

Helpful Tips to Appeal a FEMA Decision

Release Date: Oct 22, 2024

You applied to FEMA for disaster assistance and received a decision letter. You're not sure what the letter means, but you are worried the letter may be saying you are ineligible for assistance. You have the right to appeal any FEMA decision or award amount.

A decision letter is sent when information is missing from your application such as proof of identity, proof you own your home, or proof you lived in your home for a major part of the year before Tropical Storm Helene swept Tennessee.

If your primary home was in **Carter, Cocke, Greene, Hamblen, Hawkins, Johnson, Unicoi** or **WashingtonCounty** and you received a decision letter from FEMA, below are tips for how to appeal FEMA's decision.

Carefully read FEMA's letter

- You need to understand why FEMA said your application was "ineligible" or why FEMA is holding off on making a decision. Often, the reason is as simple as missing documents or information. Read FEMA's letter carefully to help you understand what the agency is asking.

How do I appeal FEMA's decision?

- You can appeal any FEMA decision or award amount by sending documents that show you qualify and need more help. You may send estimates for repairs, receipts, bills, etc. Each decision letter you receive from FEMA explains which documents may help you appeal FEMA's decision.
- Supporting documents may include:
 - receipts
 - bills
 - repair estimates
 - property titles or deeds, or



- any other information that may support your reasons for the appeal.

Do I have to send any other documents?

- No, you don't have to send anything else with your documents. But you can send additional information to help explain why you are appealing. Sending additional information isn't required, but it can help FEMA's review of your appeal. If you want to send additional information, you can:
 - Send a signed and completed Appeal Request Form. A copy of this form is included in your FEMA decision letter.
 - Send a signed, written appeal letter.
- Appeals must be submitted within **60 days** of the date on the FEMA decision letter.

What should I include on documents I send to FEMA?

- All documents you send to FEMA as part of your appeal should include your:
 - full name
 - current phone number and address
 - disaster number (**DR-4832-TN**) and nine-digit FEMA application number written on all pages, and
 - address of the disaster-damaged home.
- Receipts, bills and estimates must include the business name and contact information to help FEMA confirm the information.

Can someone appeal for me?

- If you send a written explanation for the appeal that is prepared by someone other than you, it must include that person's signature. FEMA will need your written permission to share information about your application. You can do this by completing an [Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form](#) and sending it to FEMA.

How can I send documents?



- You can send appeals and supporting documents to FEMA.
 - **Upload** to your disaster assistance account at DisasterAssistance.gov.
 - **Mail:** FEMA, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055.
 - **Fax:** 800-827-8112.
 - **Visit:** any Disaster Recovery Center. Search the [DRC Locator](#) to find one near you.

What you can expect after submitting your appeal

- You submitted an appeal to FEMA within 60 days of FEMA's decision letter or award amount. Now what? You may receive a call or letter from FEMA asking for more information. Or FEMA may schedule an inspection of your primary home. Whichever the case, once you've sent FEMA an appeal, you can expect a decision letter within 90 days after FEMA receives it.

Other resources

- For answers to your questions about appeals and FEMA assistance, call the **FEMA Helpline** at **800-621-3362**. If you use a relay service such as video relay service or captioned telephone service, you can provide FEMA with your number for that service. Helpline operators speak many languages and lines are open from **7 a.m. to midnight ET**, seven days a week.

