

POSSIBLE LODGING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR WINTER STORM

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During the recent winter ice storms in Louisiana, some families were forced from their homes. Those who went to a hotel may have incurred expenses not covered by their insurance policy. In some cases, FEMA may reimburse their expenses under the federal disaster declaration.

Recent ice storms and record low temperatures in Louisiana knocked out utilities for thousands of households. Most experienced rolling blackouts and temporary water outages.

Some homes had no heat for several days while the temperatures remained well below freezing.

Applicants who had no eligible real property or personal property damage may not qualify for FEMA Rental Assistance solely due to utility outages but may qualify for Lodging Expense Reimbursement (LER).

- Applicants may be eligible for LER during the time in a disaster that a primary residence is uninhabitable because of damage, lack of utilities, or inaccessibility.
- LER reimburses the actual costs applicants incurred if they were displaced from their homes for a short time due to utility outages. FEMA requires applicants to submit receipts for lodging.
- Covered costs must have occurred on dates the residence was inaccessible or had an extended utility outage. The period for expenses began Feb. 11 and ended Feb. 28.
- These policy changes will not affect eligibility for other forms of FEMA assistance that do not require an inspection.



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- All other policy criteria remain unchanged. Applicants whose homes remain inaccessible or who incurred disaster-caused damage or had to shut off water supplies due to burst pipes or other complications will continue to be considered for eligible forms of FEMA Housing Assistance.

FEMA's Individuals and Households Assistance Program applies to applicants whose homes and/or possessions were damaged by the severe winter storms if they are:

- Uninhabitable, meaning the dwelling is not safe, sanitary, or fit to occupy and requires repairs to make the residence habitable; or
- Inaccessible, meaning the applicant's disaster-damaged primary residence cannot be reached (e.g., fallen trees, downed power lines or restrictions placed by federal, state or local officials).

A remote inspection may be needed, and FEMA Rental Assistance may apply.

For the latest information on the winter storm, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4590. Follow the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at twitter.com/FEMARegion6.

