THREATENING PHONE CALLS

I. Overview
- Purpose
- Other Items to Note

*** This can be referenced by all staff ***
(JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)

II. Process
- Threatening Call Procedures
- Documenting the Call
- Exceptions

III. Appendix
- Referral Information

IV. Definitions and Acronyms
- Acronyms
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Threatening Phone Calls.

Purpose:

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will supply staff with information on how to address a threatening phone call, a suicidal phone call, and assist callers that are undergoing a great deal of stress.

Other Items to Note:

- TAKE threatening phone calls very seriously.
  - All incidents must be reported to the Federal Protection Services Mega Center in Denver at 1-877-437-7411.
  - The employee that witnessed the incident or threat must report it immediately. The Federal Protection Services Mega Center will ensure that they get all pertinent information for the report and assign an Inspector. This will expedite responses and make it easier for Federal Protective Services (FPS) to contact the proper person involved.
    - If the threat is against an inspector, refer to Section A.1 for additional information.
    - If the threat is to commit suicide OR self-harm, refer to Section A.2. for additional information.
    - If the threat includes other threats such as bomb threats or threats toward public officials, FEMA staff, FEMA facilities, or other individuals, refer to Section A.3. for additional information.
    - If the threat is received through fax or mail, refer to Section A.4. for additional information.
  - The National Processing Service Centers (NPSCs) have established procedures for documenting a bomb/telephone threat.
    - Supervisors/designated staff will work to document/save the threatening phone calls, including self-harm.
      - Refer to Section A.3 for additional information.
II. PROCESS

A. Threatening Call Procedures

Complete the following procedures when encountering a threatening phone call.

1. Applicant/Caller threatens Inspector:

If an inspector is threatened during a phone call:

i. TREAT all threats seriously;

ii. STAY calm and TRY to keep the caller on the line as long as possible;

iii. LISTEN to the caller and LIMIT interruptions;

iv. DO NOT place the caller on hold;

v. NOTIFY your Supervisor/Point of Contact (POC) immediately via email AND follow-up by utilizing Microsoft Teams, interoffice instant messaging, AND/OR signaling for assistance;

   1. If the call is disconnected prior to receiving a response, FORWARD all details of the call to your Supervisor/POC for any possible emergency response actions.

vi. USE your best customer service, and without being forceful, ATTEMPT to obtain the following information:
2. Applicant/Caller threatens to **Commit Suicide** or **Self-Harm** during the Phone Call:

   a. If the applicant/caller states the following during the phone call:
f. If the caller DOES NOT provide enough information regarding how they can be contacted or located, ENCOURAGE them to contact the referrals in Appendix A

8. CONTACT the Federal Protection Services Mega Center at 1-877-437-7411 to report the incident and details of the threat; AND
3. Applicant/Caller Makes Other Threats:

a. If the verbal threat includes bomb AND/OR death threats toward public officials, FEMA staff, FEMA facilities, or other individuals:
   i. TREAT all threats seriously;
   ii. STAY calm and TRY to keep the caller on the line as long as possible;
   iii. LISTEN to the caller and LIMIT interruptions;
   iv. DO NOT place the caller on hold;
   v. NOTIFY your Supervisor/POC immediately via email AND follow-up utilizing Microsoft Teams, interoffice instant messaging, AND/OR signaling for assistance;
      1. If the call is disconnected prior to receiving a response, FORWARD all details of the call to your Supervisor/POC for any possible emergency response actions.

b. USE your best customer service, and without being forceful, ATTEMPT to obtain the following information:

d. CONTACT the Federal Protection Services Mega Center at 1-877-437-7411 to report the incident and details of the threat;
4. Threats Received through Fax or Mail:

   a. If the written threat includes bomb AND/OR death threats toward public officials, FEMA staff, FEMA facilities, or other individuals:

   iv. **CONTACT** the Federal Protection Services Mega Center at 1-877-437-7411 to report the incident and details of the threat.

5. Recovering from the Incident
B. Documenting the Call

1. Further documenting a Verbal Bomb or Death Threat:

   a. After concluding the call and notifying the required individuals, staff should determine if the recorded call is located in the IC Business Manager for retention and security purposes.
III. APPENDIX A

A. Referral Information

Applicants/Callers that are suicidal or threatening self-harm but DO NOT have a plan should be referred to the following:

1. Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990;
   a. For the deaf and hard of hearing, dial 1-800-846-8517 (TTY).
   b. For Spanish, press #2.

2. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255;

3. Local mental health services; OR
   a. Available in some metropolitan areas by dialing 211 or 311.

4. The American Red Cross at 1-866-438-4636.
   a. For Spanish, dial 1-800-257-7575.

5. For additional referral information, refer to the NEMIS DR Info button, the Web NEMIS Dstr link, OR the Disaster Specific Information page for the correct disaster.
IV. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronyms

DRC      Disaster Recovery Center
DSOP     Disaster-Specific Operating Procedure
FEMA     Federal Emergency Management Agency
ID       Identification
IHP      Individuals and Households Program
JFO      Joint Field Office
NPSC     National Processing Service Center
SOP      Standard Operating Procedure
Transferring Registrations
Effective Date: June 11, 2021

***ALL processing employees must read this section***

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I. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing Transferring Registrations.

STOP

Purpose:

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will assist staff in transferring a registration that was entered into an incorrect disaster into the appropriate open disaster.

- The open disaster can be a disaster in a different state or a separate disaster in the same state.

Prior to Processing:
Transferring Registrations
Effective Date: June 11, 2021
II. PROCESS

A. Transferring the Registration

Use these procedures to transfer a registration to another disaster.

1. The Disaster is in a Different State
2. The Disaster is in the Same State

   a. The Copy Registration (Copy Rgns) function is used to transfer a registration to a different disaster within the same state.
b. This function records an entry in the Events Log on both registration indicating the data was copied from one disaster into another, along with the registration numbers.

c. To copy a registration:

d. The Copy Registration pop-up will open and display the result of the transfer:

e. The screen will display the final result of the transfer: Saved as Complete or Incomplete.
f. To close the pop-up, **CLICK** on the red X in upper right-hand corner.

3. Accessing IncompleteRegistrations

4. Data Changes to Identify the TransferredRegistration

5. Creating a New Registration
c. Once the registration is completed, if there are documents in the original registration:

   iii. In the original registration, **PERFORM** the following actions:
2. ROUTE to FEMA Complete.

B. Change Disaster Function

1. The Change Disaster function is used to transfer data from registrations stored in DR 6500 to another active disaster declaration.

C. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios not specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to complete the transfer process using available SOPs, Disaster Specific Operating Procedures, or other posted information:
III. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Call Attempt: One call attempt to all available numbers to clarify/request information or discuss eligibility determinations; (If the full contact information is not available, it can be obtained by using the Yellow Pages, an Internet search provider, or by calling the applicant).

Acronyms

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IV. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following documents:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - DAC – Call Center RI
- Resources
  - Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide
# WRI T T E N  C O N S E N T  A ND  S H A R I N G  A P P L I C A N T S  I N F O R M A T I O N

## I. Overview
- Purpose
- Documentation or Verification Needed
- Other Items to Note

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

## II. Important Information
- Prior to Processing

***All processing employees must read this section***

## III. Process
- A. Verifications
- B. Information Requests
- C. Granting Access of Information
- D. Denying Access of Information
- E. Exceptions

## IV. Examples and FAQs
- Releasing an applicant’s information to a third party
- POA without a Written Consent
- Frequently Asked Questions

## V. Definitions and Acronyms
- Definitions
- Acronyms

## VI. Related Guidance
- Links to Related Guidance

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FEMA

Written Consent and Sharing Applicants Information
Effective Date: August 4, 2021
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee **must** read before addressing sharing applicant information.

Purpose

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) explains the circumstances, requirements, and procedures to release an applicant’s information to a third party.

Documentation or Verification Needed:

- FEMA must have a Written Consent or Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form from the applicant or co-applicant to release information to a third party.
  - The Written Consent outlines the information FEMA is authorized to release and to whom.

- FEMA may accept a Power of Attorney (POA), Guardianship, or Conservatorship documentation from an applicant’s/co-applicant’s assigned third party if it meets the State law requirements where the applicant/co-applicant resides. Since these instruments have different restrictions, authorizations, or purposes than the Privacy Act, the submitted information must be coordinated further for program review and Office of the Chief Counsel (OCC) review and validation prior to sharing information or access to the applicant’s file with the third party.

Other Items to Note:

- Applicants may use the Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form to request a copy of their file to be mailed to their address of record with FEMA. Refer to the Info Control SOP for additional information.

- A Written Consent, Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form, POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document is NOT required when an individual calls to register on behalf of the applicant or when an applicant calls FEMA and requests a third party to speak on their behalf during the call.
  - During a call, the applicant/co-applicant **MUST** answer all verification questions before FEMA can release information to the third party;
Third Party Inspection Requests

- If a displaced applicant/co-applicant states they are NOT able to meet with the inspector and wishes to authorize a third party to meet with the inspector, FEMA will require a Written Consent letter, a completed Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form, or a Power of Attorney, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document from the applicant to authorize a third party inspection.

- Inspectors will only meet with the applicant, co-applicant, or a designated third party to perform an inspection.

- The third party MUST be over the age of 18 in order to attend the inspection on the applicant's/co-applicant's behalf.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing sharing applicant information.

STOP

Prior to Processing:

- Prior to releasing information to a third party OR processing documents submitted on behalf of the applicant:
  - CONFIRM that a Written Consent, Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form, POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document is present in the applicant’s file.
    - If the document is a Written Consent, CONFIRM it meets the requirements listed in Section A. Verifications;
    - If the document is a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship, CONFIRM it has been reviewed and approved by OCC:
      - The Release of Information Form will be set as Verified in the Info Control screen; AND
      - A Comment in the Events History will detail what authorizations are granted and to whom.
      - Refer to Section III.C.3 for additional information.
    - DO NOT release applicant’s information to a third party without a valid Written Consent, Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document unless the applicant/co-applicant is present during the call and provides consent.
    - DO NOT accept a Written Consent missing the requirements listed in Section A. Verifications.
    - DO NOT accept an expired POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document.
If an applicant or authorized third party requests a copy of the FEMA file:

- **CONFIRM** there is an Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form or a written request in file, and it meets the requirements listed in Section A. Verifications.

- **EMAIL** the FEMA-IHP-Mailroom.

- Refer to the Info Control SOP for additional information.
III. PROCESS

A. Verifications

To release an applicant’s information, FEMA requires a Written Consent or Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form that specifically identifies the information to be released or a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document from the applicant/co-applicant.

Third party inspection requests require a Written Consent letter that specifically identifies inspection as an issue that may be shared; or a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document on file before the inspection can be issued.

The requirements for a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document are different. Please refer to POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship section for more information.

1. **Written Consent Letters**:

   Written Consent used for the release of information or third party inspection must include the following requirements:

   a. Be in writing (handwritten or typed);
   
   b. **INCLUDE** the applicant’s or co-applicant’s full name, current address, date and place of birth;
   
   c. Be dated and **signed** by the applicant or co-applicant;
   
   d. **INCLUDE** some form of the following statement, “I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.” OR be notarized;
   
   e. **INCLUDE** an individual identifier, i.e. the FEMA application number, current mailing address (CMA), current phone number (CPN), etc.;
   
   f. **SPECIFY** what information can be released to the third party, i.e. the entire case file, the current contact information, the amount of disaster assistance received, etc.; AND
   
   g. The individual must designate, identify, and name the individuals, entities, or organizations to which the disclosure is being consented. The consent must also list the actions that the third party can complete on behalf of the applicant, e.g. reissue of funds, complete the inspection, submit an appeal, etc.

2. **Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act** Form:
a. **INCLUDE** the applicant’s or co-applicant’s full name, place of birth and date of birth;

b. At least one selection for each item under **Section B**; AND

c. The applicant or co-applicant’s **signature**, CMA, printed name, and the date signed.

i. The **Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act** form expires one year from the date of **signing**. **CONFIRM** the date of the **signature** has not expired.

3. When the authorized third party contacts the Helpline for assistance, they must verify their name and all of the standard verification items for the applicant/co-applicant as outlined in the Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide.

**B. Information Requests**

**FOLLOW** the actions below to request a Written Consent or **Authorization for the** Release of Information Under the **Privacy Act** form.

1. If a Written Consent or **Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act** form is NOT on file or is missing at least one of the requirements listed in **Section A. Verifications**:
C. Granting Access of Information

1. The Written Consent or Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form meets all the verification requirements listed in Section A.

   Verifications:

   a. ADD a Verification Requirement item;
2. Assistance with verifying a Written Consent or Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form validity:
NOTE: The IHP Helpdesk will assist in determining the validity of the documents; however, staff are responsible for updating NEMIS.

3. Assistance with verifying a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship validity:
   
a. CONFIRM that the POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document has been reviewed and approved by OCC:
   
b. If the Release of Information Form is NOT set as Verified in the Info Control screen:
   
c. Once the review is completed, the Coordination Unit will:
4. Third party access to files for deceased applicants:

a. POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship documents are NOT acceptable for deceased applicants.

b. The IHP Helpdesk will determine if the third party can access a deceased applicant’s file, what information can be released, and what actions can be taken by the authorized third party. The IHP Helpdesk will contact the third party for additional clarification if necessary.

c. If a third party has submitted documentation to FEMA to request access to the deceased applicant’s file:

b. If the IHP Helpdesk has NOT granted access to the third party:
Written Consent and Sharing Applicants Information
Effective Date: August 4, 2021

ii. If documents are in file:

iii. If documents are NOT in file:
D. Denying Access of Information

When a Written Consent, Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form, POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document DOES NOT meet the requirements to access the file, ENSURE the Release of Information Form is set as Not Verified on the Info Control screen.

1. The Written Consent or Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form submitted to access the file is NOT acceptable.

2. If the POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document submitted to access the file was NOT accepted by OCC.
E. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios NOT specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, Disaster Specific Operating Procedures, or other posted information:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

The following process scenarios assume the Written Consent, Authorization for the, Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form or POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship document meets all verification requirements.

Scenario 1 – Releasing an applicant’s information to a third party (Written Consent)

Result: RELEASE only the information specified in the Written Consent and only to the authorized individual, agency, or organization.

Scenario 2 – Releasing an applicant’s information to a third party (Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form)
Scenario 3 – POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship documents submitted without a Written Consent

1. POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship documents have different restrictions, authorizations or purposes that can have contradictions with the Privacy Information Act and Federal Regulations.

2. POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship documents are written and represented differently depending on the state they are originated.
Result: ACCEPT the POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship if it has been reviewed and approved by OCC; OR

DO NOT accept a POA, Guardianship, or Conservatorship if it has NOT been reviewed and approved by OCC or if the applicant is deceased.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. I have a caller stating they are a relative of an elderly applicant and want to check the status on the case; however, there are no documents in the file giving permission to release the information. Is it ok to give the information?

2. Do individuals that register on behalf of an elderly applicant have permission to continue to access the file after the registration has been completed?
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Call Attempt: A call attempt to all available numbers to clarify/request information or discuss eligibility determinations.

Signature: A valid signature may be evidenced by any mark made by pen or pencil denoting the signer’s name or mark; a mark or name created and adopted through a software program such as Microsoft Word; adoption of an electronic signature that includes typing a name or mark at the end of an email; a digital image of a handwritten signature or mark; the click of an “I accept” button on an e-commerce site as his or her legal signature; or adoption of an electronic symbol, sound, or process that is attached to, or logically associated with, the document and executed by the applicant or his or her agent, with the intent to sign the document.

Third party: An individual, entity, or organization to which the disclosure is being consented.

Acronyms

CMA  Current Mailing Address
DDA  Damaged Dwelling Address
DRC  Disaster Recovery Center
DSA  Disaster Survival Assistance
JFO  Joint Field Office
POA  Power of Attorney
POC  Point of Contact
RWCL  Request for Written Consent Letter
SOP  Standard Operating Procedure
WP  Workpacket
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Info Control
- Resources
  - Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide
# Call Connect Procedures

**Effective Date:** April 12, 2021

### I. Overview

- **Purpose**
- **Other Items to Note**

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

### II. Process

1. **A. Call Connect Procedures**
2. **B. IHP Helpdesk**
3. **C. SBA Transfer Procedures for all Businesses, Non-Profits, Homeowners and Renters**
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Call Connect Procedures.

Purpose:

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will supply staff with information on how to address call connect procedures.

Other Items to Note:

- Inbound International calls cannot be transferred.
- DO NOT perform a warm transfer between 844-684-6333 (FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance) and 800-621-3362 (FEMA Disaster Assistance).
- A warm transfer within FEMA Disaster Assistance (i.e. workgroups in C3MP) is completed by:
  - Introducing the caller to the receiving agent
  - Confirming to the receiving agent if the caller has verified all information
  - Providing the registration number
  - Outlining the topic of the call
  - Closing the conversation with the caller
  - Exiting the call
- All changes in this document must be made in coordination with the TXNPSC CCTS Section.
- When you transfer a call outside of FEMA (for example the SBA), the disclosure statement, “This call may be monitored and recorded for quality assurance purposes” must be provided to the person to whom the call is transferred to.
II. PROCESS

A. Call Connect Procedures

Complete the following procedures when transferring phone calls:

1. Interaction Desktop – Transferring to Workgroups

2. Call Connect Numbers

NOTE: DO NOT transfer applicants to individual users.
NOTE: Refer to the Language Line SOP for information regarding calls requiring a language in which the agent is not fluent.

B. IHP Helpdesk

1. Procedures - IHP Helpdesk

NOTE: DO NOT transfer any applicant to the IHP Helpdesk.
C. SBA Transfer Procedures for all Businesses, Non-Profits, Homeowners and Renters

Busy Signals:

- C3MP - SELECT the Cancel button twice to disconnect the call and reconnect with the caller.
- Traditional - PRESS **9 to disconnect busy tone, then PRESS *7 to reconnect with caller.
Civil Rights Issues
Effective Date: October 5, 2020

CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUES

I. Overview
- Purpose 2
- Civil Rights and Office of Equal Rights (OER) 2
- Examples of Civil Rights Issues 2
- Alleged Discrimination 3

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

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***ALL processing employees must read this section***
- Before reporting a Civil Rights issue to the OER 4

III. Process
- Reporting a Civil Rights issue to the OER 5

IV. Examples and FAQs
- Frequently Asked Questions 7

V. Definitions and Acronyms
- Acronyms 9
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Civil Rights issues.

Purpose:

- This document provides procedures for FEMA staff to follow when addressing potential Civil Rights violations against applicants.

Civil Rights and the Office of Equal Rights (OER)

- Civil Rights laws protect individuals from discrimination against:
  - Race;
  - Color;
  - Religion;
  - Sex;
  - Nationality;
  - Disability;
  - Age;
  - Economic status; AND
  - Sexual orientation.

- The OER is responsible for enforcing Civil Rights laws and regulations that ensure non-discrimination in the delivery of services and benefits to disaster survivors.

Examples of Civil Rights Issues

- Civil Rights issues include but are NOT limited to the following:
  - A FEMA contractor makes racially insensitive remarks or sexually harasses an applicant;
  - An applicant receives a smaller Housing Assistance (HA) or Other Needs Assistance (ONA) grant than their neighbor and believes it is due to their race, sex, etc.;
Civil Rights Issues
Effective Date: October 5, 2020

- A Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is located in an area where one racial or ethnic group DOES NOT feel comfortable entering;
- A DRC is located in a building that is NOT handicap accessible; OR
- Information about FEMA assistance is NOT available in a language other than English when a large number of residents within the disaster area speak other languages.

Alleged Discrimination

- FEMA staff is responsible for providing specific and detailed information, as reported by the applicant, to the OER when an applicant alleges a Civil Rights violation.
- If the alleged Civil Rights violation happened to the applicant in person or by telephone:
  - **REPORT** any alleged Civil Rights violation perpetuated by FEMA staff and FEMA contractor's staff.
  - DO NOT suggest the possibility of discrimination to the applicant or try to direct the applicant towards a Civil Rights complaint if the applicant DOES NOT state one.
  - DO NOT refuse to provide the OER's telephone number if the applicant insists on speaking directly to an Equal Rights Officer. The applicant may call OER at (202) 646-3535.
  - Refer to Section A. Reporting a Civil Rights Issue to the OER for additional information.

**NOTE:** Applicants DO NOT file a formal complaint by calling the FEMA Helpline or by speaking with FEMA staff in person.

**ADVISE** applicants they must file a formal complaint directly with the OER in order for their Civil Rights complaint to be addressed.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Civil Rights issues.

STOP

Before reporting a Civil Rights issue to the OER:

- All allegations of Civil Rights violations must be reported to the Civil Rights Office immediately.
  - DO NOT email or provide any information of a Civil Rights complaint to the local on-site Equal Rights Specialist.
    - The Civil Rights Office is a direct link with the OER Headquarters.

- Privacy issues are involved when reporting a Civil Rights violation to the OER and the identity of a complainant must be protected.
  - DO NOT enter any details about the complaint when adding a Comment or a Contact in the National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS) or Web NEMIS.
III. PROCESS

A. Reporting a Civil Rights Issue to the OER

1. If an applicant reports an alleged Civil Rights violation in person or by telephone:

   a. FEMA staff will:

      i. **EMAIL** the information to the Civil Rights Office; OR

      ii. **EMAIL** the information to a Supervisor/Point of Contact (POC), and **REQUEST** the information be forwarded if the email CANNOT be sent directly.

1. **INCLUDE** the following information:

   a. **Subject Line:** Civil Rights Complaint

   b. Applicant’s name;

   c. Address;

   d. Phone Number;

   e. Registration ID number;

   f. Disaster Number; AND

   g. A summary of the issue or complaint. Refer to **Section IV. Examples and FAQs** for additional information.

   iii. **ASSIST** the applicant with any other requests regarding the Individuals and Households Program (IHP);

 iv. **ADD** a Contact; AND

  1. **WRITE** the following information in the **Summary** line:

   a. (Facility Name/Number) **FORWARDED TO OER**

  2. **DO NOT** enter any information about the Civil Rights complaint in the **Details** box.

   v. **PROCESS** any outstanding issues in the applicant’s file.
2. If the Civil Rights complaint is made via correspondence such as a mailed letter, fax, document uploaded electronically:

   a. FEMA staff will:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How can I find out what the applicant wants?
   a. LISTEN to what the applicant is saying; AND
   b. ASK open-ended questions;
      i. Refer to the following scenarios for appropriate responses:
         1. Applicant says: I want to make a complaint. I think FEMA discriminated against me.
            a. SAY: I’m sorry to hear that.
            b. ASK: Why do you believe FEMA discriminated against you? Please tell me more so I can get all the details and pass the information on to the appropriate staff.
         2. Applicant says: I’m calling about my money from FEMA. I didn’t get as much as other people on this block with the same damages. It’s discrimination, pure and simple.
            a. SAY: I’m sorry to hear that.
            b. ASK: Please tell me more so I can get all the details and pass the information on to the appropriate staff.

2. What should my email to OER include?
   a. USE the Subject Line: Civil Rights Complaint; AND
   b. PROVIDE OER with all the specific details given by the applicant. DO NOT record the details of the complaint in NEMIS.
      i. Refer to the following examples of useful statements:
         1. The applicant stated she received a smaller award than her neighbor because she is a single mother and believes she is being discriminated against.
         2. The applicant reports there were NO Spanish speaking FEMA staff at the DRC. Therefore, she could NOT get the information she needed and believes this is a violation of her Civil Rights.
3. The applicant believes he DID NOT receive an adequate IHP grant. He claims this was due to his race.

**GATHER** specific details when the applicant makes the following statements that DO NOT provide useful information:

1. **Applicant says:** The inspector was rude.
   a. **SAY:** I am sorry to hear that.
   b. **ASK:** What did the inspector do to make you think that? Why do you think the inspector acted that way?

2. **Applicant says:** I am very upset and feel that FEMA is discriminating against me.
   a. **SAY:** I am sorry to hear that.
   b. **ASK:** Why do you believe you were discriminated against?

3. **Applicant says:** The person who took my registration had a real attitude.
   a. **SAY:** I am sorry to hear that.
   b. **ASK:** What did they do or say that made you upset?
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronyms

DRC  Disaster Recovery Center
DSA  Disaster Survivor Assistance
HA  Housing Assistance
IHP  Individuals and Households Program
JFO  Joint Field Office
NEMIS  National Emergency Management Information System
OER  Office of Equal Rights
ONA  Other Needs Assistance
POC  Point of Contact
SOP  Standard Operating Procedure
CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES

I. Overview
   - Purpose
     ***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

II. Important Information
   - Prior to Processing
     ***ALL processing employees must read this section***

III. Process
   - A. Processing Congressional Inquiries
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing a Congressional Inquiry.

Purpose:

- This document describes the review, processing, and actions performed by the FEMA Program Management Section to address inquiries and escalated reviews requested by Congressional representatives, White House referrals, and/or FEMA leadership.

Other Items to Note:

- Elected officials may contact FEMA on behalf of their constituents to inquire about disaster assistance. These requests are received via mail and are known as Congressional Inquiries.

- Congressional Inquiries may originate from a variety of public offices, including those of Governors, State Legislators, and members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

- The Individuals and Households Program’s (IHP) Program Management Section (PMS) reviews all cases in which a Congressional Inquiry has been received.
  - When reviewing a case with a Congressional Inquiry, PMS will ensure all categories of IHP assistance are addressed at the time of the Congressional review.
    - PMS may also coordinate casework resolution with SPU staff.
  - Once a congressional review is complete, a PMS NEMIS Comment will reflect the final resolution and standard processing may proceed as the file is no longer under congressional review.
    - If the applicant submits documents after the congressional review is completed, staff will continue to process unmet needs following standard procedures without the need to contact the IHP-Helpdesk.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing a Congressional Inquiry.

Prior to Processing:

■ Caseworkers must review cases before processing to verify that the case is not under review for a Congressional Inquiry.

○ Cases with a Congressional Inquiry can be identified via Comments in the Events Log, a written inquiry from an elected official in the Correspondence tab, or a Workpacket (WP) in the FEMA Supervisor Congressional subqueue.

■ Caseworkers must not process, resolve, or make any determinations on an applicant’s case which is under review by PMS for a Congressional Inquiry.
III. PROCESS

A. Processing Congressional Inquiries
DUPLICATE INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION PROCESSING

I. Overview

- Purpose
- Other Items to Note

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

**ALL employees must read this section**

II. Important Information

- Prior to Processing
- Eligibility Criteria

III. Process

- A. Eligibility Verifications
- B. Information Requests
- C. Processing Eligible Assistance
- D. Processing Ineligible Decisions
- E. Joint Option Disaster Information (ONA Only)
- F. Appeals
- G. Exceptions

IV. Examples and FAQs

- Duplicate Investigation Processing
- Example Scenario 1
- Example Scenario 2
- Frequently Asked Questions

V. Definitions and Acronyms

- Definitions
- Acronyms

VI. Related Guidance

- Links to related documents
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Duplication of Benefits Review.

Purpose:

■ Prevent, correct, OR avoid duplication of benefits (DOB) to ensure quick and uninterrupted delivery of Individuals and Households Program (IHP) assistance to eligible individuals and households.

■ Avoid recoupment actions by preventing improper payments to individuals or households with the available means or sources to satisfy their disaster-caused expenses or serious needs.

NOTE: FEMA may NOT provide IHP assistance when any other source has already provided such assistance OR when such assistance is available from any other source.

■ For the purpose of this document, eligibility with categories of assistance or expenses is defined according to the duplicate (DUP) status of the household member who is requesting IHP assistance, the information the applicant voluntarily provides to FEMA, OR the information recorded during inspection.

Other Items to Note:

■ During the registration intake (RI) process, FEMA looks for specific types of data matches to identify DUP registrations in the following fields:

■ Duplicate Investigation (DUP Invest) reviews occur via:

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During DUP Invest review, the linked registrations are given a manual DUP status:

- **No DUP - Continue Processing** (NO DUP)
- **Possible Duplicate** (POSS DUP)
- **Exact Duplicate** (Exact DUP)

Once the DUP Invest review is complete, the DUP group is automatically updated reflecting one of two possible statuses:

- **Unresolved**: Default status of linked registrations in need of DUP Invest review. A registration continues to be unresolved when linked to another unresolved DUP group.
- **Resolved**: Registrations resolved and issued a DUP status, for example, NO DUP.

The DUP status may remain unresolved if the registration is linked to another DUP group requiring DUP Invest review.

**Duplicate Resolution** processing:

- Registration linked as POSS DUP and Exact DUP stop in the Duplicate Resolution queue for eligibility review before a payment is approved.
- Staff processing DUP Resolution workpackets (WP) are responsible to review the linked registrations and determine the eligibility of the applicant.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing Duplication of Benefits Review.

