



FEMA

May 18, 2021
DR-4595-KY NR 07
FEMA News Desk: (202) 805-6991

News Release

Spending FEMA Grants Wisely

FRANKFORT, Ky. – More than \$2.8 million in federal assistance grants have been approved by FEMA to help survivors of the severe storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides that occurred in Kentucky between Feb. 27 and March 14, 2021.

While assistance is tax free and grants don't have to be repaid, **FEMA urges survivors to use the funds quickly, wisely and only for disaster-related expenses.**

When a grant is awarded, FEMA sends a disaster assistance determination letter listing approved uses including:

- home repairs (e.g., structure, water, septic and sewage systems)
- rental assistance for a different place to live temporarily
- repair or replacement of a flooded essential vehicle
- medical care for an injury caused by the disaster
- repair, cleaning or replacement of clothing, specialized tools
- necessary educational materials (e.g., computers, school books, supplies)
- moving and storage expenses related to the disaster
- other disaster-related expenses

Recipients may spend their FEMA Housing Assistance grant to achieve the goal of permanent, safe, sanitary and functional housing.

- Rental assistance grants are provided for temporary housing when a disaster leaves a home uninhabitable or inaccessible.
- FEMA does not pay to return a home to its pre-disaster condition.
- Homeowners or renters can choose to rent an apartment, house, mobile home or some other temporary rental unit.
- Those who intend to seek continued rental assistance need receipts to show they used the grant for rent.

Disaster grants **should not** be used for travel, entertainment, regular living expenses or any discretionary expenses not related to the disaster.

It's also important to remember that federal law prohibits duplicating federal grants from other sources. In other words, if a disaster-related loss is covered by another source, such as insurance, or is taken care of by a volunteer group, donation or gift, FEMA cannot pay for that cost again.

FEMA encourages recipients to keep their receipts for three years to show how the funds were spent. After every major disaster, FEMA conducts audits of disaster assistance payments to ensure that taxpayer dollars were properly provided by the agency and appropriately used by recipients.

Applicants who have trouble understanding their FEMA disaster assistance determination letter should contact the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362** (TTY: **800-462-7585**). Those who use a Relay service, such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel, should provide their specific number assigned to that service. It is important that FEMA can contact you. Phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week. Multilingual operators are available during those hours (press **2** for Spanish).

Homeowners and renters affected by the severe storms in Breathitt, Clay, Estill, Floyd, Johnson, Lee, Magoffin, Martin and Powell counties can register for assistance with FEMA in one of three ways:

- Online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.DisasterAssistance.gov)
- Downloading the FEMA app; or
- Calling **800-621-3362** (TTY: **800-462-7585**). Multilingual operators are available seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. local time. Multilingual operators are available during those hours (press **2** for Spanish).
- Those who use a Relay service, such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel, should provide their specific number assigned to that service. It is important that FEMA can contact you. Phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number.

###

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.