistance?**

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

## **What does Rental Assistance cover?**

- Rental Assistance covers temporary housing while you are unable to live in your home.
- Rental Assistance funds are for security deposits, rent and the cost of essential utilities such as electricity, gas and water.
- Rental Assistance can be used for short-term hotel stays while you look for a place to rent.
- Rental Assistance may not be used to pay for cable or Internet.

## **How long does rental assistance support me?**

- The initial grant is for one to two months on a case-by-case basis.
- You can then request a three-month extension for up to 18 months total by calling the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362.

## **What do I do if my home is not safe, sanitary and livable and I need a place to stay?**



1. File a claim with your insurance company.
  - Your Flood, Homeowners or Renters' Insurance company will give you a settlement document that you will need to provide to FEMA.
  - It may take time to get this document, so file your insurance claim as soon as possible.
  - Check with your insurance agent to see if your policy covers Additional Living Expenses which may pay for relocating to a temporary residence.
2. Apply for FEMA assistance right away.
  - You can apply online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov), use the [FEMA mobile app](#) or call **the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362**. Multilingual operators are available from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. PT daily.
  - Submit your insurance settlement documents to FEMA for review as soon as you receive them.
  - If your policy does not include additional living expenses, or if you use up this coverage and you still cannot live in your home, you may be eligible for FEMA Rental Assistance.
3. Document how you use your assistance.
  - Keep all of your receipts for three years to show how you spent your FEMA grants.
  - If grant money is not used as outlined in your FEMA eligibility letter, you may have to repay your grants and you could lose your eligibility for further federal assistance.
  - FEMA is prohibited from duplicating benefits provided by other sources for the same loss.

## What is Continued Rental Assistance?

Rental Assistance is the initial temporary 1-2-month grant for homeowners and renters to pay for somewhere to live while they repair or rebuild their home. After the first 1-2 months, survivors can apply for continued Rental Assistance which provides three-month Rental Assistance extensions for up to 18 months total.

## Am I eligible for continued Rental Assistance?

To be eligible to apply for continued Rental Assistance, you must meet the following conditions:



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- Were awarded initial Rental Assistance and used it help you pay rent and essential utility costs.
- Are unable to return to your pre-disaster residence because it is uninhabitable, inaccessible, or not available due to the disaster.
- Demonstrate a disaster-caused financial need.
- Show you are developing a longer-term or permanent housing plan or demonstrate progress toward one. For example, a contractor's estimate of repairs can point to progress.

## **How do I apply for continued Rental Assistance?**

1. Fill out an application.

- If you are a homeowner and your losses are equal to or greater than the amount of the initial Rental Assistance award, the application for continued Rental Assistance will be sent to you automatically, approximately two weeks after the initial Rental Assistance award was approved.
- If you are a renter, you must contact FEMA and ask for an application for continued Rental Assistance by calling the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362** 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. PT daily.

2. Turn in your application to FEMA.

- Complete the application including the required documentation. (See the FAQ below outlining the required documentation.)
- Return your application to FEMA in one of the following ways:
  - Upload them to your disaster account at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov).
  - Mail them to FEMA, PO Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055.
  - Fax to FEMA at 1-800-827-8112

## **What documents do I need to turn in with my continued Rental Assistance application?**

You should submit the following documents with your application:

- Pre- and post-disaster income for household members 18 and older.



- Proof of pre-disaster housing costs. For example, proof can be copies of lease and utility bills, renter's insurance, mortgage statements, real estate taxes, home insurance, etc.
- Proof of post-disaster housing costs such as a copy of current lease or rental agreement signed by the applicant and the landlord.
- Copies of all receipts for expenses related to housing.

### **Where do I submit my application?**

Your application form and supporting documents should be returned to FEMA in one of the following ways:

- Upload them to your disaster account at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov).
- Mail them to FEMA, PO Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055.
- Fax to FEMA at 1-800-827-8112

### **What would disqualify me for continued Rental Assistance?**

- You must request continued Rental Assistance within 18 months the from date of declaration.
- If you do not submit documentation that demonstrates you have used your entire Rental Assistance award, your first continued Rental Assistance award will be reduced by what remains of the initial Rental Assistance.
- Applicants residing in non-traditional housing are not eligible for continued Rental Assistance.

### **Is continued Rental Assistance based on my income?**

- Continued Rental Assistance is based on a disaster-related unmet need. Income and the price of rent are both used to determine eligibility.

### **Is continued Rental Assistance based on what I paid for rent pre-disaster?**

- If you are found eligible, FEMA will pay Fair Market Rate (FMR) plus a utility allowance, three months at a time for up to 18 months from the date of declaration.



- For example, if you were paying \$1,000 for rent prior to the disaster and now you're paying the FMR of \$2,500 for rent while your home is repaired, FEMA continued Rental Assistance covers the full \$2,500.
- FEMA continued Rental Assistance covers full rent (that is based on Fair Market Rate) plus a utility allowance.

For the latest FEMA information on the Jan. 21-23, 2024 San Diego County severe storms and flooding, visit [www.fema.gov/disaster/4758](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4758).

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*FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.*

*All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, or economic status. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, you can call the Civil Rights Resource line at 833-285-7448 (TTY 800-462-7585). Those who use a relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should update FEMA with their specific number assigned to that service. Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).*



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