

Assistance Available for Self-Employed Wildfire Survivors

Release Date: February 4, 2025

LOS ANGELES – Self-employed individuals in Los Angeles who became unemployed as a direct result of the wildfires, may apply for **FEMA Individual Assistance, Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)** and/or **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Loans**.

FEMA Individual Assistance

FEMA may be able to provide funds to repair or replace disaster-damaged tools and equipment required for your job. This help is available to a wide variety of applicants, including artists, musicians, mechanics, and many other occupations.

Eligible Occupational Tools

Occupational tools are tools and equipment required for self-employment or not provided by an employer but required for employment. Examples of essential tools include:

- Computers required by an employer or for self-employment when you are responsible for the replacement of the computer. Technology and equipment involved in the creation of art, music, photography, etc.
- Tools and equipment such as power tools, tractors, plows, seeders, planters, harvesters, sprayers, hay balers, utility vehicles, lawnmowers, etc.
- Art materials, paint, brushes, canvas, clay, musical instruments, theatrical tools such as movable flooring, drapery, makeup, costumes as well as sound and lighting equipment.
- Uniforms required for work when you are responsible for replacement of the uniforms.



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This assistance may be available if the items were damaged by the disaster, you do not have another working item that can meet this need, and the loss of the item was not covered by insurance.

Required Documentation

To be eligible for self-employment assistance, you must provide documentation that proves you are self-employed, such as federal tax return documents, and meet the general eligibility criteria for FEMA assistance. Self-employed survivors should provide FEMA with:

- Insurance documents for all potential coverages and benefits.
- Itemized receipts or estimates for repairing or replacing the requested items.
- A written statement that explains the items are needed for self-employment.

To find out if you are eligible, apply to FEMA:

Go online to disasterassistance.gov/.

- Download the [FEMA App](#) for mobile devices.
- Call the FEMA helpline at **800-621-3362** every day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.
 - Help is available in most languages. If you use a relay service, such as video relay (VRS), captioned telephone or other service, give FEMA your number for that service.
- Visit a [Disaster Recovery Center](#).
 - **UCLA Research Park West**
10850 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064
Open Daily: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 - **Altadena Disaster Recovery Center**
540 W. Woodbury Rd., Altadena, CA 91001
Open Daily: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The deadline to apply for FEMA Individual Assistance is **March 10, 2025**.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance



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Los Angeles County workers impacted by the severe wildfires and winds can now apply for [Disaster Unemployment Assistance \(DUA\)](#) or [regular unemployment benefits](#). The Employment Development Department (EDD) administers these benefits. DUA is for workers – such as self-employed people – who are not eligible for regular unemployment benefits and lost their jobs or had hours reduced because of the disaster.

The deadline to submit a DUA application is March 10, 2025.

Visit the State of California's [Employment Development Department](#) for more information on how to apply.

U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loans

The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**, FEMA's federal partner in disaster recovery, offers low-interest disaster loans to help homeowners, renters, private non-profit organizations, and business of all sizes recover from declared disasters. Applicants may apply online and receive additional disaster assistance information at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster). Disaster loan information and application forms can be obtained by scheduling an in-person appointment at a [SBA Disaster Recovery Center](#) or by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at **800-659-2955**.



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