

FEMA Rental Assistance May Help Renters and Homeowners Who Need a Place to Stay

Release Date: Tháng 6 14, 2021

BATON ROUGE, La. – For Louisiana renters and homeowners who cannot live in their homes because of the severe storms, tornados and flooding in May, FEMA rental assistance may help. The initial rental award is for two months and may be reviewed for further assistance.

FEMA rental assistance is a temporary grant to survivors to pay for somewhere to live while they repair or rebuild their home. For renters, it may provide a solution while their lodging is under repair or while they look for a new place to rent.

Options include renting an apartment, home or travel trailer that can keep survivors near their jobs, schools, homes and places of worship. Housing is in short supply, so it may take time for survivors to find a suitable replacement home.

Funds can be used for security deposits, rent and the cost of essential utilities such as electricity, gas and water. They may not be used for to pay for cable or Internet.

Survivors who live in Ascension, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Iberville or Lafayette parishes, follow these steps if your home is uninhabitable and you need a place to stay:

- File a claim with your insurance company. Your homeowners or renters insurance company will provide a settlement document that you will need to provide to FEMA. It may take time to get this document, so file your claim as soon as possible. Also, check with your insurance agent to see if your policy covers additional living expenses (ALE). ALE may pay for relocating to a temporary residence.
- Apply for FEMA assistance right away. If you have insurance, tell FEMA and submit your settlement documents for review once you receive them. FEMA



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cannot determine your final eligibility status until this information is complete. If your policy does not include ALE, or if you use up this coverage and you still cannot live in your home, you may be eligible for rental assistance from FEMA. You can apply by going online to disasterassistance.gov, by downloading the FEMA app or by calling the Helpline at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585).

A FEMA inspector may contact you to make an appointment to inspect the damage on the outside of the home and to record your information on any damage inside. Inspectors may look through windows to see visible damage but will not go inside.

Keep your receipts for three years to show how you spent FEMA grants. If grant money is not used as outlined in the letter, you may have to repay FEMA and could lose eligibility for further federal assistance.

Extensions on rental assistance may be granted for three-month periods up to a maximum of 18 months from the date of the FEMA disaster declaration.

It is important to keep FEMA updated with your contact information and housing status. If you have any questions, you can always call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585).

For the latest information on the May 17-21 severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4606. Follow the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at twitter.com/FEMARegion6.

