

Details Matter When Filing a FEMA Appeal

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Survivors who registered with FEMA for federal assistance due to one of California’s two 2020 wildfire disaster declarations receive letters containing the agency’s response to their application and the reason for that determination.

If you have any questions about a letter from FEMA or what your next steps may be, you can get answers by calling the FEMA helpline at **800-621-3362** (TTY: **800-462-7585**) between 7 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. PST. If you use a relay service, such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel, provide FEMA the specific number assigned to that service when you register.

You have the right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with FEMA’s determination. A critical step in the appeals process is that you must write a letter to FEMA before your appeal can be considered. Simply submitting documents without a letter will not get the appeals process started. The letter must ask for a reconsideration and explain in detail why the appeal is being filed. Here is a checklist of what the letter should include:

- The applicant’s full name, address of pre-disaster residence and current phone number and address.
- The applicant must sign the letter.
- The appeal must be postmarked within 60 days of the date the applicant received FEMA’s initial ineligibility letter.
- The letter should include the statement, “I hereby declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.”
- The letter should be dated.
- The letter should include the applicant’s nine-digit FEMA application number and the disaster code. It will be either DR-4558-CA or DR-4569-CA.
- The letter should explain why the applicant believes FEMA should reconsider its original decision. There can be many different reasons. Examples are that you have additional losses from the wildfires that you didn’t report at the time



you registered; you have obtained documentation of information that was missing at the time of the original registration, such as proof of ownership or residency; or you may now have estimates for repairs. If you do, include them.

There are three ways to submit an appeal or to send FEMA missing documents:

- By mail to: FEMA's Individuals and Households Program, National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville MD 20782-7055.
- By fax: 800-827-8112.
- With a personal FEMA online account. To create an account, go to DisasterAssistance.gov. Select the Create Account button at the bottom of the page and follow instructions. You can then upload your documents in the Upload Center. (This page takes you to the login if you are returning to add more documents: go.usa.gov/xUPX5.)

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