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Register online for FEMA disaster assistance

Residents are urged to register as soon as possible

Individuals who suffered property damage or loss directly caused by Hurricane Irma and who plan to seek disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are reminded that the first step is to register – regardless of the requested assistance. Individuals are urged to register as soon as possible.

Residents may register for FEMA assistance online at www.disasterassistance.gov or via the FEMA app. The app is available for download through the Apple App Store or Google Play, by searching for FEMA. Residents may also register by calling 1-800-621-FEMA.

When registering with FEMA, you must provide:

- Social Security number
- Address of the location where the damage occurred (pre-disaster address)
- Current mailing address
- Current telephone number
- Insurance information
- Total household annual income
- Routing and account number for your checking or savings account
- A description of your disaster-caused damage and losses

Applicants receive a nine-digit registration number for use when corresponding with FEMA. Keep this number on hand. It will be needed to update your application with any new information.

Some applicants may be required to submit a [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) loan application before FEMA can determine their eligibility for assistance. The SBA offers low-interest disaster loans to businesses of all sizes, most private nonprofits, homeowners and renters. SBA loans can help you recover from losses not covered by insurance, grants or other sources.

The SBA also offers low-interest working capital loans (called [Economic Injury Disaster Loans](#)) to small businesses and most private nonprofits having difficulty meeting

obligations as a result of the disaster. For more information, applicants may call SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955, or visit SBA's website at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster). Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call 800-877-8339.

What to Expect After You Apply

Within about 10 days of your application to FEMA, if you are uninsured or lack the appropriate insurance coverage, a qualified inspector will contact you to set up a time to see the damage to your property that was caused by the disaster. If you need language translation support during your inspection, including sign language, you can request it.

When a FEMA inspector arrives, he or she will display official photo identification. If it is not displayed, ask to see it and inspect it carefully. Your losses will be recorded and submitted to the Individual Housing Program (IHP).

Approximately 10 days after the inspection, you should have a decision from IHP about whether you qualify for help. If you have been referred for an SBA disaster loan, the SBA will also contact you and schedule an appointment to review your disaster-related losses. It is critical that you complete the loan application process. If it is approved, it provides funds from the low interest loan. If it is not approved, you may qualify for additional FEMA assistance, but not until the loan process is complete.

If you are eligible for help, you should receive a U.S. Treasury/State check or notification of a deposit to your bank account within about 10 days of the inspector's visit. Other types of assistance may be provided later, based on specific eligibility and need.

For a more detailed explanation of the process and what you can expect, visit <https://www.fema.gov/apply-assistance>.

Residents can get updates on Irma recovery efforts by checking local media outlets, the county website (www.pinellascounty.org) and county social media accounts; search hashtag #PinellasIrma.

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