

# FACT SHEET: Citizenship Status and Eligibility for Disaster Assistance FAQ

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**Q. If I am an undocumented immigrant, am I eligible for assistance for needs related to the disaster?**

**A:** Yes, you may be eligible under many different programs run by voluntary agencies for various types of assistance. Among these are:

American Red Cross 866-438-4636 (English) 800-257-7575 (Spanish)  
Catholic Charities 888-744-7900 (English and Spanish)

**Q. How does my citizenship status affect my eligibility for disaster assistance?**

**A:** You do NOT have to be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or Qualified Alien to receive assistance.

However, you must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or Qualified Alien for a cash award from FEMA's Individuals and Households Program. Also, you must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or Qualified Alien to be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. You may, however, apply on behalf of your U.S. citizen child, or another adult household member may qualify the household for assistance.

Even if you do not, or your family does not, qualify for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program), please call FEMA at 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585 (TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) for information and to be referred to other programs that can assist you regardless of your immigration status.

**Q. Will my registration information be shared with immigration or other law enforcement agencies?**



A: FEMA will not proactively provide applicant information to immigration or law enforcement organizations. However, in rare circumstances, based on a specific request, a FEMA applicant's personal information may be shared within the Department of Homeland Security. The Department includes Federal Emergency Management Agency, Customs and Border Protection, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Transportation Security Administration, United States Coast Guard, United States Secret Service and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Q. If I am an undocumented immigrant, can I apply on behalf of my child who was born in the United States?

A: Yes, you can apply on behalf of your minor child (under 18 years of age) for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program Assistance) if you live together.

You will not have to provide any information on your immigration status or sign any documents regarding your status.

Q. Do I need a Social Security number to register for FEMA cash assistance (Individual and Households Program Assistance)?

A: If you are applying for disaster assistance with cash benefits, you should provide your Social Security number. If you are applying on your minor child's behalf, you should provide his/her Social Security number.

Q. If I have a Social Security number, am I eligible for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program) as a "Qualified Alien?"

A: Not necessarily. Having a Social Security number does not automatically mean that you are a Qualified Alien. You may be lawfully present in the U.S. and have a Social Security number but not be a Qualified Alien.



Q. What are the citizenship/immigration requirements to receive federal disaster assistance?

A: You must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or a Qualified Alien in order to be eligible for FEMA cash assistance (Individuals and Households Program) and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

- A Qualified Alien includes anyone with lawful permanent residence (a “Green Card” holder). Other Qualified Aliens include:
  - Refugees
  - Refugee status
  - Withholding of deportation
  - Parole into the U. S. for at least one year
  - A Cuban-Haitian entrant
  - Certain aliens subjected to battery or extreme cruelty to them or a relative
  - Certain trafficking victims.
- Applicants should consult an immigration expert concerning whether or not their immigration status falls within the Qualified Alien category.
- You will be asked to sign a Declaration and Release (FEMA Form 009-0-3) that you, or a member of your household, is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or a Qualified Alien.
- If you cannot sign the Declaration and Release form, another adult household member who is eligible can sign it, and no information regarding your status will be gathered.
- After you register on behalf of a child or other person qualified for FEMA disaster assistance, FEMA may ask for supporting documents such as a birth certificate for a qualifying child and proof of residence, such as a mortgage statement or utility bill.

*Assistance for eligible individuals and small businesses includes funds for temporary housing and necessary home repairs, individual and household grants, disaster unemployment assistance, low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration and other programs.*



*All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual orientation), religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585 (TTY/TDD).*

Aid is available to residents of Chambers, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, Montgomery, Orange and San Jacinto counties, who incurred losses from Sept. 17-23. The deadline to apply for assistance is Dec. 3, 2019.

To learn more about recovering from Imelda, visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4466> and <https://tdem.texas.gov/imelda-recovery-resources/>. Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/femaregion6](http://www.twitter.com/femaregion6) and the FEMA blog at <http://blog.fema.gov>.

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*FEMA's mission is to help people before, during and after disasters.*

For more information on Tropical Storm Imelda and Texas recovery, visit the Tropical Storm Imelda webpage at [www.fema.gov/disaster/4466](http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4466), the [@FEMARegion6 Twitter account](http://www.fema.gov/txmit), [www.fema.gov/txmit](http://www.fema.gov/txmit) and the [Texas Division of Emergency Management website](http://www.fema.gov/txmit). TTY users may call 800-462-7585.

The U.S. Small Business Administration is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center at



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800-659-2955. TTY users may also call 800-877-8339. Applicants may also email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) or visit SBA at [www.SBA.gov/disaster](http://www.SBA.gov/disaster).



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