STOP

Prior to Processing:

- For cases locked or under Program Management Section (PMS) or NCT review:
  - Prior to reviewing or discussing returned and the reissue of funds, VERIFY the ONA Option selection.
    - FEMA staff are authorized to process and discuss ONA in FEMA Option disasters.
    - In Joint Option disasters, only the state, territorial or tribal government (STT) is authorized to process and discuss ONA eligibility, refer to Section III.E: Joint Option Disaster Information.
    - Helpline Staff: refer to the Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide for additional information.
  - For ONA questions in a Joint Option disaster, PROVIDE the applicant with the STT ONA Helpline number listed on the Disaster Info (F8) link.
  - Registrations with an unresolved duplicate status CANNOT be accessed or updated. This can also occur when a data change links two or more applicants at any point of the registration’s life cycle. A DUP Invest review is required to clear the links before processing can occur.
Eligibility Criteria:

- Temporary Housing Assistance:
  - Financial Assistance: Only one applicant within the household is eligible for Rental Assistance (ER) AND/OR Lodging Expenses Reimbursement (LER). Refer to section III. F. Appeals if another household member is also requesting financial Housing Assistance.

- An unresolved DUP status prevents the automated processing of Expedited Assistance, Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA), AND other automation scripts.

  DO NOT use this guidance to determine eligibility with Multifamily Roads and Bridges.

- Sequence of Delivery
  - Housing Assistance (HA)
    - Temporary Housing Assistance, if eligible; AND
    - Home Repair Assistance or Home Replacement Assistance.
  - Other Needs Assistance (ONA)
    - Funeral Assistance, if there is a pending funeral review;
Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Maximum (system limit only):

- In an effort to minimize errors, the system will generate a popup if the total combined payment exceeds $100,000.
  - Total combined payments include (in any combination)
    - HA
    - ONA
    - ADA related line items
  - Temporary Housing Assistance and ADA related line items are NOT counted toward the financial HA and ONA maximums, so in rare instances an applicant's total award may exceed $100,000.
  - If this happens, PLACE the case on “Hold – Program Review”.

- The Program Management Section will have to authorize this payment.
III. PROCESS

A. Eligibility Verifications

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Identity verification passed (IDV_PASS) through registration Intake or submitted documentation Identity Verification SOP.

2. The damage dwelling (DD) is the applicant's primary residence. Refer to the Occupancy Verification SOP for additional information.

3. Eligible damage is NOT fully covered by insurance. Verify one of the following:

B. Information Requests

1. Duplicate Investigation:
   a. No request letters OR phone calls are required during the DUP Investigation process.
2. Duplicate Resolution; If there is insufficient information to make a determination:

NOTE: DO NOT discuss information or details about other household members OR linked files that are NOT listed in the applicant’s registration.

3. Insurance Verification:

a. When the applicant is NOT insured or is under-insured, some situations can be resolved by performing a courtesy call to the insurance provider.
C. Processing Eligible Assistance

1. Temporary Housing Assistance

   a. Temporary Housing Assistance is only provided to the applicant identified as the Head of Household (HoH).

      i. A roommate or boarder can obtain Temporary Housing Assistance separate from the HoH if they can demonstrate a commercial relationship OR formal agreement. These can be supported by one of the following:

      b. Separated households: The individual roommate or boarder must submit a written appeal explaining the extenuating circumstances preventing them from relocating with the household, along with supporting documentation.
c. The eligible types of assistance include:

   i. Rental Assistance;

   ii. Lodging Expenses;

   iii. Transitional Shelter Assistance; OR

   iv. Expedited Awards for Housing Assistance (if available).

d. **REVIEW** the linked registrations and determine which applicant is the HoH. **USE** the Duplicate Resolution Matrix table for additional information.

e. On the **Process Case** screen:
2. Continued Temporary Housing Assistance

a. Applicants who relocated separately from the HoH due to the disaster may be eligible for Continued Temporary Housing Assistance (CTHA) if they meet the eligibility criteria. Once the household members reunite, the CTHA will continue under the HoH application up to the 18 month period of assistance, plus one additional month when utilized for a security deposit.

b. The Rental Assistance and Lodging Expense Reimbursement awarded to the separated household member is NOT deducted from the HoH. Only the HoH is eligible for additional categories of IHP Assistance.

c. On the Process Case screen:

NOTE: Temporary Housing Assistance may be available to more than one household member upon Appeal. Please revert to Section F. Appeals for additional information.
3. Home Repair Assistance and Home Replacement Assistance

a. Home Repair Assistance is available to the owner identified as the HoH. Home Repair Assistance is NOT available to landlords who DO NOT permanently reside in the damaged dwelling. In addition, any available assistance is limited to the owner-occupied unit and NOT the common areas (e.g., elevators in condominiums). Special considerations must be made when two or more household members are requesting Home Repair Assistance. Identify the HoH in the following order of preference:

   i. Insurance: The insured applicant or the registration with the most complete insurance information.

   ii. SBA Referral: The registration with an open SBA referral.

   iii. Returned Inspection: The first registration returning from inspection to NEMIS.

b. **REVIEW** the linked registrations and determine which applicant is the HoH. **USE the Duplicate Resolution Matrix table** for additional information.

c. On the Process Case screen:
4. Personal Property Assistance

a. Personal Property Assistance is provided to the HoH.

b. Roommates and boarders may be eligible for individually-owned PP items under a separate application.

   i. The combined applications CANNOT exceed the maximum quantity limit for the specific item in the household e.g. one refrigerator per household, one per occupant in the bedroom, clothing one per person, etc.

   ii. Refer to Section D. Processing Ineligible Decisions if another applicant was previously identified as the HoH and eligible for same PP items.

   iii. Refer to the Personal Property Assistance SOP for information regarding the PP quantity limits.

c. REVIEW the linked registrations and determine which applicant is the HoH. USE the Duplicate Resolution Matrix table for additional information.

d. On the Process Case screen:
5. Transportation Assistance

a. Assistance is available to individuals and households NOT covered by insurance, or other sources, whose cars were damaged as a result of a declared disaster, while in a declared area.

b. The damaged vehicle is owned (or registered) by the applicant, co-applicant, or household member who DOES NOT have a separate FEMA registration.

i. If more than one vehicle exists, refer to the Transportation and Second Vehicle Requests SOP for additional information.

c. On the Process case screen:
6. Funeral Assistance
   
a. The Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) is responsible to coordinate eligibility of Funeral Assistance with the Region.

b. If a registration for assistance with Funeral expenses is found in the DUP Res queue, SEND an email to the FEMA-IHP-Specialized-Processing-Unit.

7. Miscellaneous Other Expenses, Medical Assistance, Dental Assistance, and Child Care Assistance
   
a. Roommates and boarders are eligible for these categories if the eligibility requirements for the category of assistance are met.

D. Processing Ineligible Decisions
   
1. Eligibility codes for processing denials
   
a. USE the following eligibility codes for processing DUP ineligible decisions:
2. Temporary Housing Assistance

a. Once the HoH has been identified, all other residents of the household including roommates and boarders are ineligible for assistance.

b. If the applicant is listed as the co-registrant (co-reg) in the HoH registration:

c. On the Process Case screen:
3. Continued Temporary Housing Assistance

a. Applicants who CANNOT demonstrate a separate relocation, pre-disaster financial responsibility, OR formal agreement are NOT eligible for CTHA. PROCESS these applicants as...

b. On the Process case screen:

4. Home Repair Assistance and Home Replacement Assistance

a. Once an eligible payment has been issued to a household member, all other applicants within the household CANNOT receive Home Repair Assistance or Home Replacement Assistance.
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c. On the **Process case** screen:

5. Personal Property Assistance

a. Personal Property Assistance is provided to the HoH.

b. Roommates and boarders may be eligible for individually-owned PP items under a separate application.

   i. The combined applications CANNOT exceed the maximum quantity limit for the specific item in the household e.g. one refrigerator per household, one bed per occupied room, clothing one per person, etc.

   ii. Refer to the [Personal Property Assistance SOP](#) for information regarding the PP quantity limits.
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6. Transportation Assistance

a. Assistance with a damaged vehicle is available when the damaged vehicle is owned (or registered) by the applicant, co-applicant, or household member who DOES NOT have a separate FEMA registration.

i. The DUP registration is NOT eligible for assistance when the assistance for the damaged vehicle was already issued to another applicant.
b. On the Process case screen:

- On the Process case screen:

  b. On the Process case screen:

  e. Refer to the Transportation and Second Vehicle Requests SOP for additional information about second vehicle requests.

7. Funeral Assistance

   a. The Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) is responsible to coordinate eligibility of Funeral Assistance with the Region.

   b. If a registration for assistance with Funeral expenses is found in the DUP Res queue, SEND an email to the FEMA-IHP-Specialized-Processing-Unit.

E. Joint Operation Disaster Information (ONA Only)
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1. If processing a Joint Option Disaster:
   a. ONA categories are only processed by the STT.
   b. FEMA staff is authorized to process Housing Assistance (HA) categories.

2. If incoming mail generates a WP to a FEMA processing queue:
   a. REVIEW/PROCESS any outstanding issues within HA categories.
      i. If an additional WP is available in a state, territorial, or tribal queue, no further action for ONA is required.
      ii. If an additional WP is NOT available in a state, territorial, or tribal queue; AND
         1. There are no HA categories to address:
         2. There are HA categories to address:

F. Appeals

1. Independent Household
   a. Appeals for independent household: The applicant appeals and states the households live in the same dwelling, or share the common areas, but are independent from each other, e.g. two families living in the same house. These applicants are required to demonstrate a pre-disaster financial responsibility before obtaining Temporary Housing Assistance.
      i. An applicant can demonstrate financial responsibility with one of the following documents:
         1. Pre-disaster rent receipts, cancelled checks, or money orders for the damaged dwelling;
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2. Pre-disaster lease, landlord’s statement, or rental agreement for the damaged dwelling; or

3. Pre-disaster major utility bills (water, electricity, or gas) in the roommate’s or boarder’s name for service at the damaged dwelling.

b. If proof of financial responsibility is NOT in the file, GENERATE an Appeal Request Documentation (ADOC) letter with the Separate Household insert.

i. Separate Relocation

a. If the applicant was unable to relocate with the household, the applicant is required to submit an appeal letter explaining the extenuating circumstances that prevented the household from relocating together.

G. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios NOT specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, Disaster Specific Operation Procedures (DSOP), or other posted information:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

Duplicate Investigation Processing

The NPSC Training module for Duplicate Investigation is available from [this link].

Scenario 1 – Duplicate Investigation Decision Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>If / Then</th>
<th>Duplicate Status would be:</th>
<th>Comment Summary line:</th>
<th>Standard Auto-generated Comment Detail:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Are applicants applying for the same damaged dwelling?</td>
<td>0(7)(8)</td>
<td>Not Duplicate: Continue Processing</td>
<td><a href="7">0A</a>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is the same person listed as Registrant on one application and Registrant or Co-Registrant on the other?</td>
<td>0(7)(8)</td>
<td>Not Duplicate: Continue Processing</td>
<td><a href="7">0A</a>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Are they all owners?</td>
<td>0(7)(8)</td>
<td>Not Duplicate: Continue Processing</td>
<td><a href="7">0A</a>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Duplicate Investigation and Resolution Processing

**Effective Date:** October 27, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>If / Then:</th>
<th>Duplicate Status would be:</th>
<th>Comment Summary line:</th>
<th>Standard Auto-generated Comment Detail:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Is one applicant an owner?</td>
<td>Possible Duplicate: Link for DOB Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Duplicate: Continue Processing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possible Duplicate: Link for DOB Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Are they all renters?</td>
<td>Owner: Possible Duplicate: Link for DOB Review</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Renters: Possible Duplicate: Link for DOB Review</td>
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</table>
## Scenario 2 – Duplicate Resolution Decision Matrix - Determining the HoH for Duplicate Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>If / Then</th>
<th>Registration Situation</th>
<th>Summary Line</th>
<th>Comment Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do both apps live in the same damaged dwelling?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D(I)(E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Is the registrant the same person on both applications?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Is one of the registrations WWO, INCI, or INPR?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Are they both owners?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Duplicate Investigation Decision Matrix
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>If / Them</th>
<th>Registration Status</th>
<th>Summary Line</th>
<th>Comment: Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Is one app an owner?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are they both renters?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Duplicate Resolution Decision Matrix
FEMA
Duplicate Investigation and Resolution Processing
Effective Date: October 27, 2021

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Assistance for Roommates and Boarders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assistance</th>
<th>Eligible Party</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Property Assistance</td>
<td>Each roommate and boarder with individually-owned items.</td>
<td>Combined applications for same housing unit CANNOT exceed a specific line item maximum quantity limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assistance, Dental Assistance,</td>
<td>Each roommate and boarder</td>
<td>Standard criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funeral Assistance, Child Care</td>
<td>First roommate who applies, unless roommates are unable to relocate together due to extenuating circumstances.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance, and Transportation Assistance</td>
<td>Boarders residing in the same housing unit as the landlord/head of household, if unable to relocate together due to extenuating circumstances.</td>
<td>FEMA expects all household members residing in the same housing unit to relocate together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Assistance</td>
<td>Boarders residing in a separate housing unit within the structure may be eligible for Rental Assistance separate from the landlord.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Assistance for Roommates and Boarders
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Boarders: Individuals or families in a private commercial relationship with the landlord. Boarders may reside in a housing unit with the landlord/head of household or in a separate housing unit within the structure.

Commercial Relationship: A formal agreement to rent a portion of a residence from the owner. Roommates and boarders must be able to demonstrate a formal agreement or financial responsibility to the household. A pre-disaster commercial relationship can be supported by one of the following:

- Pre-disaster rent receipts, cancelled checks or money orders for the damaged dwelling.
- Pre-disaster lease, statement, or rental agreement for the damaged dwelling.
- Pre-disaster major utility bills (water, electricity or gas) in the boarder or boarder co-applicant’s name for service at the damaged dwelling.

Different damaged dwelling: A housing unit that is distinct or separate from another. This also applies to basement apartments with a separate kitchen and entrance NOT accessible to the landlord OR other renters.

Displaced Applicant: Someone whose primary residence is uninhabitable, inaccessible, made unavailable by the landlord (to meet their disaster housing need), or NOT functional as a direct result of the disaster and has no other housing available in the area.

Extenuating Circumstances: A situation or condition outside of the applicant’s control posing difficulties in their disaster recovery efforts.

FEMA Verified Loss (FVL): The total dollar amount of IHP eligible disaster-caused damage to real property and personal property as verified by FEMA. The FVL represents the total potentially eligible damage, but due to insurance coverage, the financial Housing Assistance maximum, and other eligibility factors; an applicant may NOT ultimately receive assistance for their full FVL.

Financial Housing Assistance Maximum: Financial assistance for Home Repair Assistance and Home Replacement Assistance for owner-occupied homes is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI).

