



FEMA

W-08068

September 22, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: Write Your Own (WYO) Principal Coordinators
and the NFIP Servicing Agent

FROM: WYO Clearinghouse

SUBJECT: Improved Registration Process to Meet Assistance Needs

FEMA has modified the assistance application process for individuals affected by Hurricane Ike. Please see the attached pages for details on the newly implemented changes.

You may wish to share this information with others in your organization.

Attachment

cc: Vendors, IBHS, FIPNC, Government Technical Representative

Suggested Routing: Claims, Underwriting



FEMA

Fact Sheet

Date: September 17, 2008
Contact: FEMA News Desk
202-646-4600

FEMA IMPROVES REGISTRATION PROCESS TO MEET ASSISTANCE NEEDS

PROCESS

- If you've been affected by Hurricane Ike, FEMA urges you to apply for assistance online at www.FEMA.gov or by calling 1-800-621-3362 TTY 1-800-462-7585.
- If you have access to the internet, FEMA's online application is an easier way to apply for assistance. Visit www.FEMA.gov to complete your application.
- If you choose to apply by phone, you should know that FEMA is experiencing extremely high call volume and extended wait times. Some calls have been dropped due to the phone network being overwhelmed. Service providers have been made aware of these rare instances and are making every effort to address them.
- All calls are important to us and we appreciate your patience and understanding while we are assisting those in need. Each call is individually addressed and reviewed, and that is a time-intensive process.
- The FEMA Registration and Helplines are operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are answered in the order received, so hanging up will only delay being served. Wait times may be decreased during off-peak hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. local time and on Sundays. If your call is disrupted, please call back.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Recognizing that many disaster victims may be in shelters with no communications and unable to register for assistance, FEMA has established procedures that move registration capabilities directly into the field. FEMA is deploying outreach staff to these shelters and providing an on-site capability to register disaster victims for FEMA assistance.
- Several Mobile Disaster Recovery Centers (MDRCs) and fixed Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) are in Texas and more are on the way. The centers, equipped with phones and computers, will help residents without phone service or internet access to apply for assistance. Ask a local emergency management official to find the location of a mobile or fixed DRC in your area. As other DRCs are established, announcements will be made at the local level.

(MORE)

- Additional customer service representatives are being added to FEMA's call centers each day. Registration lines will remain open until all disaster victims have had an opportunity to apply. If your damages are less severe, please consider waiting a few days, if you can, to register to let your neighbors who may have been more severely impacted register first. Be assured that waiting will not affect your eligibility for assistance.

ADDITIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE TIPS

- It will take approximately 15 minutes or longer to complete the application process. Only one family member per household should register. Before you call or go online, gather the following basic information to speed the process:
 - Social Security number (including your spouse's);
 - Daytime telephone number where applicant can be reached;
 - Address of the damaged property;
 - Current mailing address;
 - Brief description of disaster-related damages and losses;
 - Insurance information; and
 - Direct deposit information to help speed delivery of funds.
- If you have losses that are covered by insurance, please contact your insurance company prior to calling FEMA; it could speed up FEMA's delivery of assistance for any remaining uninsured essential items for which you may be eligible.
- When the home becomes accessible for inspection, you should notify FEMA through the Helpline at 800-621-3362 or by visiting a Disaster Recovery Center. FEMA may provide additional assistance after the home has been inspected. If an applicant is denied assistance, the Helpline can also assist in an appeal of that decision.

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