

How to Appeal a Decision from FEMA

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HARRISBURG, Pa. – If you receive a letter from FEMA saying you are not eligible for federal assistance or that your application is incomplete, you have 60 days from the date of that letter to submit the missing documentation or to appeal FEMA's decision.

Read the letter carefully. It will provide additional information on what your next steps will be. For example, you may need to submit insurance documents or receipts. You may need to confirm your identity or provide proof of residency. Or it may be something as simple as a missing signature.

If you disagree with FEMA's decision, you may appeal. An appeal is a request to FEMA to review your file again. It is also an opportunity to provide new or additional information not previously submitted that may affect the decision. You may appeal any decision by FEMA regarding your application for Individual Assistance, such as your initial eligibility decision, the amount or type of assistance provided to you, late applications, requests to return money, or a denial of continued Temporary Housing Assistance.

An appeal should be an explanation of why you disagree with the decision. Be sure to include the following:

- Applicant's full name, current address and damaged dwelling address.
- Applicant's 9-digit FEMA registration number, found at the top of the determination letter (on every page)
- The last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number (on every page)
- FEMA disaster declaration number, DR-4815-PA (on every page)

You can submit your appeal documents online, in person, by mail or by fax.

- **Online:** If you set up an online account, appeals can be managed through this account. Visit DisasterAssistance.gov, log into your account and to upload all supporting documents using the Correspondence "Upload Center."



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- **In person:** You can take your appeal documentation to a [Disaster Recovery Center](#).
- **By mail:** Mail appeal documents to

FEMA - Individuals & Households Program National Processing
Service Center

P.O. Box 10055

Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055

- **By fax:** Fax appeal documents to

(800) 827-8112, Attention: FEMA - Individuals & Households Program

All appeals are reviewed. Decisions are usually made within 30 days of receiving the appeal; however, it may take up to 90 days. You will be notified of the response to your appeal either by mail or via the [DisasterAssistance.gov](#) account you created when you applied with FEMA.

There are many reasons why you may choose to appeal a FEMA decision. Here is one example:



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FEMA Appeals



Name: Maria
Age: 35
Location: Pennsylvania
Disaster: TS Debby
Job: Nurse
Family: Married with two children
Home: Owner
Insurance: Yes
Flood Insurance: No



Sometimes, FEMA may not immediately approve applications for a number of reasons, such as lack of documentation, misspelled names, or wrong identification numbers, which may require people to submit an appeal.

People who wish to appeal FEMA's decision do not need to provide a signed, written appeal letter describing the reason for the request. They can simply submit their appeal by submitting the requested documentation to support their claim, or by filling out an Appeal Request Form, which will be provided with FEMA's decision.

MARIA'S STORY

The Scenario

Maria's home was left uninhabitable due to flooding following Tropical Storm Debby. Some of her important documents, like insurance information, were damaged.

The Process

Maria applied for FEMA assistance but was **initially denied because she didn't have all the required documentation.**

The Result

Fortunately, Maria visited a **Disaster Recovery Center** where she was connected with Commonwealth agencies to replace her lost documents. She went on a Saturday to accommodate her schedule. Then she submitted the correct documents to FEMA through DisasterAssistance.gov.

The above story uses fictional characters and events to help explain the disaster assistance process for disasters declared on or after March 22, 2024. If you live in an individual assistance area and want to learn more about how FEMA can help you, call [800-621-3362](tel:800-621-3362), visit disasterassistance.gov or download the [FEMA app](#) to apply for FEMA assistance.

To learn more about FEMA's disaster assistance programs, please visit: fema.gov/IA



If you have any questions about a letter from FEMA, we encourage you to visit a [Disaster Recovery Center](#) or call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. If you use video relay service, captioned telephone service, or another service, give FEMA your number for that service. FEMA staff are standing by to answer your questions.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters. FEMA Region 3's jurisdiction includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. Follow us on X at x.com/FEMAreion3 and on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/femareion3.



Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 833-285-7448. If you use a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service. Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish and 3 for other languages).



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