Financial Other Needs Assistance Maximum: Financial assistance for ONA Personal Property Assistance, Transportation Assistance, Moving and Storage Assistance, Medical Assistance, Dental Assistance, Funeral Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and
Miscellaneous Other Items is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor CPI.

**Financial Responsibility:** For duplicate resolution processing, an economic obligation to the household. A pre-disaster financial responsibility can be supported by one of the following examples:

- Pre-disaster rent receipts, cancelled checks or money orders for the damaged dwelling.
- Pre-disaster lease, statement or rental agreement for the damaged dwelling.
- Pre-disaster major utility bills (water, electricity or gas) in the boarder or boarder co-applicant’s name for service at the damaged dwelling.

**Head of household:** The primary owner-occupant OR lesseeholder.

**Household:** All the persons (adult and children) who lived in the pre-disaster residence who requests IHP assistance. This includes any persons, such as infants, spouse, or part time residents who were NOT present at the time of the disaster, but who are expected to return during the assistance period.

**Roommates:** A household members with an independent financial responsibility for the housing unit that are NOT dependents of each other and are NOT married, such as renters whose names are on a lease.

**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALE</td>
<td>Additional Living Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COD</td>
<td>Cause of Damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Disaster Assistance Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>Damaged Dwelling Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOB</td>
<td>Duplication of Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSOP</td>
<td>Disaster Specific Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUP</td>
<td>Duplicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUP Invest</td>
<td>Duplicate Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUP Res</td>
<td>Duplicate Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUPCHECK</td>
<td>NEMIS Duplicate Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFT</td>
<td>Electronic Funds Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT</td>
<td>Failed Income Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FVL</td>
<td>FEMA Verified Loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoH</td>
<td>Head of Household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDV_Pass</td>
<td>Identity Verification Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>Individuals and Households Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LER</td>
<td>Lodging Expenses Reimbursement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS DUP</td>
<td>Possible Duplicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>Registration Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA</td>
<td>Small Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPU</td>
<td>Specialized Processing Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSN</td>
<td>Social Security Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STT</td>
<td>State, territorial, or tribal government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSA</td>
<td>Transitional Sheltering Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Workpacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Appeal Processing
  - Personal Property Assistance
  - SBA Referrals
  - Transportation and Second Vehicle Requests

- Resources
  - Disaster Specific Information
  - Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide
# Indexing With DMARTS

**Effective Date: October 22, 2021**

## I. Overview
- Purpose of Indexing
- Indexing Tasks
- DMARTS System
- Document Sources
- Indexing Processes

*** This can be referenced by all staff ***

(JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)

*** ALL processing employees must read this section ***

## II. Important Information
- Critical Indexing Guidance
- Coversheets

## III. Process
- A. Review the Document(s)
- B. Record Item Details
- C. Create or Modify Indexing Comments
- D. Route to the Next Phase of Indexing

## IV. Examples and FAQs
- Comment Examples
- Indexing Process Scenarios
- Smart Routing and Item Descriptions
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Comments
- Indexing Features
- Indexing Functions
- Item Code Selection
- Substantiation Questions
- Workpackets

## V. Definitions and Acronyms
- Definitions
- Acronyms

## VI. Related Guidance
- Links to Related Guidance
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before indexing documents into an applicant’s file.

Purpose of Indexing:

- Indexing is the process by which incoming documents are attached to a registration in NEMIS. This process is used to categorize and label documents for streamlined processing. Indexing Smart Route(s) (SR) documents to the appropriate location based on the Category and Item code selected by staff.

Indexing Tasks:

DMARTS System:

- The Document Management and Records Tracking System (DMARTS) is the database used for indexing. This database interacts with NEMIS to add documents to applicants’ files.

Document Sources:

- Documents come into Indexing from three sources:
  - Postal Mail: Documents submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) via the United States Postal Service (USPS), Federal Express (FedEx), the United Parcel Service (UPS), etc. Copies of submitted documents (including the envelope) are imported to DMARTS by an offsite Mail Operations Contractor;
    - Imports: Imports typically consist of large volumes of documents with more than eight pages, or, documents associated with more than one registration that are processed by an offsite Mail Operations Contractor. A Fax Splitter utility is used to separate these documents.
  - Uploads: Documents uploaded from the applicant’s online Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) account; AND
Fax: Documents submitted to FEMA via the toll free fax number. The offsite Mail Operations Contractor uses a Fax Splitter utility to review and separate documents that may contain pages for multiple registrations.

Indexing Processes:

- After reviewing all pages and entering all required data, staff must select one of the Process buttons to move the document to the next stage of processing.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before indexing.

Critical Indexing Guidance:

- It is critical that documents are connected to the correct registration.
- **USE** identification information on a received document, i.e. name, address, phone, or Social Security Number (SSN); to identify the correct registration.
- **DO NOT** rely only on matching the Registration ID number. The number may have been written incorrectly.
- **VERIFY** the registration number by comparing the document information against the search results to identify the appropriate registration to be selected for archiving.
- During review, **ENSURE** the documents to be archived:
  - **DO NOT** contain documents for multiple registrations;
  - **DO NOT** contain documents for multiple disasters; AND
  - **DO NOT** contain fraud allegations unless a sender is attempting to resolve their own duplicate status. Never use the word “Fraud” in an indexing Comment.
- If the appropriate registration can **NOT** be identified, the document must be routed to the **Advanced Process** where a more experienced agent will perform additional searches and/or **PLACE** courtesy calls to the sender.

**NOTE:** It is critical that documents be attached to the correct file. Misindexed documents can lead to a breach of Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Coversheets:

- Coversheets provide specific indexing instructions for documents. They are placed on top of documents by the FEMA Mailroom.
III. PROCESS

A. Review the Document(s)

It is critical that a thorough review of an image be completed to ensure that all issues are addressed. The following outline provides a recommended step-by-step sequence of tasks while indexing.

1. **ACCESS** Indexing in DMARTS

2. **SELECT** the Next Image

3. **LOCATE** the Appropriate Registration
4. **REVIEW** Images and **IDENTIFY** the Source of the Documents
5. SELECT Category and Item code(s)
B. Record Item Details

1. Single Substantiation Item
2. Multiple Substantiation Items
C. Create or Modify Indexing Comments

A Comment is required for all document sets. There are different requirements for the Comment depending on which Process the documents will be routed to, or, what actions need to be performed.

1. Creating a Comment to send to Archive
NOTE: The following should NOT be listed in the Comment:

- Documents that are NOT relevant to any type of decision or determination, e.g. grocery lists, movie tickets, etc.;
- Documents previously listed in a Comment; OR
- Punctuation other than a comma, e.g. periods, semicolons (;) and ampersands (&).

2. Creating a Comment for Another Process

   a. When creating a Comment for another Process:

D. Route to the Next Phase of Indexing
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

A. Comment Examples

1. **Adding Descriptions** - Indexing **Comments** typically list the document types and the number of pages. In some situations, it is helpful to provide an additional description for future processing, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clarifying an <strong>Item</strong> code.</td>
<td>OTHER Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describing the document condition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Table 1: Comment Examples for Document Descriptions

2. **Action Requests** - When routing to a **Process** other than *Archive*, the **Comment** should indicate the **Process** first, followed by processing instructions, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Discrimination</strong> - Claims of discrimination due to race, nationality, creed, color, age, sex or sexual orientation must be sent to <strong>Advanced</strong> for follow-up review.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Translation</strong> - Non-English documents that affect eligibility and are NOT easily interpreted must be sent to <strong>Reprocess</strong>. <strong>NOTE</strong>: FEMA letters mailed in other languages DO NOT require translation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Multiple Disasters</strong> – Document sets that contain items for multiple disasters or registrations must be sent to <strong>Reprocess</strong> for splitting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Late Applications</strong> – Document sets related to Late Application processing DO NOT have a Registration Number. Therefore, a <strong>Category</strong> and <strong>Item</strong> code can NOT be selected. These must be sent to <strong>Reprocess</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Reg not found</strong> – On the first attempt, if unable to locate a Registration to attach the document set, staff must send them to <strong>Reg not Found</strong>. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, staff must send the document set to <strong>Advanced</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Table 2: Comment Examples for Action Requests

B. Indexing Process Scenarios:

**USE** the following scenarios to help determine the appropriate **Process** button to use for moving a document set to the next stage of processing. Some routing is specific to the document source. **CONSIDER** the **Source** of the document when determining the
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Appropriate Process selection. NOTE: FOLLOW any Coversheet instructions provided within the document set as they take priority over any standard instructions.

### 1. Archive Button:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Archive</th>
<th>Additional Action prior to Archiving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Incomplete faxes or fax imports.</td>
<td>09/7/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Returned Mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pages scanned in upside down.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Poor quality documents in which the sender’s identity and critical document info is somewhat legible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “Cover Sheet Only” received via fax or uploaded via the DAC that includes registrant identity information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Non-English documents from FEMA or other government forms that are easily interpreted, e.g. Birth Certificates, Driver Licenses, Social Security documents, etc. These documents DO NOT require translation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Documents alleging fraud submitted to clear up a duplicate status.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> Documents alleging fraud should NEVER BE ARCHIVED into NEMIS files unless the sender is resolving their duplicate status.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Recoupment Submission Form submitted by the Fraud Prevention Investigation Branch (FPtIB) or the FEMA Internal Investigation Division (FIID).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Indexing With DMARTS

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#### Table 3: Archive Process Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Archive</th>
<th>Additional Action prior to Archiving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Waiver request or receipts regarding the waiver process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Waiver Income Certification form or Income Tax Return submitted regarding the waiver process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Scanned image of the waiver summary and/or the concurrence pages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Document containing financial information requested in the FEMA Finance Center (FFC) Request for Information (RFI) letter and an Appeal letter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Document containing appeal of their recoupment and DOES NOT mention an Oral Hearing request.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Documents from the U.S. Department of the Treasury that include the Treasury Review Coversheet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 4: Save/Hold Process Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Save/Hold</th>
<th>Take this Action prior to Routing to Save/Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Any documents in which staff are unable to complete processing due to reassignment, end of shift, etc.</td>
<td>DRT(KE)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 5: Reg not Found Process Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Reg not Found</th>
<th>Take this Action prior to Routing to Reg not Found</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Documents with little identifiable information, e.g. missing name, registration number, address, or phone number.</td>
<td>DRT(KE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Documents that are illegible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Back to Top**
3. Documents whose identifiable information pulls up multiple registrations and the appropriate registration can NOT be determined.

Table 5: Reg not Found Process Scenarios

4. **Advanced Button:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Advanced</th>
<th>Action prior to Routing to Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Blank pages need to be deleted.</td>
<td>D(RT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** This applies only when all pages of the document are blank. This **DOES NOT** include blank pages that are found within documents with other viewable pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Extraneous documents NOT relating to any registrant’s file (i.e. movie tickets, recipes, etc.)</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Documents alleging discrimination.</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Document sent from <strong>Reg not Found</strong> after second indexing attempt and it <strong>DOES NOT</strong> contain any distinguishing information that would determine sender’s identity.</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Anonymous statements indicating that a registrant is committing fraud.</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Envelopes Only or Cover Sheet Only that can <strong>NOT</strong> be identified as belonging to any registration.</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. 10 or more pages in document scanned in upside down or sideways.</th>
<th>D(RT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. **Reprocess Button:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Reprocess</th>
<th>Action prior to Routing to Reprocess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Documents containing pages for multiple registrations.</td>
<td>D(RT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Back to Top
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues sent to Reprocess</th>
<th>Action prior to Routing to Reprocess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Documents containing pages for multiple disasters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-English documents requiring translation – (i.e., letters, receipts, contractor/medical statements, or other documents affecting eligibility that are NOT easily interpreted).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Late Applications (NP LATE) - documents containing sender’s identity and request for disaster assistance, but no registration can be found (sender may be unregistered).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Non IHP related documents that should be forwarded to another FEMA section (i.e. Mitigation, resumes, contractors seeking FEMA employment, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Documents for old disasters that are NOT listed in the Indexing queue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Document ONLY contains an inspector complaint NOT related to an assistance request.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Document &quot;separators&quot; that were misread as an image instead of separating documents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Postal mail or mail import (NOT faxes or Applicant uploads) that seem to be missing pages, i.e. missing a second page of a letter written on the back of the page, or letter indicates receipts enclosed but no receipts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Smart Routing and Item Descriptions

The following is a list of the Category(s) and Item code(s) followed by the queue and subqueue where the Item code is programmed to Smart Route and a description of documents for each Item code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>115/4/29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Appeal for Funeral Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Appeal for Medical Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appeal for Miscellaneous/Other Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Appeal for Moving and Storage Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Appeal for Child Care Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Appeal for Personal Property Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Generic registrant’s statement (used when appeal type is unknown).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Appeal for Transportation Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Expenses related to Continued Rental Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Income documents related to Continued Rental Assistance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Code</td>
<td>Queue - Subqueue</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5W(7)(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Residential Lease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Residential Rent Receipt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous documents relating to Continued Rental Assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant’s statement Requesting Continued Rental Assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Category: Dental</td>
<td>Dentist or Dental supplies/equipment provider’s statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dental estimate, receipt, or bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Document indicating payment by an insurance company to the insured to settle a dental insurance claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant statement indicating they DO NOT have dental insurance coverage; or the Dental Insurance Enclosure form from the RFI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous documents relating to a request for Dental assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5X(7)(E)</td>
<td>Category: Direct Housing</td>
<td>Appeal for DH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental and Historical Preservation/Record of Environmental Concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Site Map/Inspection Request form (SIR) for DH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DH Licenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DH Mobile Home Documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation of the applicant’s permanent housing plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forms used to document eligibility for an additional DH cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Receipt for Government Property - DH lease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Request for work to be done to set up, repair, or uninstall a DH unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Category: Funeral</td>
<td>Coroner’s Report – includes autopsy and investigation and consultant reports concerning a death.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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### Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0X(7)(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Death certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0X(7)(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Funeral estimate receipt or bill.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Written statement confirmed by oath before an authorized official.

