

Be Alert to Fraud After Hurricane Helene in Florida

Release Date: ?? 30, 2024

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.- Floridians should be aware that con artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud or identity theft after Hurricane Helene. In some cases, thieves try to apply for FEMA assistance using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from people affected by the disaster.

If a FEMA inspector comes to your home and you did not submit a FEMA application, your information may have been used without your knowledge to create a FEMA application. If this happens, please inform the inspector that you did not apply for FEMA assistance so they can submit a request to stop further processing of the application.

If you did not apply for assistance but receive a letter from FEMA, please call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. The helpline will submit a request to stop further processing of that application.

If you do want to apply for FEMA assistance after stopping an application made in your name without your knowledge, the helpline will assist you in creating a new application.

Scams

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) crews, housing inspectors and other officials will be working in areas impacted by Hurricane Helene. They carry official photo identification badges. FEMA representatives never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections or help in filling out applications. Their services are free.

Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant in return for payment.



Don't give your banking information to a person claiming to be a FEMA housing inspector. FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect your personal financial information.

If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department or contact Florida's Office of the Attorney General by calling 866-9-NO-SCAM (866-966-7226) or visit myfloridalegal.com. To file a fraud complaint, go online to Scam Report (myfloridalegal.com).

If you have knowledge of fraud, waste or abuse, you can report these tips – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – to the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. You can also email StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov to report a tip.

For the latest information about Florida's Hurricane Helene recovery, visit fema.gov/disaster/4828. Follow FEMA on X at x.com/femaregion4 or on Facebook at facebook.com/fema.

