



FEMA

DISASTER ASSISTANCE DIRECTORATE

FACT SHEET

Students Affected by a Presidentially Declared Disaster

BASIC ELIGIBILITY

In general, FEMA may provide assistance to individuals and households who qualify for such assistance under section 408 of the Stafford Act. Individuals must meet the basic eligibility criteria outlined in Title 44 CFR §206.113.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

FEMA's Individuals and Households Program may provide **Housing Assistance** (i.e., Rental Assistance) when an applicant's primary residence is damaged or destroyed. In most cases, dormitories or student housing that is conditioned on enrollment within the college or university is temporary and does not meet the definition of a primary residence.

A student may be eligible for **Housing Assistance**, specifically Temporary Housing Assistance, from FEMA if they meet the basic eligibility criteria for IHP and the definition of an "independent" student. To be considered an "independent" student, the applicant must provide official documentation to prove that he or she meets at least one of the following requirements:

1. Born before Jan. 1, 1984;
2. Enrolled in a Master's or doctorate program (beyond a Bachelor's degree) at the beginning of the award year;
3. Married (even if separated) prior to the declared disaster;
4. Has children who receive more than half their support from him or her;
5. Has legal dependents (other than children or spouse) who live with him or her and who receive more than half their support from him or her;
6. Is an orphan or ward of the court, or was a ward of the court until he or she reached the age of 18;
7. Is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.



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8. Is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces (A "veteran" includes an individual who attended a U.S. service academy and who was released under a condition other than dishonorable.);
9. Is a student for whom a financial aid administrator makes a documented determination of independence by reason of other unusual circumstances.

"Independent" status may be verified by providing a pre-disaster "Student Aid Report" from the U.S. Department of Education or any other official documentation proving the student's independent status.

OTHER NEEDS ASSISTANCE

Also under FEMA's Individuals and Households Program, all students residing in dormitories or student housing that is affiliated or conditioned on enrollment within the college or university, may be eligible for **Other Needs Assistance** (ONA). Since dormitories are generally partially furnished, financial assistance is limited to the following personal property items: electric fan, computer, clothing, television, microwave, school books, telephone, radio, carbon monoxide detector, bathroom (e.g. toiletries), and kitchen (e.g. dishes).

Students may also be eligible for disaster-related medical, dental, funeral, transportation, and moving and storage expenses without regard to the type of pre-disaster housing.

DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS

By law, FEMA cannot duplicate assistance available from insurance settlements or other assistance programs. If a student receives assistance from another source for the same loss, such as money from their parent's homeowners insurance or money from the college or university, they must notify FEMA. Any duplicated assistance received from FEMA must be returned.

OTHER DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Additional FEMA assistance, such as crisis counseling and disaster legal services will be available to all applicants without regard to student status.

To apply for federal disaster assistance, call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), TTY 1-800-462-7585, or visit www.fema.gov.