- Affidavits of Residency or other court documentation (Occupancy/Ownership).
- Birth certificate.
- Driver’s License or State Issued ID Card.
- Appeal request to clear a duplicate status issue.
- Eviction notice.
- Foreclosure notice.
- Federal or State Benefits Letter (Occupancy).
- Statement from the applicant’s HOA.
- Home title, Mobile Home Certificate of Title, Title Amendment indicating rent-free ownership.
- Landlord statement or letter.
- Local School District Letter or Statement (Occupancy).
- Merchant statement.
- Mobile Home Commercial Park Statement (Occupancy/Ownership).
- Motor Vehicle Registration (Occupancy).
- Mortgage payment coupon.
- Mortgage payment receipt.
- Notarized statement.
- Official statement or letter.
- Declarative statement submitted for Proof of Occupancy.
- Declarative statement submitted for Proof of Ownership, Tax receipts, Property Tax bill, Warranty deed, quitclaim deed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5077(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Copy of the registration that is mailed to the applicant. Signatures for Privacy act and legal residency. Mail in which the postal service documents the sending and receipt of a letter. An official report of the proceedings and judgment in a court. Critical Data Change updates to income, dependents, or damaged dwelling address. Financial documents requested in the FFC RFI letter. Documents from the Treasury that include the Treasury Review Coversheet. Request for a copy of the registration. Request for a Late Application. Request for an Oral Hearing associated with the recoupment process. Permanent Housing Construction (PHC) related documentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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### Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| va_u:;:·vry . lll·U I Q_l l_
<p>| VA_21 | 107 | Power of Attorney (POA) authority to act for another person in specified legal or financial matters. |
| | | Applicant's appeal of a Recoup decision. |
| | | A letter from the applicant authorizing a third party to act on the applicant's behalf. These are also referred to as a Written Consent. |
| | | FEMA correspondence returned as undeliverable by the USPS. |
| | | Certified Mail accepted and receipt returned. |
| | | Certified Mail returned as refused. |
| | | Certified Mail returned as undeliverable. |
| | | Letter from the SBA indicating that the applicant DOES NOT qualify for a loan. |
| | | Letter from the applicant thanking FEMA for service or assistance. |
| | | Income Certification form used in the recoup waiver process. |
| | | Program Management Section (PMS) summary/concurrence pages. |
| | | Statement or request concerning a waiver of a recoupment decision. |
| | | Insurance Agent's statement or letter. |
| | | Applicant's statement indicating they have no insurance coverage for the cause of damage. |
| | | Insurance policy page that specifies the insured person's name, address, policy period, coverage, and limitations. |
| | | Insurance letter indicating the applicant's claim has been denied. |
| | | A document detailing the terms and conditions of an insurance contract. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(973(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Document indicating payment by an insurance company to the insured to settle an insurance claim. Insurance coverage for miscellaneous/other items. <strong>DO NOT</strong> use, this <strong>Item</strong> code is an autogenerated code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(973(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contractor's Statement or Letter indicating the work to be done and/or construction completion times. HUD Section 8 Registration form indicating that the applicant is in a program that provides assistance to eligible families to rent housing in the private market. Hotel or Motel receipt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(973(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Document indicating payment by an insurance company to the insured to settle a medical claim. Applicant statement indicating they <strong>DO NOT</strong> have medical insurance coverage; or the <strong>Medical Insurance</strong> Enclosure form from the RFI. Miscellaneous documents relating to a request for Medical assistance. Medical estimate, receipt, or bill. Physician's or other healthcare supplies/equipment provider's statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(973(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Results of the Child Care Assistance Calculations used to support payment of the Child Care assistance. Child Care Declaration Statement. Child Care receipt/estimate/affidavit. Estimate or Receipt for a Miscellaneous/Other item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(973(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moving and Storage estimate, receipt, or bill.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Indexing With DMARTS

**Effective Date:** October 22, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29/7(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation of insurance that covers the cost of moving property and/or storage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Authorization used for the Katrina/Rita Relocation Program (2007) which provided assistance for applicants to return to their home state, relocate to alternate housing, or move from a FEMA Temporary Housing Unit (THU).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant's request for Katrina/Rita Relocation Assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Letter or Statement from a Storage company or facility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Category: Other Gov Forms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Code</th>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29/7(E)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Citizenship Certification - by action of law while residing in the U.S. or born outside the U.S. to a U.S. citizen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Income Tax Return.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marriage license issued prior to getting married or marriage certificate issued after marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Military Record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Proof of a person having obtained U.S. citizenship through naturalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Generic Item code used for documents that DO NOT have a corresponding Item code in DMARTS (i.e. <strong>Coversheet</strong> only, doc type illegible).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Privacy Act Notice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identification card attesting to the permanent US resident status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Security Administration Document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Employer's report of wage, salary and taxes withheld from earnings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Category: Personal Prop**
## Item Code: B(x)/E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Queue - Subqueue</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receipt, estimate or bill provided to justify a request for personal property assistance. Applicant’s request for Personal property assistance. Essential tools estimate or receipt. Payments made to FEMA via a check. FEMA check that is NOT to be reissued, such as one that is voluntarily returned by the applicant as NOT wanted, or a copy of a Treasury Check that was scanned for the file only. FEMA Treasury check returned by the applicant requesting a reissue because of incorrect or expired information on the check. Congressional correspondence. FEMA Debt Repayment Form. Opt-in signature page for La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE) letter. Applicant’s request to stop payment on a FEMA check. Insurance coverage for vehicle damage NOT caused by a collision, such as fire, theft, flood or vandalism. Department of Motor Vehicles Statement or documentation from the city, state, towing company or other verifiable agencies to confirm the vehicle was towed and salvaged due to the disaster. Vehicle repair estimate, bill or receipt. Applicant’s statement indicating they have no insurance coverage on a damaged vehicle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Frequently Asked Questions:

A. Comments

1. **Should staff modify auto-generated Comments to follow manual Comment guidelines?**

   a. There is **NO need to modify auto-generated Comments**. Auto-generated Comments are sufficient as long as all items are selected and the number of pages are listed in the Comment.

   b. If the auto-generated Comment is **NOT sufficient** or the document set is being routed to any **Process** other than **Archive**, **MODIFY** the Comment to explain any issues with the document set or to provide additional description of the documents.

2. **What abbreviations can be used in Indexing Comments?**

   a. Any abbreviations listed in the **FEMA Acronyms and Abbreviations SOP** and/or **Smart Routing and Item Descriptions**.

3. **Do staff include Coversheets and envelopes in Comments?**

   a. **Coversheets**, Information Updates (IU), and envelopes are **NOT included in Comments** but must be counted in the total number of pages.
4. If staff select an Item code from the drop down list, is that Item code included in the Comment?

a. Yes, all items must be included in the Comment regardless if the Item code is selected from the drop down list. See example below:

i. 2 page request asking for a copy of the file.
   Category: Info Control
   Item: File Copy Req
   Comment: FILE COPY REQUEST, 2PGS

B. Indexing Features

1. What is the purpose of the Worked from Hardcopy checkbox?

a. A checkmark in this box prevents a WP from being created for an Item code selection.

2. Can staff rearrange pages of a document set?

a. Document sets must remain in the same order as submitted. Moving pages may cause the screen to freeze, forcing a restart of DMARTS.

3. If a Coversheet indicates that a WP should NOT be created, but the SR field is inactive and defaulting to Yes, what should be done?

a. If the SR field is inactive, the WP creation will be auto-determined by the business rules.

4. What is the Source Count Report?

a. The Source Count Report displays the number of document sets by Mail or Fax that are currently in Indexing and Advanced Indexing queues. A document set may contain multiple pages in one set.

5. How do staff keep DMARTS from timing out?

a. To avoid DMARTS timing out:

Back to Top
6. **Can partial information be used to search for a registration?**

   a. The **Indexer Report** reflects the total number of items sent to Archive on a specific date or a range of dates. However, the report DOES NOT reflect documents that were sent to any other Process.

7. **How do staff view the number of routing events they had on a specific day?**

   a. The **Indexer Report** reflects the total number of items sent to Archive on a specific date or a range of dates. However, the report DOES NOT reflect documents that were sent to any other Process.

C. **Indexing Functions**

1. **Who is responsible for deleting pages, and when?**

   a. Staff working the Advanced Process have the ability to delete pages or an entire document. If pages need to be deleted, SEND the document to Advanced with a detailed Comment explaining the request.

2. **Is there a report that tracks documents that deleted from the Advanced Process?**

   a. DMARTS tracks all actions performed, including documents that are deleted. However, deleted documents are NO longer accessible in DMARTS or NEMIS.
3. Should staff make phone calls to help identify the sender’s identity?

4. When would staff working the Advanced Process send a document back to Indexing?

D. Item Code Selection

1. What type of documents would staff NOT select an item code?

2. When do staff use the Item: Registrant’s Stmt under the Appeals Category?

3. When do staff use the Item: Agent’s Stmt Ltr under the Insurance Category?

4. When do staff use the Item(s): CA Income, CA Expenses, or CA Misc?

5. When do staff use the Item(s): Check, Check No Reissue, or Check Reissue?
6. When do staff use the Item: Crtcl Data Chg?

7. Are staff required to select separate Item(s) for each Rent Receipt included within a document set for Continued Rental Assistance?

8. Are staff required to select separate Item code(s) if an Appeal Letter is for both HA and ONA items?

9. How should staff process document sets submitted to verify identity?
   a. Identity verification documents must be processed using an Item code that most closely matches the document.

10. What Item code does staff select for an inspection request?
    a. There is NO Item code for inspection requests. Therefore, staff will select:

11. What Item code does staff select for a University ID card since it can be used to prove occupancy, identity, or proof of current enrollment?
a. University ID Cards can be submitted for multiple reasons. Therefore, staff should SELECT:

12. What Item code does staff select when the only item in the document set is a Coversheet?

   a. If the Coversheet includes enough information to identify a registration, SELECT:

13. What is the difference between Item code(s): Rel of Info Auth and File Copy Request?

   a. A Release of Information (ROI) Authorization (Rel of Info Auth) is used when an applicant submits a Written Consent for a third party to act on their behalf. A File Copy Request is used when an applicant requests a copy of their records from FEMA.

E. Substantiation Questions

1. How do staff record multiple page numbers in the page number field?

2. What should staff do if there is NOT enough information to complete the Substantiation Questions?
F. Workpackets

1. What happens to the extra WP's when multiple Item codes are used?
   a. NEMIS Business Rules will NOT create a new WP if there is an existing WP with an active pending (PND) line for the requested assistance type. If an existing WP DOES NOT include an active PND line for the requested assistance type, one will be added by the NEMIS Business Rules.
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

**Archive** – Button used in DMARTS to save indexed images to an applicant's file.

**Bar Code** – A code consisting of a group of printed and variously patterned bars, spaces and sometimes numerals containing information (as identification) about the object it labels, and is designed to be scanned and read into computer memory.

**Batch** – A collection of documents typically named by the date received by DMARTS. A batch can be a single image or several images. One Batch may be composed of several separate documents which are accessed separately (using Next Image) in the Index Module.

**Batch Number** – Number comprised of the barcode identifier (when applicable), Image Source (Fax: f, Scan: s, etc.), file creation date, and the unique batch identifier (Ex: i_20081010_617).

**DMARTS Mailroom Application** – Document Management and Records Tracking System/DMARTS application contains a set of modules used to review and analyze correspondence received from disaster applicants.

**Doc ID Number** – The Doc ID Number includes an indexing prefix, barcode identifier (when applicable), the Image Source, the date the file was created, unique batch identifier number, and a unique identifying number for the specific set of documents. This number can be used to search for specific documents in the Indexing queue (Ex: HS-i_20081010_617-1861150717).

**Document** – Single or multipage images that may be a portion of a larger Batch.

**Fax Splitter** – Manually operated utility used to review and separate fax transmissions. The Fax Splitter ensures that each transmission is a complete document. Larger faxes (more than 8 pages) are automatically forwarded to the Fax Splitter for review during increased activity.

**Index Module** – The section within the DMARTS application used for cataloguing scanned images and attaching them to their respective NEMIS file.

**Indexing Coversheet** – Manually created and added during indexing and used for specific types of documents and usually contains indexing instructions.

**Image** – A single page computer representation of a faxed or scanned document. (One image = one document either single or multi page.)
Mail Utility Module - A customized application used by FEMA to print all outgoing mail generated within NEMIS.

NEMIS Business Rules - A set of Conditions and Actions used by NEMIS to automatically route and/or process registrations. The Conditions and Actions are influenced by the configuration of toggle switches in NEMIS.

Queue - A holding area for scanned documents waiting to be reviewed.

Repository - The queue to hold records that are waiting for a specific process.

Smart Routing - An automated function that determines if a work packet is needed for incoming correspondence (according to the NEMIS Business Rules) and auto-routes WP’s to the appropriate queue based on the Item code selected during indexing.

Utility/Utility Software - System software used to perform standard operations.

Acronyms

Ack
Acknowledgement Letter

DAC
Disaster Assistance Center

DDA
Damaged Dwelling Address

DH
Direct Housing

DMARTS
Document Management and Records Tracking System

EHP
Environmental and Historical Preservation

FAQ
Frequently Asked Question

FEMA
Federal Emergency Management Agency

HA
Housing Assistance

HOA
Homeowner’s Association

HUD
Housing and Urban Development

IU
Information Update

LUPE
La Union del Pueblo Entero

NPLATE
After Filing Deadline Grace Period Letter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONA</td>
<td>Other Needs Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDL</td>
<td>Property Damage Liability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC</td>
<td>Permanent Housing Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PII</td>
<td>Personally Identifiable Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIP</td>
<td>Personal Injury Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS</td>
<td>Program Management Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POA</td>
<td>Power of Attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC</td>
<td>Record of Environmental Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROI</td>
<td>Release of Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA</td>
<td>Small Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR</td>
<td>Site Map/Inspection Request Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>Smart Route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSN</td>
<td>Social Security Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THU</td>
<td>Temporary Housing Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS</td>
<td>United Parcel Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USPS</td>
<td>United States Postal Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Workpacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- **Standard Operating Procedures:**
  - Info Control

- **Resources:**
  - Civil Rights Issues
  - FEMA Acronyms and Abbreviations
### INFO CONTROL

#### I. Overview
- Purpose
- Other Items to Note

*** This can be referenced by all staff ***
(JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)

#### II. Important Information

***ALL processing employees must read this section***

- Prior to Processing
- Eligibility Verifications
- Returned Mail
- Timer Expired
- Letter Regeneration Error
- Info Control Supervisor Subqueue
- Joint Option Disaster Information (ONA Only)
- Exceptions

#### III. Process

#### IV. Examples and FAQs
- Timer Expired – Letter was generated, but not mailed
- Timer Expired – No Response Received

#### V. Definitions and Acronyms
- Definitions
- Acronyms

#### VI. Related Guidance
- Links to Related Guidance
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing FEMA Info Control.

Purpose:

- **FEMA Info Control** is a processing queue for Caller Services and Casework (CSAC) and Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) staff. **FEMA Info Control - Supervisor** is restricted to the FEMA Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Mailroom specialists.

- This document outlines the processing actions related to Info Control issues, including:
  - Processing functionality;
  - Updating the **Info Control** screen;
  - Setting verification requirements;
    - Addressing correspondence issues; AND
  - Defining requirements to protect the applicants Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Other Items to Note:

- Info Control Processing is available from two queues in NEMIS.
  - **FEMA Info Control**: This queue is accessible to CSAC and SPU staff.
  - **FEMA Supervisor Review**: Info Control processing from this queue is reserved for Info Control staff and other designated members.

