

Survivors Won't Lose Benefits If They Receive FEMA Assistance

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ATLANTA – Georgia survivors who suffered losses during Hurricane Idalia needn't worry that applying for federal disaster assistance will cause them to sacrifice their Social Security or Medicare benefits, pay more taxes or give up income-based benefit programs. A grant from FEMA does not add to your taxable income as long as the grant is to help recover from a disaster like Idalia.

"Hurricanes affect everyone," said Judy Kruger, FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer for Georgia. "We want to reassure Georgia residents not to be afraid to apply for federal assistance. Receiving a disaster grant will not cause anyone to miss out on assistance from other programs."

"We urge survivors who sustained hurricane damage to go ahead and apply," Kruger said.

The deadline to apply for federal assistance is Nov. 6, 2023.

Applying for assistance also does not affect a person's eligibility for Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) or other state and federal programs. Recipients do not have to repay FEMA grants.

- To apply for FEMA assistance, survivors who live in **Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Glynn** or **Lowndes** county can visit DisasterAssistance.gov, use the [FEMA mobile app](#) or call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. If you use a relay service such as video relay service (VRS) or captioned telephone service, give FEMA the number for that service. Press 1 for English. Press 2 for Spanish. Press 3 for other languages.

Residents may also visit a Disaster Recovery Center to apply to FEMA for federal disaster assistance. To find a center near you, text "DRC" and your Zip Code to 43362 or visit fema.gov/drc. For an accessible video on how to apply for FEMA



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assistance, visit youtube.com/watch?v=WZGpWI2RCNw.

When you apply, you will need to provide:

- A current phone number where you can be contacted.
- Your address at the time of the disaster and the address where you are now staying.
- Your Social Security Number.
- A general list of damage and losses.

Banking information if you choose direct deposit.

If you have homeowners or renter's insurance, you must also file a claim with your insurance company. FEMA cannot duplicate benefits for losses covered by insurance. You will need to provide your insurance claim information and policy number (or the agent and/or the company name) to FEMA to determine eligibility for federal assistance.

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.

