

FEMA Assistance Teams Strive to Leave No Survivor Behind

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ATLANTA – It's important for Hurricane Idalia survivors who applied for FEMA disaster assistance to keep in touch with FEMA to ensure the disaster assistance process stays on track. If you applied for assistance, you should call the FEMA Helpline, use the FEMA app, or visit a Disaster Recovery Center to update FEMA about changes in your housing situation, phone number, contact information, insurance and banking information.

It is just as important that FEMA stay in touch with you and Individual Assistance specialists in Georgia are doing exactly that.

FEMA's Enhanced Applicant Services (EAS) is tasked with locating applicants challenged by navigating the application and appeals process. The EAS team is made up of personnel from FEMA's Individual and Households Program (IHP).

Historically, survivors, including some with access and functional needs, have difficulty responding to the determination letter FEMA sends to all applicants. Disasters are traumatic for everyone, but issues can be compounded for older adults and people with disabilities. Whether the problem is a lack of digital access, an inability to respond, or simply a reluctance to do so, these applicants need a boost from EAS. The IHP team identifies survivors who reported on their application that they had hearing and vision problems, mobility difficulties, or mental or emotional distress.

Staff can follow-up to learn about additional disability-related losses or needs such as medical support assistance, medical equipment repairs or replacement of assistive technology that was lost or damaged during the hurricane. In some cases, nonprofit organizations are enlisted to ensure a survivor's needs are



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

addressed.

FEMA takes the extra steps to reach these survivors and make sure they are getting the help they need to recover. In the aftermath of Hurricane Idalia in Georgia, these efforts are translating into hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional funds for survivors. In one recent case, EAS helped a homeowner receive the maximum FEMA grant to help pay for repairing their house by assisting them in getting the information needed for their application.

Disaster recovery is a two-way street:

- If you applied for assistance, you need to stay in touch with FEMA and update your information with FEMA. You need to answer phone calls from FEMA, even if the caller ID is unknown. (But don't be scammed; only FEMA will know your nine-digit application number.)
- FEMA won't leave you behind. EAS will find you, help you with your application or appeal, and assure that you receive all the financial assistance to which you are entitled.

For the latest information on Georgia's recovery from Hurricane Idalia, visit fema.gov/disaster/4738, follow FEMA on X, formerly known as Twitter, at twitter.com/femaregion4 and at facebook.com/fema.

