

Must I Be a U.S. Citizen to Get FEMA Help?

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As Oklahoma survivors recover from February's severe winter storms, many survivors are wondering if they can qualify for FEMA disaster assistance if they are not United States citizens. Some may make assumptions based on rumors and may avoid seeking federal help, even though it may be available to them.

Noncitizens May Be Eligible

FEMA is committed to helping all [eligible disaster survivors](#) recover from the severe winter weather. These include:

- U.S. citizens.
- Noncitizen nationals.
- Qualified non-citizens.

A qualified non-citizen is a lawful permanent resident. It could also be someone with legal status for reasons which may include asylum, refugee, parole, withholding of deportation and Cuban/Haitian entrants.

Adults who do not meet the citizenship or immigration status at the time of application, may still apply for certain forms of assistance, if another adult household member is a citizen or if the household has a minor child who was born in the United States and has a Social Security number.

- FEMA or the Social Security Administration can help you get [Social Security Numbers for Children](#).
- A minor child must have lived with the parent or guardian applying on their behalf since Feb.11, 2021, the date of the onset of severe weather. The parent or guardian must register as the co-applicant.
- Individuals may consult an immigration expert to verify if they meet the immigration status requirements for FEMA disaster assistance



How to Register with FEMA

If you meet these eligibility criteria and live in one of the 16 counties that are eligible for federal assistance, you may complete an application for FEMA Individuals and Households Program assistance. For a list of designated counties, visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4587>.

- Those with cell phones or internet access can register with FEMA by visiting DisasterAssistance.gov, or downloading the FEMA app.
- You can also register by calling 800-621-3362 (TTY for the hearing-impaired, call 800-462-7585).

Those who use a relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should alert FEMA as to the specific number assigned to that service.

Multilingual operators are available. Toll-free lines are open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Other Programs and Volunteer Agencies

Other individual assistance programs are available, regardless of citizenship status. Programs like the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Crisis Counseling Assistance at <https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/ccp>. Other short-term, noncash emergency help may also be available.

For legal assistance, survivors can visit:

- **[ABA YLD Disaster Legal Services Hotline: 888-743-5749](#)**
 - To help meet the growing legal needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division has teamed up with RingCentral Inc. to create a national hotline to connect the Disaster Legal Services Program (DLS) with those seeking civil legal services.
- **[Oklahoma Bar Association: \(405\) 416-7000](#)**
 - Professional association of lawyers.
- **[Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc.: 1-888-534-5243 or \(405\) 557-0020](#)**
 - Provides free civil legal services to low-income people.
- **[Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc.: \(405\) 943-6457](#)**
 - Provides free civil legal services to low-income people.



FEMA

Voluntary organizations offer help regardless of citizenship status. To find voluntary organizations in your county:

- Call the American Red Cross at 800-733-2767 or visit [local American Red Cross chapter](#) for information about your local Red Cross chapter.
- Dial 2-1-1 from any phone to find your local [United Way](#) or visit 211oklahoma.org to find the phone number for the service in your area.

For the latest information on the Oklahoma severe winter storms, visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4587> or follow the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at twitter.com/FEMARegion6.