- The **Regenerate** Function:
  - Updates to the Current Mailing Address (CMA) must be made before the letter is regenerated to ensure the letter is received by the applicant at the correct address.
  - Regenerated mail is a copy of the returned letter, including the same date as the mailing date of the original. A regenerated letter will NOT extend the applicable appeal period.
The body of the regenerated letter will include the CMA from when the letter was originally sent however, the letter cover page will reflect the updated address and will be mailed to this address.

- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**
  
  - General PII includes names, email addresses, home addresses (both CMA and Damaged Dwelling Address (DDA)), phone numbers, and EFT routing numbers.
    - General PII may be disclosed to applicants/co-applicants only after they have met the requirements to gain access to the file; and, when requested by the applicant/co-applicant; i.e. the applicant asks staff to confirm the CMA on file.
  
  - Sensitive PII includes Social Security numbers (full or last 4), Driver License or State ID numbers, Passport ID numbers, Date of Birth, and EFT account numbers.
    - Sensitive PII may never be disclosed to applicants/co-applicants, regardless if they met the requirements to gain access to the file. Staff may only update sensitive PII after the applicant/co-applicant has met the requirements to gain access to the file; and, the information is provided to staff by the applicant/co-applicant. Staff should never provide the outdated information to the applicant/co-applicant.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing applicants in Flood Zones and Protected Areas.

Prior to Processing:

- For cases locked or under Program Management Section (PMS) or NCT review:

- Returned funds: If a copy of a U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) check, personal check, money order, etc., is found in the NEMIS subqueue.

- Returned mail processing is completed by CSAC and/or SPU staff regardless of the ONA processing option.

- Prior to reviewing or discussing Cross Disaster processing, VERIFY the ONA Option selection.
  - FEMA staff are authorized to process and discuss ONA in FEMA Option disasters.
In Joint Option disasters, only the state, territorial or tribal government (STT) is authorized to process and discuss ONA eligibility. REFER to Joint Option Disaster Information.

Helpline Staff: REFER to the Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide for additional information.

For ONA questions in Joint Option disasters, PROVIDE the applicant the STT ONA Helpline number, which is listed on the NEMIS Disaster Info (F8) link.

Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Maximum (system limit only):

- In an effort to minimize errors, the system will generate a popup if the total combined payment exceeds $100,000.
  - Total combined payments include (in any combination)
    - Housing Assistance (HA)
    - ONA
    - American with Disabilities Act (ADA) related line items
- Temporary housing and ADA related line items are NOT counted toward the financial HA and ONA maximums, so in rare instances an applicant’s total award may exceed $100,000.
  - If this happens, PLACE the case on Hold – Program Review.

- PMS will have to authorize this payment.
III. PROCESS

A. Eligibility Verifications

Although FEMA Info Control is NOT a decision processing queue, the auto determination event may route WPs to the different FEMA Info Control subqueues in an attempt to meet the missing verification requirements. Staff processing FEMA Info Control must review the documents received and ASSOCIATE incoming correspondence with the missing verification requirements.

1. Identity is verified (IDV_Pass). REFER to the Identity Verification SOP for additional information.

B. Returned Mail

1. Correspondence Returned to FEMA:

   a. Returned mail is correspondence sent to applicants and returned to FEMA by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). Some of the reasons for returned mail are:

      i. Misspelled street name, incorrect P.O. Box number, or zip code;

      ii. Missing apartment or lot number;

      iii. Moved, unknown, deceased; OR

      iv. No mailbox, DD is vacant, or mail unclaimed.

   b. If the USPS establishes an alternate mail delivery station, the information will be available on the Disaster Specific Information web page or Preshift.

2. Returned Mail Processing:

   a. The mailroom scans the correspondence into the Document Management and Record Tracking System (DMARTS), and the IHP Mailroom staff index the returned mail which creates a WP to FEMA Info Control - Returned Mail.

      i. WPs will NOT generate when:

         1. There is an existing WP in FEMA Info Control - Returned Mail.

         2. The CMA is updated between the date the correspondence was mailed and the date it is returned.

            a. In these circumstances a script will regenerate the returned mail.
3. The e-correspondence option is updated to Yes after the correspondence is mailed.

   a. Once the returned mail is scanned and indexed, an email notification will be issued to the applicant indicating the correspondence is available in their DAC account.

   b. REVIEW the returned correspondence and information in the file to determine if the CMA requires an update.

      i. If there is information in file (e.g., incoming mail, contacts, or comments) indicating the applicant submitted a request to change their CMA, and the change had NOT been completed:

      ii. If there is NO information in the file to update the CMA:

      iii. Information about letters that should NOT be generated is available on DSOPs, preshifts, or PPM SOPs.
iv. For returned recoupment letters, e.g. Notice of Potential Debt Letter (NPDL) or Notice and Demand Letter (NDL) found in FEMA Info Control - Returned Mail.

C. Timer Expired

1. The applicant DID NOT respond to a document request in a timely manner:

   a. The Request for Information (RFI) letter is the only request letter in which a timer is required.

      i. The RFI letter is used for item requests. Appeal RFIs are the only RFI letters that DO NOT have an associated timer.

      1. Common reasons for the applicant’s delay in returning documents within the allotted time are;

          a. Postal service delivery delays;
          b. Backlog at the IHP Mailroom; OR
          c. Documents scanned into an incorrect file or problems with the image quality.
          d. Refer to Preshift Notes or the Disaster Specific Information web page for information regarding delays in mail service or known issues affecting the timely receipt of correspondence to FEMA.

2. Processing of timer expired and eligibility review:

   a. Initial case review will occur in FEMA Info Control - Timer Expired.
D. Letter Regeneration Error

1. Procedure to recreate letters:

   a. System errors will prevent letters from being regenerated through the NEMIS Regenerate button. The letter CANNOT be regenerated if the error message occurs.

   b. NEMIS will display the following pop-up error message, or a similar variant:
i. **Regenerate Letter Error; OR**

ii. The new version of this letter has more input fields than the original.

c. If an error message appears after the **Regenerate** button is selected, **RECREATE** the super letter.

---

### E. Info Control Supervisor Subqueue

1. **Limited access processing queue:**

   a. **FEMA Info Control - Supervisor** is a subqueue within the **FEMA Info Control** process in NEMIS.

   b. **FEMA Info Control - Supervisor** is reserved for Info Control Specialists and other designated staff members.

   c. Staff assigned to this subqueue are responsible for ensuring appropriate processing actions are taken and enforcing the Privacy Act requirements as necessary when FEMA is requested to release information.

   d. WPs are routed into this subqueue when FEMA receives one of the following documents:

      i. Applicant Complimentary Letter or Thank You Letters;
ii. Late Applications; OR

iii. Documents Scanned into the Wrong File.

2. Documents processed by Info Control Specialists:

a. Applicant compliments and thank you letters:

   i. If an applicant's letter mentions a FEMA employee or field inspector by name or ID number, EMAIL the FEMA-IHP-MAILROOM and ask that a copy of the letter is sent to the respective department.

   ii. If the applicant's letter DOES NOT mention a specific employee or field inspector, NO further action is required.

   iii. Once the case review is completed, the Info Control specialists will ROUTE the WP to FEMA Complete.

b. File copy requests:

   i. File Copy Requests are processed from FEMA Info Control - File Request by the IHP Mailroom.

      1. If a WP for a file copy request is NOT available in FEMA Info Control - File Request, ADD a new WP for processing. An Info Control specialist will process the applicant's request.

   ii. To process an applicant's request for a partial or complete copy of their file, they must have submitted a completed Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form specifically requesting their file or a written request that must include the following:

      1. Be in writing, typed or written;

      2. The applicant or co-applicant’s full name (first and last);

      3. The applicant or co-applicant’s date and place of birth;

      4. Current address (CMA or DD); AND

      5. The applicant or co-applicant’s signature with one of the following:

         a. Notarization; OR

         b. With the following statement: “I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.”
iii. If the request is missing any of the above requirements, **ADD** and **MAIL** an **ADOC** letter requesting the missing information.

iv. Once the request is verified, **EMAIL** the **FEMA-IHP-MAILROOM** with the following information:

v. Once the email is sent to the IHP Mailroom, **ADD** a **Comment** indicating that the request was completed. **ROUTE** the WP to **FEMA Complete**.

vi. The IHP Mailroom is the only department authorized to:

1. **GENERATE** the requested copies;

2. **PRODUCE** Certified copies for Other Federal Agencies (OFA);

3. **GENERATE** the Case File Cover Letter (MCCF); AND

4. **ROUTE** the WP to **FEMA Complete** after the copies are generated.

c. Late applications:

i. The review and processing of Late Applications is completed by SPU and Regional staff.
i. To determine who has the Late Applications review authority, **ACCESS** the Disaster Specific Information web page and **REFER** to the Summary Information section and the Late Application Review heading.

iii. **REFER** to the Late Application SOP for additional information and details about late processing.

d. Documents scanned into the wrong file:

i. Info Control staff assigned to **FEMA Info Control - Supervisor** maintain records of all archived documents.

ii. When the IHP Mailroom receives a request to remove documents from an incorrect file into another, the Info Control staff add a new WP in **FEMA Info Control - Supervisor**. Once the documents are placed into the correct folder, they will dispose of the WP.

iii. For additional information and details on how to notify the mailroom about documents that were scanned into the incorrect file, **REFER** to the Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide.

F. Joint Option Disaster Information (ONA Only)

1. If processing a Joint Option Disaster:

   a. ONA categories are only processed by the state, territorial, or tribal government.

   b. FEMA staff are authorized to process HA categories.

2. If incoming mail generates a WP to a FEMA processing queue:

   a. **PROCESS** any outstanding issues within HA categories.

   i. If an additional WP is available in an STT queue, such as State Manual Determination, State Appeal, or State Supervisor Review, NO further action for ONA is required.

   ii. If an additional WP is NOT available in a state, territorial, or tribal government queue; AND

   1. There are NO HA categories to address:

   2. There are HA categories to address:
G. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios NOT specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, DSOPs, or other posted information:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

The following processing scenarios describe common Info Control processing scenarios.

Scenario 1: Timer Expired – Letter was generated, but NOT mailed.

Scenario 2: Timer Expired – No response received.
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Basic Documentation: Verification requirements met by submitted documents or other approved verification method such as inspection.

Call Attempt: One call attempt to all available numbers to clarify/request information or discuss eligibility determinations (If the full contact information is NOT available, it can be obtained by using the yellow pages, an internet search provider, or by calling the applicant).

Reissue: The process of reviewing the file, confirming the applicant continues to be eligible for the returned assistance, and resending the eligible award.

Returned funds: Occurs when FEMA receives funds issued to an applicant because the award was undeliverable, the applicant requested a stop payment, or the funds were returned voluntarily.

Third party: An individual, entity, or organization to which the disclosure is being consented.

Signature: A valid signature may be evidenced by any mark made by pen or pencil denoting the signer’s name or mark; a mark or name created and adopted through a software program such as Microsoft Word; adoption of an electronic signature that includes typing a name or mark at the end of an email; a digital image of a handwritten signature or mark; the click of an “I accept” button on an e-commerce site as his or her legal signature; or adoption of an electronic symbol, sound, or process that is attached to, or logically associated with, the document and executed by the applicant or his or her agent, with the intent to sign the document.

Verifiable: A receipt or statement with the name, address, and telephone number of the provider or official that includes sufficient information explaining the incurred costs or information for processing.

Acronyms

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act
CMA Current Mailing Address
CSAC Caller Services and Casework
DAC Disaster Assistance Center
DDA Damaged Dwelling Address
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DSA</td>
<td>Disaster Survival Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDV_Pass</td>
<td>Identity Verification Passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>Individual and Households Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEMIS</td>
<td>National Emergency Management Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPSC</td>
<td>National Processing Service Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONA</td>
<td>Other Needs Assistance</td>
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<td>PII</td>
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<td>POC</td>
<td>Point of Contact</td>
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<td>SOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPU</td>
<td>Specialized Processing Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>STT</td>
<td>State, territorial, or tribal government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Workpacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- **Standard Operating Procedures**
  - **Identity Verification**
  - **Late Application**
  - **Outbound Calls and Third Party Verifications**

- **Resources**
  - **Disaster Specific Information**
  - **Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide**
  - **Preshift Notes**
  - **Recoupment Helpline User's Guide**
# Late Applications

**Effective Date:** August 27, 2020

## I. Overview

- Purpose
- Who May Get Assistance?
- Documentation or Verification Needed
- Other Items to Note

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

***All employees must read this section***

## II. Important Information

- Prior to Processing

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- Late Application within the 60-day grace period
- Late Application after the ILATE was sent
- Late Application after the 60-day grace period

## V. Definitions and Acronyms

- Definitions
- Acronyms

## VI. Related Guidance

- Links to Related Guidance
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Late Applications.

Purpose

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) addresses any necessary processing procedures for applicants who submit Late Applications.

Who May Get Assistance?

- FEMA may approve Late Applications from applicants who register within the 60-day grace period which is after the deadline of the standard OR extended application period.
  - Applicants must submit valid documents within 60 days from the date the Late Application was completed.

Documentation or Verification Needed:

- FEMA may consider a Late Application when applicants submit the following documents:
  - A signed letter of explanation; AND
  - Documents that clearly confirm why the applicant was unable to apply during the application period.

Other Items to Note:

- Applications completed during the standard application period will be processed following standard operating procedures.
  - The standard application period ends 60 days from the date the President of the United States declares an incident a major disaster.
  - FEMA may authorize an extension for the application period as a result of disaster specific circumstances.
- Applications completed after the deadline of the standard or extended application period will be processed as Late Applications.
  - The National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS) allows new applications to be completed during the 60-day grace period.
• Applicants who complete a Late Application will receive a designation of HA: NONREG and Other: NONREG during Registration Intake (RI).

o Applicants will receive an After Filing Period (NLATE) letter after completing a Late Application.

• FEMA may consider a Late Application when applicants send a letter of explanation and submit documents that clearly confirm why they were unable to apply during the application period.

• For documents submitted through traditional postal mail or uploaded through the applicant's Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) account, FEMA will use the postmark date to determine if the documents were submitted prior to the disaster financial closure date. For documents submitted through fax, the timestamp of the fax transmittal will be used.

o Applicants will receive an After Filing Period Second Response (ILATE) letter if the following occur:

  • They did NOT submit a letter of explanation, or documents that clearly show why they were unable to apply during the application period; OR

  • The reason they provided was insufficient in demonstrating a condition that would cause a significant delay in allowing them to apply for assistance.

o The ILATE letter informs applicants that the application cannot be processed.

