



FEMA

Apply for Assistance

Federal assistance is available to eligible individuals and families affected by this disaster.

Hawaii Wildfires (DR-4724-HI)

Designated Areas

News & Media

Reports & Notices

How a Disaster Gets Declared

Disaster Authorities

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Hawaii (DR-4724-HI): Rumor Control and Frequently Asked Questions



English Español Ōlelo Hawaii Iloko 한국어 Tagalog

Help keep yourself, your family and your community safe after the Hawaii wildfires by being aware of rumors and scams and sharing [official information from trusted sources](#).

Do your part to stop the spread of rumors by doing three easy things:

1. Find trusted sources of information.
2. Share information from trusted sources.
3. Discourage others from sharing information from unverified sources.



Learn more about common disaster-related **rumors** and **frequently asked questions** and how to **report scams after a disaster**.



Protecting Your Identity



If you apply to FEMA, you may be visited by an inspector.



FEMA inspectors will always have an official identification badge.
Always ask to see ID."



If you did NOT apply for FEMA assistance, tell the inspector. If the inspector has left, call the **FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362** and tell them you did not apply.



If you suspect identity theft *visit [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov)*.



Rumors

Frequently Asked Questions

Rumors

Search by Keyword

Apply

Rumor: FEMA will pay for my hotel if I call 1-800-621-3362.

Fact:

You are not able to request hotel room payment assistance from FEMA by calling any number.

However, FEMA may reimburse lodging expenses to eligible individuals and families. To see if this assistance is available to you, apply at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov).

Rumor: It costs money for an inspection or to apply for assistance.

Fact:

This is not true. FEMA will never ask you to pay to apply for assistance or receive an inspection.

If you have knowledge of fraud, waste or abuse you can report it anonymously by calling the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. You can also email StopFEMAfraud@fema.dhs.gov.

Rumor: If I apply for disaster assistance, FEMA may confiscate my property or land if they deem it unlivable.

Fact:

This is not true. FEMA cannot seize your property or land. Applying for disaster assistance does not grant FEMA or the federal government authority or ownership of your property or land.

When you apply for disaster assistance a FEMA inspector may be sent to verify the damage on your home. This is one of many factors reviewed to determine what kind of disaster assistance you may be eligible for. If the results of the inspection deem your home to be uninhabitable, that information is only used to determine the amount of FEMA assistance you may receive to make your home [safe, sanitary and functional](#).

Rumor: FEMA and the Red Cross are confiscating donations for Hawaii wildfire aid.

Fact:

This is not true. FEMA and the Red Cross are not seizing any donated items for Hawaii.

FEMA coordinates with numerous nonprofit and voluntary organizations, including the Red Cross, to identify ways in which donations can be distributed effectively. During major disasters, it is very common that a large influx of donated items can actually hinder disaster response efforts. For that reason, we encourage people to consider donating cash to trusted organizations that are responding. [Learn more about volunteering and donations](#).

Rumor: If I receive donations from a GoFundMe page or something similar, FEMA will not help me.

Fact:

It depends. By law, FEMA cannot duplicate benefits you receive from another source. However, there are many different types of assistance available through FEMA and we review each application to ensure you receive the aid for which you are eligible.

If you receive money from a GoFundMe page for a specific disaster-related expense--such as home repairs, funeral expenses or other emergency needs—you may not be able to receive FEMA aid for the same expense. For example, if you receive donations to clean up storm damage to your home, FEMA may not be able to also grant you financial assistance for home clean up. We encourage all survivors to apply for assistance regardless so we can review your specific case.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Search by Keyword

Apply

Why am I only approved for \$700 after I apply for disaster assistance?

After you register with FEMA, you may be approved for a one-time immediate payment of \$700 for Critical Needs Assistance, one of several types of federal assistance you may be eligible to receive.

Critical Needs Assistance is typically approved quickly because it is meant to help with immediate needs like water, food, and fuel.

Examples of other types of assistance include help with a temporary place to stay, funding home repairs, and emergency needs that insurance and other financial assistance sources may not cover. Learn more about the [types of FEMA assistance](#).

August 16, 2023

Can FEMA reimburse me for my lodging expenses?

FEMA may be able to provide Lodging Expense Reimbursement (LER) for out-of-pocket lodging expenses, but only if these expenses are not covered through other means, such as insurance.

To be considered for LER, you must meet basic [eligibility criteria for assistance](#) and FEMA must verify that your home is unlivable, inaccessible, or affected by an extended disaster-caused utility outage. You must also submit verifiable documentation, such as receipts, of your lodging expenses.

May 13, 2022

I have insurance, can I still get reimbursed for my lodging expenses?

By law, FEMA cannot duplicate benefits provided through insurance. Many insurance policies include Additional Living Expenses (ALE) or Loss of Use (LOU) coverage, which provides money to cover lodging costs when you are unable to live in your home due to a disaster. If your insurance does not include ALE or LOU, or if the money provided by your insurance does not cover all your lodging expenses, you can submit your insurance documentation to FEMA to be considered for Lodging Expense Reimbursement.

May 13, 2022

When can I expect to receive reimbursement for my eligible lodging expenses?

Lodging Expenses Reimbursement requests are manually reviewed by processing staff. In larger scale disasters, it can take one to two months after receipts are submitted to receive reimbursement.

September 18, 2021

I am a lodging property owner. How can I add my property to a FEMA approved list?

If lodging properties are interested in participating in FEMA's TSA program for disaster survivors, they may email femahousing@clclodging.com or call 866-545-9865 to speak with representatives from Corporate Lodging Consultants, who manage the enrollment of lodging providers. Additional information about emergency lodging can be found at [Emergency Lodging Assistance Program](#).

September 6, 2021

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