



FEMA Fact Sheet

DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

Background: Immediately before, during and after hurricanes, floods and other major disasters, the welfare and safety of hundreds, if not thousands, of victims, are often jeopardized because, due to their immigration status, they:

- Refuse or do not understand guidance and direction from emergency management authorities concerning voluntary or mandatory evacuations.
- Fear taking advantage of emergency shelter, whether provided by voluntary agencies, faith-based organizations, or government.
- Fail to utilize many services provided to evacuees and victims by voluntary agencies, faith-based organizations or government.

While it is the law that one must be a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National, or a Qualified Alien to be eligible for FEMA cash assistance programs (Individuals and Households Program Assistance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance), you do NOT have to be a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National or Qualified Alien to receive the following non-cash services:

Mass Care

- **Sheltering**
- **Feeding**
- **Distribution of Emergency Relief Supplies**
- **Basic First Aid**
- **Disaster Welfare Information**

Emergency Assistance

- **Mass Evacuation**
- **Family Reunification**
- **Household Pets and Service Animals**
- **Crisis Counseling**
- **Disaster Legal Services**
- **Functional Needs (Special Needs), Medical and Non-conventional Sheltering**
- **Voluntary Organization Assistance**

When visiting the United States, visitors are encouraged to register with their country’s Embassy or Consulate, and to keep them up-to-date on their whereabouts and contact information.

In the event of a disaster or impending threat, everyone must be prepared to respond to directions from local emergency management authorities.

Should communications with family be disrupted by disaster, FEMA encourages visitors to work with the American Red Cross and its Safe and Well Website <https://disastersafe.redcross.org/>. If affected by a disaster, this website can provide a way for a person to communicate to their family that they are “safe and well”. Concerned family and friends also can search the list of individuals who have registered themselves as “safe and well.”



FEMA

“FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.”