

Help with Funerals and Burials

FEMA may provide money to help survivors cover funeral or burial expenses caused by a Presidentially declared disaster.

What is Funeral Assistance?

Funeral Assistance is money to help pay for death or disinterment expenses caused by a disaster.

Who can get Funeral Assistance?

You may get Funeral Assistance if:

- You or someone in your household is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien,
- FEMA can confirm your identity,
- The death or disinterment was caused by the disaster, either directly or indirectly, and
- The costs are not covered by insurance or financial assistance from another source.

What is the difference between a direct cause and indirect cause of death?

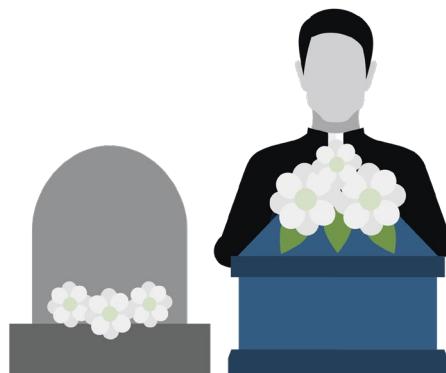
A death is directly caused by a disaster if it happens due to forces of the disaster or the direct results of the forces, such as building collapse, flying debris, or radiation exposure.

A death is indirectly caused by a disaster if it happens due to unsafe or unhealthy conditions present during any part of the disaster (i.e., preparations before the disaster, during the actual disaster, or cleanup after a disaster). Indirect cause of death also includes pre-existing conditions made worse because of the disaster. Documents stating the death “may have been caused by” or “was likely a result of” the disaster do not qualify as indirect cause of death.

Which expenses can FEMA help with?

Funeral Assistance can help cover the following expenses:

- Funeral services:
 - Clergy or officiant services
- Burial services:
 - Burial plot or cremation niche
 - Marker or headstone
 - Casket or urn
- Interment or reinterment services including the cost of transferring remains or identifying disinterred remains



- Other costs:
 - Transportation for up to two people to identify the deceased, if identification is required by your local government
 - Costs for producing and certifying up to five death certificates
 - Additional expenses required by the laws of the local government

We understand this is a difficult time and some of these terms may be technical. Below is an explanation:

Term	Definition
Interment	Remains are placed in the ground, a cremation urn, or other burial facility like a columbarium, which is a building or wall made to hold urns.
Disinterment	Remains are unearthed or moved from the ground, a cremation urn, or other burial facility.
Reinterment	Remains are put back into the ground, a cremation urn, or other burial facility.
Funeral services	Services to prepare the deceased body and services to arrange and conduct a funeral ceremony.

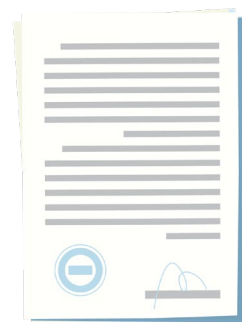
I don't live in the disaster area. Am I eligible for Funeral Assistance?

Yes, if the death or disinterment happened in the disaster area. You do not have to live in the declared disaster area to be eligible for Funeral Assistance.

What documents does FEMA need?

You must send:

- A document explaining the death or disinterment was caused by the disaster, either directly or indirectly. This can be:
 - An official death certificate, or
 - A signed statement from a medical examiner, coroner, or other certifier, or
 - For disinterment, a statement from a funeral home representative or cemetery representative
- Receipts or estimates for funeral or burial costs
- Documents showing any funeral assistance you got from other sources, like voluntary organizations, government agencies, charities, or private donations
- For reinterment only, documents showing the disinterment occurred in a privately owned, licensed cemetery or burial facility and the cemetery or burial facility is not responsible for reintering displaced remains



How much Funeral Assistance can I get?

The amount you may get is based on your eligible costs up to the amount your state, territorial, or tribal government chooses. They can choose to set this limit per household or per death.

Are there any expenses FEMA can't help with?

Yes. FEMA can't help with any of the following:

- Obituaries
- Flowers
- Printed materials such as banners, programs, or register books
- Catering services, including food
- Transporting the applicant or others to the site(s) of funeral services, interment, or reinterment
- Tips or gratuities

I don't agree with FEMA's decision. How can I appeal?

If you don't agree with FEMA's decision, you can appeal by showing why you need FEMA assistance. The decision letter you get from FEMA will have more information about the types of documents you should send.

You may use an optional Appeal Request form, which is included in the decision letter you receive from FEMA. You can also choose to write and sign a letter to send with your documents to help FEMA understand why you need help.

For more information on understanding your letter please visit [FEMA.gov/letter](https://www.fema.gov/letter).

How can I send documents?

You can send supporting documents to FEMA by:

- Uploading to your disaster assistance account at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov).
- Mailing to FEMA, P.O. Box 10055 Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055.
- Faxing to 1-800-827-8112.
- Visiting a Disaster Recovery Center, if available.