



INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

When a State, Territorial, Indian Tribal Government, or local government determines that an incident may exceed their capabilities to respond, the Governor or Indian Tribal Chief Executive must request a declaration from the President. Individual Assistance programs and services may be authorized by the President based upon whether the damage involved and its effects are of such severity and magnitude as to be beyond the response capabilities of the State, the affected local governments, and other potential recipients of supplementary Federal assistance.

The Individual Assistance mission is to ensure disaster survivors have timely access to a full range of authorized programs and services to maximize the recovery, through coordination with partners including State, Territorial, Indian Tribal, and local government, as well as other Federal Agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector.

Individual Assistance Programs

FEMA provides assistance to individuals and households through coordination with partners and the delivery of Individual Assistance program, including:

- **Mass Care and Emergency Assistance:** Mass Care activities include congregate sheltering; feeding and hydration; distribution of emergency supplies; and reunification of children and adults with their families. Emergency Assistance activities include voluntary agency coordination; donations management; non-congregate and transitional sheltering; support to individuals with access and functional needs in shelters; support to children in disasters; support for mass evacuations; and support for household pets and service animals.
- **Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP):** CCP assists individuals and communities recovering from the effects of a natural or human caused disaster through the provision of community based outreach and psycho-educational services.
- **Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA):** DUA provides unemployment benefits and re-employment services to individuals who have become unemployed as a result of a major disaster and who are not eligible for regular State unemployment insurance.
- **Disaster Legal Services (DLS):** DLS provides legal assistance to low income individuals who, prior to or as a result of the disaster, are unable to secure legal services adequate to meet their disaster related needs. FEMA, through an agreement with the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association, provides free legal help for disaster survivors.
- **Disaster Case Management (DCM):** DCM is a program that involves a partnership between a disaster case manager and a survivor to develop and carry out a Disaster Recovery Plan. The process involves an assessment of the survivor's verified disaster caused unmet needs, development of a plan that outlines the steps necessary to achieve recovery, organization and coordination of information on available resources that match the disaster caused unmet needs, monitoring of progress towards the recovery plan goals and, when necessary, client advocacy.
- **Individuals and Households Program (IHP):** IHP has two provisions: Housing Assistance and Other Needs Assistance. Housing Assistance provides financial and direct assistance or both to eligible disaster survivors who have necessary expenses and serious needs that they are unable to

meet through other means, such as insurance. This help may be in the form of Temporary Housing, Repair, Replacement, and Semi-Permanent or Permanent Housing Construction. Other Needs Assistance provides financial assistance to individuals and households who have other disaster-related necessary expenses or serious needs such as medical, dental, child care, funeral, personal property, and transportation costs.

Individual Assistance Service Delivery Channels

FEMA offers disaster survivors multiple options to access Individual Assistance. Survivors may receive information and services through:

- **Internet or Smartphone Application:** Disaster survivors may apply for assistance or check their application status online at <https://www.disasterassistance.gov>. Disaster survivors may also access Individual Assistance via smartphone by downloading the FEMA application from <https://www.fema.gov> or through their mobile provider's application store.
- **FEMA Toll-Free Helpline:** Disaster survivors may call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 to register for assistance or check their application status. Disaster survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY may call 800-462-7585. Disaster survivors who use 711 or VRS (Video Relay Service), may call 800-621-3362.
- **Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs):** Disaster survivors may apply for assistance in person at DRCs in or near their communities. DRCs are usually open quickly following a disaster for a limited period of time. They are accessible and equipped with tools to accommodate disaster survivors who need disability related communication aids. FEMA staff can assist with completing registrations or checking their application status. FEMA coordinates with the State, Territory, or Indian Tribal Government to establish fixed and mobile DRC locations.
- **Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA)** - FEMA may send staff into the affected communities to help disaster survivors apply for IHP assistance. FEMA may also coordinate with the State, Territory, or Indian Tribal Government to send staff into emergency shelters to assist survivors. FEMA staff are equipped with computers or similar devices to assist survivors with registering for IHP Assistance or provide them referrals to other resources.

Because FEMA's programs are not designed to make a survivor whole, we encourage a whole community approach disaster recovery by engaging the full capacity of nongovernmental organizations and the private sector, including businesses, faith-based and disability organizations, and the general public, in conjunction with the participation of State, Territorial, Indian Tribal Government, or local government, as well as other Federal Agency partners.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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