■ New applications CANNOT be completed in NEMIS after the 60-day grace period:

  o The RI module is disabled in NEMIS after the expiration of the 60-day grace period.

  • EXPLAIN to the applicant that the application period has ended.

  o If requested by the applicant, FEMA will send an After Filing Deadline Grace Period (NPLATE) letter.

  o The NPLATE letter informs applicants that FEMA CANNOT accept their Late Application.

  o The NPLATE letter can be requested through the entire financial assistance period for the applicable disaster.
I. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing a Late Application.

Prior to Processing:

- Verify the Review Authority:
  - The Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) and the Regions share responsibility for determining the eligibility of applicants who apply after the application period deadline.
    - At the time of disaster declaration, the Region determines if the Late Application review and processing will be completed by the SPU or designated staff in the Region.
      - Only SPU staff will process Late Applications, if the National Processing Service Center (NPSC) has the Late Application review authority.
      - SPU staff will coordinate with the Region before processing Late Applications, if the Region has the Late Application review authority.
    - Refer to the Summary Information located in the Disaster Specific Information page to DETERMINE the Late Application review authority for each applicable disaster.

- Review applications affected by the Greenwich Mean Time (GMT):
  - On the last day of an application filing deadline, applications completed on or before 11:59 pm, in their time zone, will NOT be considered Late Applications.
    - Since NEMIS operates according to the GMT, these applications will reflect as a NONREG in the status bar.
      - The SPU staff will correct applications that were completed before midnight in the applicant's time zone if they have the review authority. Refer to Section III C.2 for additional information.
The Region will determine the applicant's eligibility regardless of the GMT established by NEMIS if they have the review authority. Refer to Section III C.3 for additional information.

- Non-SPU staff
  - If a Workpacket (WP) for a Late Application is found in other queues, e.g., FEMA Info Control, FEMA Manual Determination, etc.
III. PROCESS

A. Eligibility Verifications

FEMA may consider a Late Application if the applicant sends the following documents:

1. A signed letter of explanation; AND

2. Copies of supporting documents that clearly confirm why the applicant was unable to apply during the application period. These include:

B. Information Requests

There are no manual information request letters for a Late Application. NEMIS generates the NLATE letter automatically.

C. Processing Eligible Assistance

Based on the review authority, Late Applications will be reviewed and processed by the SPU or the SPU staff will coordinate with the Region first before approving a Late Application for processing. Refer to Section II for additional information.

1. NPSC review of the CU-23 report

   a. The SPU will review the CU-23 report to:
2. To correct Late Applications for GMT - NPSC Review:

   a. If the application was completed on or before 11:59 pm in the applicant’s time zone, the SPU will:

3. Late Applications for GMT - Region Review and SPU duties

   a. The Region is responsible to:
4. To approve WPs in **Late Processing queue, Docs Received subqueue** – NPSC Review:

5. To approve WPs in the **FEMA Info Control queue, Supervisor subqueue, FEMA Manual Determination, FEMA Appeals**, or other queues – NPSC Review:
6. To approve Late Applications – Region Review and SPU duties

e. If the Region has the review authority, the Region will:

D. Processing Ineligible Decisions

Based on the review authority, Late Applications will be reviewed and processed by the SPU or the SPU will coordinate with the Region first before denying a Late Application for processing.

1. To deny WPs in Late Processing queue, Pending Receipt subqueue – NPSC Review:
Late Applications
Effective Date: August 27, 2020

h. If the applicant did not submit documents:

2. To deny WPs in Late Processing queue, Documents Received subqueue – NPSC Review:

   i. If the applicant did not submit documents that meet the requirements listed under Section A. Eligibility Verifications:

3. To deny WPs in FEMA Info Control queue, Supervisor subqueue, FEMA Manual Determination or another queue - NPSC Review:

   j. If the applicant did NOT submit documents; OR

   k. If the applicant submitted documents that do NOT meet the requirements listed under Section A. Eligibility Verifications:
Late Applications
Effective Date: August 27, 2020

4. To deny WPs for documents received after ILATE letter – NPSC Review:

   I. If the applicant did NOT submit documents that meet the requirements listed under Section A. Eligibility Verifications:

5. To deny Late Applications – Region Review and SPU duties:

   m. If the Region has the review authority, the Region will:

   n. If the Region justifies denial, the SPU will:

6. Small Business Administration (SBA) and Undesignated Counties - NPSC Review
E. Appeals

Applicants have 60 days after the NLATE letter to submit acceptable documents that clearly confirm why they were unable to apply during the application period. Applicants who CANNOT provide an acceptable reason for their Late Application will be sent an ILATE letter, which informs them that their explanation is not acceptable. There are NO appeal rights for this determination because applicants were already given the opportunity to present a full and complete justification for completing a Late Application.

F. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios not specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

7. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, Disaster Specific Operating Procedures, or other posted information:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

The following process scenarios assume the applicant meets all verifications and eligibility requirements.

Scenario 1 – NONREG status and GMT

1. An applicant completed a registration before midnight in their time zone, but NEMIS shows as NONREG.
   a. If the SPU has the Late Application Review authority, the SPU will:
   b. If the Region has the Region Review authority, the Region will:

Scenario 2 – Late Application completed within the 60-day grace period

2. Applicants who complete a Late application will receive the following letters:
   c. NEMIS will automatically:
   d. SPU will:
Scenario 3 – Applicants submit documents after the ILATE is mailed

3. If applicants submit documentation after an ILATE letter is mailed.

Scenario 4 – Late Application after the 60-day grace period

4. If individuals attempt to register after RI is disabled:
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

60-Day Grace Period: It is the time FEMA allows to complete a Late Application from the date of the standard or extended application deadline. After the 60-day grace period, RI is disabled and a registration can no longer be completed.

CU-23 Report: This report identifies Late Applications including those affected by GMT.

Late Application: An application completed after the end date of the standard or extended application deadline.

NONREG Status: The status an applicant receives in NEMIS after completing a Late Application during the 60-day grace period.

Acronyms

DR Disaster Number
DRC Disaster Recovery Center
DSA Disaster Survival Assistance
GMT Greenwich Mean Time
IHP Individuals and Households Program
ILATE Ineligible case is closed
JFO Joint Field Office
NEMIS National Emergency Management Information System
NLATE Filing after deadline with consideration status
NONREG Non-Registration
NPLATE Filing after deadline with no consideration status
NPSC National Processing Service Center
POC Point of Contact
RI Registration Intake
SBA Small Business Administration
SOP Standard Operating Procedure
SPU Specialized Processing Unit
WP Workpacket
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following documents:

- Disaster Specific Information
PLACING CASES ON HOLD - 72 HOUR RULE

I. Overview

■ Purpose

***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

II. Process

A. Placing a Case on Hold
B. Removing a Case From Hold
C. Cases on Hold
I. Overview

This section describes information that every employee **must** read **before addressing** Placing Cases on Hold.

**Purpose:**

- This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidance on how to place a case on hold.
III. PROCESS

A. Placing a Case on Hold

1. Any work packet that cannot be resolved immediately may be placed on hold for up to 72 hours. The date the case was placed on hold will be displayed in the field next to the user name.

2. The user must enter a NEMIS Comment with a **valid** reason as to why the work packet was placed on hold. For example:
   a. **Comment Summary Line**: FACILITY (NPSC)# CASE PLACED ON HOLD
   b. **Comment Details**: On hold pending contractor verification of disaster-related damages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Valid Reasons to Place a Case on Hold</th>
<th>Examples of Valid Reasons to Remove a Case on Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Removing a Case from Hold

1. When removing a case from hold for a **valid** reason, state the reason for the removal within the same NEMIS Comment made to record processing actions. For example:
   a. **Comment Summary Line**: FACILITY (NPSC)# INSURANCE TAB UPDATED
   b. **Comment Details**: Removed from hold due to help line call, Insurance verification received, Updated insurance information tab, Routed to Complete.

C. Cases on Hold

1. Cases in most queues will be removed from hold by the NEMIS Business Rules based on the amount of time set for Application Hold Days in the IHP set-up. The default setting is 3 days or 72 hours.

2. There are queues that will keep the **HOLD** status until it is manually removed. These are:
3. Congressional cases, Supervisor Review (Recoupment) cases, and cases that are pending review by the IHP Helpdesk, the Specialized Processing Unit (SPU), the Regions and/or Headquarters, **MAY NOT** be taken off hold without the permission of a supervisor.
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### Recoupment Helpline User’s Guide

**Effective: August 26, 2021**

FEMA – Individuals & Households Program; National Processing Service Center
PO. Box 10055; Hyattsville, MD 20782 FAX# 1-800-827-8112

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Process:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. General Information | 1. Recoupment Helpline Agents should follow standard Helpline procedures and process all calls, even if the issues are NOT related to recoupment.  
2. Agents should give their PIN to the applicant during the call or when transferring the call.  
3. All scripts *(in blue below)* are suggested wording for use by Recoupment Helpline Agents in assisting applicants. However, agents must ensure that all required information is provided. |
| a. Helpline Opening Remarks | *(b)(E)* |
| b. Language Line | |
| c. TTY Callers | |
| d. 3rd Party Calls | The person calling is an authorized third party with a Release or Information, or Written Consent Authorization, and verifies the information required to have access to the applicant’s file: *Written Consent and Sharing Applicants Information,*  
1. Verify the caller’s current location and update as needed.  
2. Release applicable information to the caller.  
3. If the call is from Congressional Staff, say: *The FEMA Congressional Affairs Division will be able to answer your questions. Please contact them at (202) 646-4500.*  
If the call is from media personnel or reporters, say: *The FEMA Headquarters External Affairs Office will be able to answer your questions. Please contact them at (202) 646-3272.*  
Calls from attorneys with financial questions should be transferred to the FEMA Finance Center (FFC), even when a Release of Information, POA, and Written Consent is NOT on file or is expired. |
| e. Applicant Verifications | If IDV Pass, the applicant must  
1. Say: *Thank you Mr./Ms.____.* |
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<th>Process:</th>
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<tr>
<td>If the call is transferred from Helpline and the agent has NOT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>completed the verification, the Recoupment Helpline agent <strong>must</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>verify</strong> the applicant's identity before continuing the call.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Verifications for possible identity theft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Transferring Calls to FFC or U.S. Treasury</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic: Escalated Calls</td>
<td>Process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Escalated Calls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. If the caller requests to speak to a supervisor;</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Recoupment Helpline User’s Guide

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<tbody>
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<td>i. Case file review</td>
<td>1. Once you have verified that the caller has permission to access the case, review the case file in App Update.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Subject of Call</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Notice of Debt (NOD) Letter and Notice of Potential Debt (NPDL) letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the applicant **DOES NOT** have their NOD or NPDL:  

If caller states, they did NOT receive the NOD or NPDL:
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<th>Process</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. Letter of Intent (LOI) and Notice of Debt Letter (NDL)</td>
<td>(b)(7)(E)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| d. Treasury Letters                       | 1. If the letter is from the US Department of Treasury there will NOT be a copy of it in the NEMIS file.  
   If caller states they received a letter from the US Department of Treasury and/or the file includes a Comment “TREASURY DEBT 888-826-3127”; If the caller states they submitted a hearing request to the Treasury, and |
### Topic: Treasury Review

| Process |
|---------|---|
|         | (B)(7)(E) |

### Topic: Notice of Disaster Assistance Recoupment Fairness Act of 2011 (DARFA) Waiver Letter

<p>| Process |
|---------|---|
|         | g. Appeal Information |</p>
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<td>h. Late Appeal Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Oral Hearing Request Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>j. Copy of Letters</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Topic:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. Copy of File</td>
<td>(6)(7)(E)</td>
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<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Process:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. FFC Request for Information (RFI) Status Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Applicant has questions about recent debt payments or wishes to pay off their debt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Appeal Status Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Process:</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv. Closing Remarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. NOD/NPDL Letter Reasons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. NOD/NPDL Comment and Reason Do NOT Match:</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Duplication of Benefits with Other Agency</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. HA Overpayment: Lodging Expense Reimbursement</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. More Than One Application in a Disaster/Assistance in Multiple Disasters</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Non-compliance as a U.S. Citizen, Non-Citizen National, or Qualified Alien</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Not a Legal Resident</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Paid in Multi Disasters – Repair/Temp Housing/Assistance in Multiple Disasters</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. ALE was Covered in Insurance Claim/ Duplication of benefits with insurance - Additional Living Expenses</td>
<td>(B)(7)(E)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Return to Closing Remarks*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Process:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. <strong>Another Member of Household</strong>&lt;br&gt;Rcvd INS Including&lt;br&gt;PP/Duplication of benefits with household member’s insurance</td>
<td><strong>Return to Closing Remarks.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. <strong>DOB w/Household Member</strong></td>
<td><strong>Return to Closing Remarks.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. <strong>DOB with Insurance (Repair)</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. This is only for the person with the insurance NOT for others living in the</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Civil Action No. 5:21-cv-00071, 188_4/29*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replacement, PP)/Duplication of benefits with insurance</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA Overpayment: Home Repair</td>
<td>Return to Closing Remarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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### Recoupment Helpline User’s Guide

**Effective: August 26, 2021**

FEMA – Individuals & Households Program; National Processing Service Center

PO. Box 10055; Hyattsville, MD 20782 FAX# 1-800-827-8112

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Recoupment Helpline User’s Guide

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## Recoupment (Recovery of Funds)

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***This can be referenced by all staff (JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)***

***ALL processing employees must read this section***

- Recoupment Related Inquiries
- Fraud in NEMIS Comments and Contacts
- Disability and Communication Needs

A. Routing Potential Recoupments

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I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing Recoupment.

Purpose:

- This document provides an overview of the process FEMA undertakes to recover disaster assistance funds for which an applicant was not eligible. This process is known as recoupment.

Discussing Recoupment with Applicants:

- Only staff that is assigned to work recoupment may discuss recoupment with applicants.

- Staff that is NOT assigned to recoupment must refer applicants with recoupment-related questions to the Recoupment Helpline. Refer to Section II. Important Information for additional information.

Identifying Potential Recoupments:

- FEMA may identify a case in which an applicant may need to return funds as a result of routine internal reviews, information provided by the applicant, reports from other agencies, or audits conducted by the Government Accountability Office, FEMA fraud investigators, or the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General.

Reasons for Recoupment:

There are four reasons FEMA may recoup disaster assistance funds:

- Duplication of Benefits (DOB), which occurs when FEMA provides funds that were also previously received from another source, such as insurance;

- Assistance provided in error; which occurs when FEMA provides funds for which an applicant is not eligible;

- Misuse of funds; and

- Potential fraud.

