

# U.S. Citizenship and FEMA Eligibility

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FEMA is committed to helping all eligible New Mexicans recover from the damage they experienced during the South Fork and Salt Fires and flooding. This includes U.S. citizens, non-citizen nationals and qualified non-citizens.

Homeowners and renters in the **Mescalero Apache Tribe** and in **Lincoln** and **Otero** counties who were impacted by this disaster can apply for assistance from FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP). You or a member of your household must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified non-citizen.

If you do not meet the status of either U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified non-citizen, your household may still apply for and be considered for IHP assistance if:

- Another adult member of your household meets the eligibility criteria and certifies their citizenship status during the registration process, *or*,
- You are the parent or guardian of a minor child who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or a qualified non-citizen who applies for assistance on behalf of the child, if the child lives in the same household. The parent or legal guardian must register as the co-applicant, and the minor child must be under age 18 at the time the disaster occurred, beginning June 17 and continuing. ***FEMA does not collect information on the immigration status of other household members.***

All individuals, regardless of citizenship status, who have been impacted by this presidentially declared disaster are eligible for short-term, non-cash, in-kind emergency disaster relief programs. These include search and rescue, medical care, shelter, food and water.

## Qualified Non-citizens

"Qualified non-citizen" includes:



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Page 1 of 3

- A legal permanent resident (“green card” holder).
- An asylee, refugee or a non-citizen whose deportation is being withheld.
- A non-citizen paroled into the U.S. for at least one year.
- A non-citizen granted conditional entry (per law in effect prior to April 1, 1980).
- A Cuban or Haitian entrant.
- Certain non-citizens subjected to extreme cruelty or who have been a victim of a severe form of human trafficking, including persons with a “T” or “U” visa.
- Non-citizens whose children have been abused and non-citizen children whose parent has been abused who fit certain criteria.

## Non-Citizen Nationals

A non-citizen national is a person born in an outlying possession of the U.S. (e.g., American Samoa) on or after the date the U.S. acquired the possession, or a person whose parents are U.S. non-citizen nationals. All U.S. citizens are U.S. nationals; however, not every U.S. national is a U.S. citizen.

## Qualified Minor Children

If you do not meet the citizenship or immigration status at the time of applications, your household may still apply for certain forms of federal assistance if the parent or legal guardian of a minor child who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified non-citizen applies for assistance on behalf of the minor child, so long as they live in the same household.

The parent or legal guardian must apply as the co-applicant, and the minor child must be under 18 at the time disaster occurred.

## Resources

For more information, see Citizenship and Immigration Status Requirements for Federal Public Benefits, available in multiple languages, at [fema.gov/assistance/individual/program/citizenship-immigration-status](https://fema.gov/assistance/individual/program/citizenship-immigration-status).

If you’re unsure of your immigration status, talk to an immigration expert to learn if your status falls within the immigration status requirements for FEMA disaster



assistance.

Regardless of citizenship status, help may also be available at these nonprofit organizations:

- Call 800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767) or visit [redcross.org/find-your-local-chapter.html](https://www.redcross.org/find-your-local-chapter.html).
- Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico; all [575-622-1636](tel:575-622-1636) to schedule an appointment.
- Visit [nvoad.org/](https://www.nvoad.org/) to learn about other voluntary organizations.

## Apply for FEMA Disaster Assistance

To be eligible for any FEMA Individual Assistance program, you must apply to FEMA. There are four ways to apply:

- Go online to [disasterassistance.gov/](https://disasterassistance.gov/).
- Download the [FEMA App](https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products) for mobile devices at [fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products](https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products).
- Call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. MT. Help is available in most languages. If you use a relay service, such as video relay (VRS), captioned telephone or other service, give FEMA your number for that service.
- Visit the Disaster Recovery Center in Roswell. For location and hours, go online to [fema.gov/drc](https://www.fema.gov/drc).

For an accessible video on how to apply for assistance, visit [youtube.com/watch=WZGpWI2RCNw](https://www.youtube.com/watch=WZGpWI2RCNw).

