

FEMA Assistance for Those Experiencing Homelessness or Residing in Non-Traditional Housing Before the Disaster

Release Date: nov 1, 2024

FEMA Assistance is available to disaster survivors experiencing homelessness or residing in non-traditional housing, such as a tent or lean-to type of home before the disaster.

Assistance Available

FEMA may provide some forms of Other Needs Assistance to applicants experiencing homelessness or residing in non-traditional housing before the disaster. This may include:

Type of Assistance	What it covers:
Medical & Dental Assistance	Lost medications Medical/dental equipment Treatment for a disaster-caused injury Service animal injury or loss
Transportation Assistance	Disaster-caused damage to a vehicle
Funeral Assistance	Funeral expenses related to the disaster
Childcare Assistance	Increased child care expenses

FEMA does not provide Direct Housing Assistance, Home Repair Assistance, Home Replacement Assistance, or Continued Temporary Rental Assistance to applicants who were experiencing homelessness or residing in non-traditional housing before the disaster.

Additional Assistance for Individuals in Non-traditional Housing



FEMA

In addition to the assistance listed in the table above, applicants residing in non-traditional housing may also be eligible for:

Type of Assistance	What it covers:
Personal Property Assistance	Bedding, furniture, appliances, and clothing damaged or destroyed by a disaster
Displacement Assistance	Short-term housing costs

To be eligible for Personal Property Assistance or Displacement Assistance, applicants must prove they lived at the disaster-damaged address as their primary home; FEMA calls this “proving occupancy.”

To prove occupancy, FEMA accepts various documentation that places the applicant at the address at the time of the disaster, including:

- Bills mailed to the applicant's address
- Identification Card
- Social Service Organization Document
- Local School Document
- Federal or State Benefit Document
- Motor Vehicle Registration
- Affidavits of Residency or Court Documentation
- Employer's Document

If the applicant does not have access to documentation proving occupancy, they may provide a statement from a public official, member of tribal council, homeless outreach advocate, etc. The statement must be written and signed, and include the applicant’s name, location of residence, dates of occupancy, and the source’s name, title, and contact information.

Application Considerations

When applying for FEMA disaster assistance, the applicant may select “Other” for residence type if they apply online. If they apply by phone, they can explain their living situation to the FEMA representative.



Apply for FEMA Individual Assistance

- **Online:** DisasterAssistance.gov (fastest option)
- **FEMA App:** available on the Apple App Store or Google Play
- **By Phone: 1-800-621-3362.** If you use a relay service, such as Video Relay Service (VRS), captioned telephone, or other service, give FEMA your number for that service.

***Homeless** is defined as an individual whose pre-disaster living arrangements were transient in nature and void of any form of structural ownership. Examples of homeless living situations may include rent-free shelters, bridges, underpasses, or streets. **Non-Traditional Housing** is defined as a form of dwelling void of structural floor, structural walls, and structural roof.*

