

News Release

RECIPIENTS OF FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE MUST RECERTIFY ELIGIBILITY

LINCROFT, N.J. —Recertification is a standard process that FEMA uses to identify households who qualify for continued temporary housing assistance.

The recertification process applies if the applicant either received financial assistance (rental funds) to rent an alternative place to live, or if the applicant received a FEMA-provided temporary housing unit.

Financial Assistance:

- Applicants who received rental assistance will receive a letter from FEMA requesting additional information if funds are needed for continued housing assistance.
- Applicants receiving rental assistance who need additional funds can also request assistance through the FEMA Helpline, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**.
- Applicants will be asked to demonstrate they have a continued housing need and that they have expended all rental funds previously received.

Direct Assistance:

- A FEMA-provided temporary housing unit is a temporary solution for occupants until they can return to their primary residence or find other permanent housing.
- FEMA staff will call and set up an appointment to meet with the applicant in the temporary housing unit. While there, they will check the condition of their unit; and if the unit requires repairs, a work order request will be submitted.
- Occupants are responsible for developing and actively pursuing a permanent housing plan (repair, rebuild, replace) while in FEMA-provided temporary housing units.
- FEMA staff will assist the occupants in developing a permanent housing plan so they can return to a similar pre-disaster housing situation.
- FEMA staff regularly check on the progress of an occupant's permanent housing plan. Staff conducts an initial interview with occupants followed by additional visits after an additional 30 days depending on the housing plan. Interim contacts may be necessary in some cases.
- Occupants should expect to provide information about repairs to their permanent residences or about contacts made to resources that can assist them in securing permanent housing.
- A recommendation by FEMA staff to extend an occupant's housing agreement is based on a set of criteria including the estimated completion date of a reasonable housing plan. Recommendations are subject to approval.
- Occupants with no options are steered to rental resources or state programs that may be of assistance.
- If occupants refuse three suitable rental resources provided by FEMA for no valid reasons, they may be found ineligible to receive continued housing assistance by FEMA and may have to find alternative housing at their own expense.

What do Recertification staff do?

- Recertification staff will help applicants develop a housing plan and provide resources in the community that may help meet their housing needs.

- Recertification staff will collect information to determine if the need for continued assistance exists.
- They can also answer program questions about FEMA assistance or provide a phone number of someone who can provide answers.
- FEMA staff will also talk with applicants about their future housing plans and current living situation.
- Applicants who have questions about recertification or other disaster assistance can call the FEMA Helpline, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**.
- There are additional resources for the media at <http://www.fema.gov/media/index.shtm>.