

# FAQs for Mobile Home Issues<sup>1</sup>

## **If my mobile home was damaged or destroyed by the fire, can I receive FEMA disaster relief benefits?**

Maybe. If the President has declared a federal disaster and authorized payments to individuals, and your home was damaged or destroyed during the fire, you may be able to obtain financial assistance from FEMA. In such situations, FEMA assistance may be available whether you own or rent your mobile home. For more information on FEMA eligibility and registration please visit [disasterassistance.gov](http://disasterassistance.gov) or call 1-800-621-FEMA.

## **What type of FEMA benefits are available to mobile home renters?**

If you rent your mobile home (and if a federal disaster is declared), FEMA may be able to provide you with financial assistance to cover the cost of certain disaster related expenses, such as: temporary housing, disaster related medical expenses, disaster related damage to personal property, disaster related food costs, and disaster related moving expenses.

## **What type of FEMA benefits are available to mobile home owners?**

If you own your mobile home, (and if a federal disaster is declared), FEMA may be able to provide you with the same financial assistance that is available to renters, as well as, additional financial assistance to help cover the costs associated with repairing or rebuilding your mobile home. If your mobile home is completely destroyed, FEMA may also provide financial assistance to secure similar housing.

## **Do I have to continue to pay rent to the mobile home park, if my mobile home was damaged or destroyed by the fire?**

Yes. If your mobile home was damaged or destroyed during the fire, you must continue to pay your space rent to ensure that you maintain possession of your space moving forward. However, if your mobile home park is not currently safe to live in or otherwise deemed uninhabitable, you may be able to negotiate with your park's manager to receive a proportionate reduction in your space rent. If you need help negotiating with your park manager, contact your local Legal Aid office for more help.

## **Who is responsible for debris removal at my mobile home park?**

If your mobile home park was damaged or destroyed by the fire, you should review your mobile home park rules and regulations to determine if there is a written agreement that outlines which party is responsible for debris removal. If you do not have a written agreement or your written agreement is silent on this issue, California law places the debris removal burden as

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<sup>1</sup> Updated October 2019.

follows: the park owner is responsible for the cost of debris removal in all common areas of the mobile home park and the mobile home owner is responsible for the cost of removing debris from within his or her individual mobile home or on the rented lot, as well as debris from his or her personal effects.

**If my mobile home was damaged or destroyed by the fire, how do I go about removing the fire debris from my lot?**

To remove fire debris, mobile home owners can make arrangements to have their fire debris removed by a private debris removal company or choose to participate in local government's debris removal program.

**If my mobile home park was destroyed by the fire, can the park owner permanently close the park?**

Usually, the owner of a mobile home park has the right to permanently close down a mobile home park; however, there are rules in place to help protect the mobile home park's occupants. In such situations, a mobile home park owner must fully comply with all state and local relocation laws before they can begin the process of requesting to close down or rezone an existing mobile home park.

**Where can I get help with all this?**

To get legal help, search for a legal aid provider near you using this link:

<https://lawhelpca.org/legal-directory>

Or find a local lawyer referral hotline by using this link: <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/Need-Legal-Help/Lawyer-Referral-Service>

If the President has declared a disaster with Individual Assistance, then FEMA will open a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) in the area affected by the disaster. The DRC will have tables staffed by FEMA, the Red Cross, Legal Aid, and many other groups there to help. To find out if an Individual Assistance Disaster has been declared, go to <https://www.fema.gov/disasters>. (If it only says "Fire Management Assistance," that means the President has not declared Individual Assistance disaster. That could still happen, but has not happened yet.

If the President HAS declared an Individual Assistance disaster, go to <https://gateway.fema.gov/ESF6/DRCLocator> to find a DRC near you.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> DLAC appreciates the hard work of Legal Aid of Sonoma County, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles NLSLA, and Legal Services of Northern California for this information in this sheet.

