

# Spend Your FEMA Grant Wisely

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**NEW YORK** -- As eligible disaster survivors start to receive funds for rental assistance, home repairs, or other categories of assistance, be assured federal disaster assistance funds are tax-free. FEMA's notification letter will inform you of the appropriate use of disaster assistance funds. FEMA urges you to use the funds as stated in your award letter and only for disaster-related expenses.

Here are some helpful tips:

FEMA will send you a notification letter informing you of the types of assistance you are eligible to receive and the amounts of assistance FEMA is providing for each eligible need. These may include:

- Home repairs (e.g., structure, water, septic and sewage systems).
- Rental assistance for a different place to live temporarily.
- Repair or replacement of a damaged primary vehicle.
- Uninsured out-of-pocket medical expenses for an injury caused by the disaster.
- Repair or replacement of occupational specialized tools.
- Essential educational materials (e.g., computers, schoolbooks, supplies).
- Moving and storage expenses related to the disaster and other disaster-related expenses.

You may spend your FEMA grant in ways that help you make your home safe, sanitary, and fit to live in. Remember to document how you used disaster funds and keep all receipts for at least three years for verification of how you spent the money.

Disaster grants are not for regular living expenses, such as utilities, food, medical or dental bills, travel, entertainment, or any discretionary expenses not directly related to the disaster.

Federal law prohibits duplicating assistance from other sources.



You can apply for FEMA assistance at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov), use the FEMA mobile app or call the **FEMA Helpline** at 800-621-3362 (711/VRS). Lines are open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week, and operators can connect you to a specialist who speaks your language. If you use a relay service such as video relay service, captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service.

For referrals to agencies that support community-specific need, contact your nearest 211Counts center at <https://www.211nys.org/contact-us>. In New York City, call 311. For outlying areas, call 211.

For official information on the recovery effort following the hurricane, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4615>. Follow us on twitter at [twitter.com/femaregion2](https://twitter.com/femaregion2) and [www.facebook.com/fema](https://www.facebook.com/fema).



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