

# Appealing a FEMA Assistance Denial Decision

When you are faced with devastating losses we know that asking for assistance is never an easy thing to do, and we try our very best to make the process as easy as possible. And from time-to-time through this process, we get questions about what your options might be if you receive a letter from FEMA denying your request for disaster assistance. So we want to make sure that you have the best information to help you receive the assistance you need.

If you receive a letter from FEMA stating you are not eligible for assistance, it does not necessarily mean your case is closed. Your letter tells you how to appeal the decision and what additional information you need to provide to FEMA, in order for your case to be reviewed again. It is important to note that survivors must submit an appeal within **60 days** of the date on the determination letter they received.

When survivors apply for individual disaster assistance through FEMA, their needs are assessed based on a number of factors, including eligibility requirements laid out under federal law. Sometimes people do not qualify for financial help right away. Some of the reasons for an initial turn down can be

- You might not have gotten your insurance settlement;
  - You may not have given FEMA all the information we need;
  - You haven't given us proof of ownership or residence;
  - You may not have returned the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loan application;
  - You may not have provided records that showed the damaged property was the primary residence at the time of the disaster;
  - You may not have signed essential documents.
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- Bottom line – ***these letters are the start of a conversation*** between you and FEMA, not the end.
  - Read your letter carefully. FEMA may only need you to provide additional information. Your appeal should include new or missing information, documents and damage repair estimates that support the appeal request.
  - It is important to date the appeal letter and mail it to the following address:
  - FEMA - Appeals Officer  
National Processing Service Center  
P.O. Box 10055  
Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055
  - Appeals may also be faxed to: 1-800-827-8112.
  - You can also call the helpline at **800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 800-462-7585** or visit a Disaster Recovery Center, where you can talk with someone about your particular situation. Either way, you can get more information about what to do next and give us information that might change our determination about your status.
  - So again, everyone should read their letters carefully, ask questions, ask for help, ***and tell us if you think we got it wrong.***
  - **We are here to serve you – the disaster survivor – and it is your right to ask us to reconsider our decision.**