

Avoid and Report Disaster Fraud

Release Date: November 5, 2024

BATON ROUGE, La. Scam attempts can be made over the phone, by mail or email, text or in person. If you have applied for disaster assistance after Hurricane Francine, FEMA will notify you of its decision. The agency may also contact you if it needs additional information to process your application. This may come in the form of a letter. In some instances, you may receive a phone call. Review your FEMA letters carefully.

If you still need to apply, go online to DisasterAssistance.gov to create an online account with FEMA. Be extremely careful when clicking any links.

Here is a list of other possible scams that may target Hurricane Francine survivors:

Identity theft

Disaster survivors should be aware con artists and criminals may 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 have not filed a FEMA application, your information may have been used without your knowledge. Tell the inspector you did not apply for FEMA assistance.

If you did not apply for assistance but receive a letter from FEMA, please call our Helpline at 800-621-3362 any day between 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET.

If you believe you are the victim of a contracting scam, price gouging or other fraudulent activity, contact local law enforcement and report it to your local police or sheriff's department or contact the Office of the Louisiana Attorney General Consumer Protection Hotline at 800-351-4889. You may also contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at www.ftc.gov/complaint.

Telephone calls



FEMA will only reach out if you have already applied for assistance. If you are contacted by someone asking you to apply for FEMA assistance or if you question someone's intent, contact your local law enforcement agency.

Housing inspectors claiming to represent FEMA

Be cautious if somebody asks for your nine-digit application number. A FEMA inspector will not ask for this. They already have it in their records and may provide it to you to confirm they are interacting with the correct person.

FEMA inspectors never ask for or confirm banking information.

Ask the inspector to show you their identification badge. Federal and contracted employees always wear an official government badge to identify themselves.

Someone comes to your home without a FEMA photo ID

Do not let someone into your home who claims to be a FEMA employee but does not have a FEMA photo ID. All FEMA representatives carry a laminated photo ID.

Fake offers of local or federal aid

Don't trust someone who asks for money. ***Federal and local disaster workers do not solicit or accept money.*** FEMA and staff from the Small Business Administration never charge for inspections or help in filling out a disaster assistance application.

Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant and asks for large cash deposits or advance payments in full.

If you suspect any fraudulent activity involving FEMA, you can report it to the FEMA Fraud Branch at: 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.

Rental listings

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has information on how rental scams work. For instance, scammers know finding the right apartment or vacation rental can be



hard work, and a seemingly good deal is hard to pass up when you need a place to stay. Learn more at www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0079-rental-listing-scams.

To view an accessible video about fraud, visit: [FEMA Accessible: Fraud FEMA \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

For the latest information, visit fema.gov/disaster/4817. Follow FEMA Region 6 on social media at x.com/FEMARegion6 and facebook.com/femaregion6.