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse:
If the caller and/or staff has knowledge of fraud, waste, abuse, or allegations of mismanagement involving disaster relief operations, you can report this to FEMA or DHS:

- FEMA Fraud Branch:
  - Email: StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov
  - Fax: (202) 212-4926
  - Write:
    FEMA Fraud and Internal Investigation Division
    400 C Street SW
    Mail Stop 3005
    Washington, DC 20472-3005

- DHS OIG:
  - Online through their allegation form (Recommended)
  - Call: (800) 323-8603
  - Fax: (202) 254-4297
  - Write:
    DHS Office of Inspector General / MAIL STOP 0305
    Attn: Office of Investigations – Hotline
    245 Murray Lane SW
    Washington, DC 20528-0305

When making your report convey as much information (who, what, where, when, why, and how) as possible. You may request confidentiality or register your complaint(s) anonymously.

**Notifying the Applicant:**

- FEMA notifies applicants of their potential debt by sending them a Notice of Potential Debt Letter (NPDL). Applicants have 60 days from the date of their NPDL to appeal their potential debt. If the applicant DOES NOT appeal, or appeals unsuccessfully, the debt is certified and transferred to the FEMA Finance Center (FFC).

- FFC sends applicants a Notice and Demand Letter (NDL) to notify them that their debt has been certified and to establish terms of repayment. If the applicant DOES NOT respond to the NDL, FFC transfers the debt to the U.S. Department of Treasury for collection.
Registration Eligibility:

- An applicant that is going through the recoupment process for one disaster is still eligible to apply for assistance in another disaster.

Additional Information:
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing recoupment-related issues.

Recoupment Related Inquiries:

- All recoupment processing is done by the Recoupment Task Force (RTF) within the Specialized Processing Unit (SPU).
- Applicants that contact Helpline or visit a DRC with recoupment-related questions must be instructed to contact the Recoupment Helpline at 1-800-816-1122.
- The Recoupment Helpline operates from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday.
  - If a caller has a recoupment-related question during these hours, they can be transferred to the Recoupment Helpline at 90033 using the warm transfer procedure.

Fraud in NEMIS Comments and Contacts:

- DO NOT mention the words fraud, OIG, criminal, investigation, or any similar term in any NEMIS Comment or Contact. Instead, use the alternative word unverifiable.

Disability and Communication Needs:

- Prior to processing, REVIEW the NEEDS TODO popup.
  - This popup will provide information on the applicant or household’s Disability and Communication Needs.
  - If the NEEDS TO DO link is RED:
    - REVIEW the Disability and Communication Needs frame located on the Registrant Info screen for applicant’s preferred communication.
      - Refer to the Disability and Communication Needs SOP for guidance and procedures to accommodate communication needs and access and functional needs;
If non-English speaking applicants require assistance, refer to the Language Line SOP;

For assistance in performing outbound calls to applicants and third parties, refer to the Outbound Calls and Third Party Verifications SOP for additional information.
III. PROCESS

A. Routing Potential Recoupments:

1. If staff believe they have identified a possible recoupment, they will take the following steps:

2. If staff believe they have identified a possible recoupment involving potential fraud, they will take the following steps:
## IV. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

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<td>FEMA</td>
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<td>WP</td>
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V. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Disability and Communication Needs
  - Language Line
  - Outbound Calls and Third Party Verifications

- Resources
  - DHS OIG Allegation Form
  - Recoupment Helpline User’s Guide
  - Stop FEMA Fraud email
# Return/Reissue of IHP Financial Assistance

## Effective Date: June 14, 2021

### I. Overview
- Purpose
- Basic Documentation Needed
- Other Items to Note

### II. Important Information

***This can be referenced by all staff ***
(JFO, DRC, DSA, Helpline)

*** ALL processing employees must read this section ***

### III. Process

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### IV. Examples and FAQs
- Frequently Asked Questions

### V. Definitions and Acronyms
- Definitions
- Acronyms

### VI. Related Guidance
- Links to Related Guidance
I. OVERVIEW

This section describes information that every employee must read before addressing the Return/Reissue of IHP Funds.

Purpose

- Applicants who have NOT received or cashed an Individuals and Households Program (IHP) award may contact FEMA seeking assistance for information about the status of the award.

- USE this document to provide guidance to the applicant on how to return IHP funds, return ineligible funds (recoupment), check the status of missing award(s), identify the reason(s) for the return, and update registration information to ensure the reissue of funds.

- This document also describes the processing of returned IHP funds and the criteria to determine eligibility for the reissue of funds.

Basic Documentation Needed:

- Identity Verified;
- Occupancy Verified;
- Ownership Verified;
- Lack of Insurance, Settlement, or Denial letter;
- Habitability Repairs Required (HRR = Yes);
- For returning a U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) check:
  - The original Treasury check, if available.
    - For mutilated or damaged Treasury checks, all available portions of the check are needed.
- To substantiate the Non-Receipt of Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payments:
  - FEMA may require the applicant’s bank account transaction ledger demonstrating the electronic receipt has NOT occurred.
- For the reissue of funds returned voluntarily by the applicant, co-applicant, or authorized third party:
A verbal or written request from the applicant, co-applicant, or authorized third party must be on file indicating they would like to have the funds reissued.

**Other Items to Note:**

- Applicants are responsible for contacting FEMA if they know or believe the Treasury check has been lost, stolen, or mutilated to request the payment to be stopped.

- Once a Treasury check is returned to the Treasury, the check is cancelled upon receipt. The FEMA Finance Center (FFC) posts the cancellation in NEMIS as **Returned Payment - Available Treasury Check Return**.

- Returned EFTs: Upon receipt, the FFC records EFT payments in NEMIS.

- The time limit to cash or deposit a Treasury checks is 12 months from the date on the check.

- Applicants may contact FEMA to indicate they need, or want, to return IHP funds.

- Reasons for the return of funds:
  - The Treasury check was returned by the US Postal Service, or the EFT payment could NOT be completed because:
    - Wrong or invalid bank account or routing number;
    - Account is closed;
    - The check is illegible, damaged, or mutilated; OR
    - Funds rejected by financial institution.
  - Voluntarily returned to FEMA.
    - The applicant returned the award because of incorrect spelling of the applicant’s name on the check, i.e., married, divorced, misspelled name, etc.;
    - The financial institution would NOT honor the check;
    - The applicant DOES NOT need the assistance, refused the assistance due to the flood insurance requirement, obtained funds from another source; OR
    - The applicant is voluntarily returning the funds due to a recoupment action from a previous disaster.
  - Workpackets (WP) created by the FFC.
The FFC creates WPs in **FEMA Supervisor Review - Reissue** when the funds are returned by a financial institution or postal service. This may occur without the knowledge of the applicant.

WPs created by the FFC require eligibility review and a reissue decision.

There are three available options to return the funds depending on FEMA’s delivery method:

- Original, uncashed checks must be mailed to:
  
  DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
  ATTN: Treasury Check Return  
  P.O. BOX 51318  
  Philadelphia, PA 19115

- Funds received via EFT must be returned as a personal check, cashier’s check, or money order and mailed to:
  
  FEMA  
  PO BOX 6200-16  
  Portland, OR 97228-6200

- Checks returned via courier, i.e. UPS, DHL, FedEx must be mailed to:
  
  US BANK—Government Lockbox  
  Attn: DHS-FEMA – 6200-16  
  17650 NE Sandy Blvd.  
  Portland, OR 97230

Funds returned via personal check, cashier’s checks, or money order must include the following information:

- Disaster number;
- FEMA registration number;
- Applicant’s name; AND
- The reason for the return.

**Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**

- General PII includes names, email addresses, home addresses (both Current Mailing Address (CMA) and Damaged Dwelling Address (DDA)), phone numbers, and EFT routing numbers.
• General PII may be disclosed to applicants/co-applicants only after they have met the requirements to gain access to the file; and, when requested by the applicant/co-applicant; i.e. the applicant asks staff to confirm the CMA on file.

• Sensitive PII includes Social Security numbers (full or last 4), Driver License or State ID numbers, Passport ID numbers, Date of Birth, and EFT account numbers.

• Sensitive PII may never be disclosed to applicants/co-applicants, regardless if they met the requirements to gain access to the file. Staff may only update sensitive PII after the applicant/co-applicant has met the requirements to gain access to the file; and, the information is provided to staff by the applicant/co-applicant. Staff should never provide the outdated information to the applicant/co-applicant.

• The Training and Development Section has developed a guide that includes step-by-step instructions and reminders about navigating and using the tools in Web NEMIS. For additional information, refer to the Web NEMIS Appeals Reference Guide.
II. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing Return/Reissue of IHP awards.

STOP

Prior to Processing:

- For cases locked or under Program Management Section (PMS) or NCT review:
  - DO NOT process the WP if the file contains indications of being Under Review and/or locked from further processing.

- Before processing in FEMA Supervisor Review - Reissue, VERIFY that the returned funds are from a valid registration. CHECK for high risk and low risk stamps in the Registration Status screen and REVIEW any risk stamp identifiers. Refer to the Fraud Review SOP for additional information.

- If the registration is valid, CONTINUE the reissue of funds review following standard procedures. In some disasters, banking facilities may reject EFT awards issued to minor children and a reissue is required in the form of a check.
  - VERIFY the spelling of the applicant's name and PROCESS the reissue.

- Prior to reviewing or discussing returned payments and the reissue of funds, VERIFY the ONA Option selection.
  - FEMA staff are authorized to process and discuss ONA in FEMA Option disasters.
  - In Joint Option disasters, only the state, territorial or tribal government is authorized to process and discuss ONA eligibility. Refer to Section III.E: Joint Option Disaster Information.
- Helpline Staff should refer to the Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide for additional information.

For ONA questions in a Joint Option disaster, PROVIDE the applicant with the state, territorial, or tribal government ONA Helpline number listed on the NEMIS Disaster link.

**NOTE:** Designated staff from the Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) will complete all processing actions to Reissue funds. All other staff can continue to mail MCHK letters, update EFT information, or any other actions NOT related to issuing the funds back to the applicant in the Finance.

- Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Maximum (system limit only):
  - In an effort to minimize errors, the system will generate a popup if the total combined payment exceeds $100,000.
    - Total combined payments include (in any combination)
      - HA
      - ONA
      - American Disabilities Act (ADA) related line items
  - Temporary housing and ADA related line items are NOT counted toward the financial HA and ONA maximums, so in rare instances an applicant’s total award may exceed $100,000.
    - If this happens, PLACE the case on Hold – Program Review.

- The Program Management Section will have to authorize this payment.
III. PROCESS

A. Eligibility Verifications

To be eligible for the reissue of funds, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. Identity is verified (IDV_PASS). Refer to the Identity Verification SOP for additional information.

2. The applicant must continue to meet the eligibility criteria of the specific type of assistance, e.g., Home Repair Assistance, Dental Assistance, Medical Assistance, etc., before processing the reissue.

B. Information Request

Depending on the award delivery method, the following actions must take place before FEMA can initiate the Non-Receipt to notify the FFC.

1. Non-Receipt Requests for Treasury Checks:

   a. If it has been less than 14 business days from the Schedule Date (Schd Date) of the award:

   b. If it has been more than 14 business days from the Schd Date of the award:
c. If the applicant returned the Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter, but the funds have NOT been returned:

2. Non-Receipt Requests for Electronic Funds Transfer:

a. If it has been less than 48 hours since the Schd Date of the award:
b. If it has been more than 48 hours from the **Schd Date** of the award:

3. Courtesy Calls

a. Some situations can be resolved by performing a **courtesy call** to the applicant, e.g. confirming or updating CMA/EFT information.

b. If the call attempt is **SUCCESSFUL**:
Return/Reissue of IHP Financial Assistance
Effective Date: June 14, 2021

C. Processing Eligible Assistance

1. Reissue of Eligible Funds: Treasury Checks and EFT
2. Reissue Partial Payment

a. Following Section A.3, the applicant must continue to meet the eligibility criteria for the type of assistance under review and amount of assistance being reissued.

b. If the applicant remains eligible for a reissue of funds, but is NOT eligible for the full amount, a two-step process is required. This can be observed in cases where insurance is identified after the initial award was processed and a Duplication of Benefits is identified.

c. For this type of situation:

i. Step one, ADDRESS the reissue determination:

ii. Step two, COMPLETE a new eligibility determination:
3. Non Receipt Requests for Applicants Close to the Financial Housing Assistance (HA) Maximum or Other Needs Assistance (ONA) Maximum:

   a. If the funds were returned, refer to the Returned Funds section.

   b. If the funds have NOT returned and the Non-Receipt process causes the total payments to exceed the Financial HA or ONA Maximum, NEMS will NOT allow the Reissue status to be YES.

4. Reissue for Applicants Identified as Deceased:

   a. An estate of a deceased applicant is NOT eligible for IHP assistance. However, a surviving household member may receive assistance if they meet all IHP eligibility criteria.

   b. Treasury checks CANNOT be negotiated or reissued after the death of the applicant unless a surviving pre-disaster household member attempting to claim the funds has proper authority, such as a will for the damaged dwelling or was listed as the existing co-applicant in NEMS.

      i. If NO surviving household member is listed as the co-applicant, the check must be returned to FEMA.

      ii. DO NOT reissue funds when there are NO surviving pre-disaster household members listed as occupants. In these instances, the reissue CANNOT be completed because there is NO person occupying the dwelling that can be substituted in the registration as an eligible applicant.
c. If the surviving household member requests the reissue of the funds due to a disaster-caused unmet need, or requires assistance cashing a check:

5. Closed Disasters and Reissue of Funds:

a. Program Management Section (PMS) Systems Administration (SA) staff process reissue requests after the disaster financial assistance period has ended.

i. If the applicant is unable to cash the check:

ii. The Region is responsible for determining if the funds will be reissued.

6. Expired Treasury Checks:

a. SA staff processes all reissue requests of expired Treasury checks.
Return/Reissue of IHP Financial Assistance
Effective Date: June 14, 2021

7. FVL or award amount decrease based on subsequent inspection results.

   a. If the applicant remains eligible for assistance (verification requirements have been met) and a new or subsequent inspection identified a decrease in the HA or ONA award amount(s), **REISSUE** the original award(s) as long as there are **NO high risk/low risk stamp issues or gross errors.**

   b. A gross error is noted when the award is impossible to validate or against the program limits, e.g., the inspection award exceeded the number of items that can be awarded.

      i. Anytime the issue is one of interpretation, e.g. one inspector sees it as destroyed while one considers it repairable or the second inspector thought less of the roof was damaged than the first did, that would **NOT** be classified as a gross error.
ii. Gross error examples:

1. The initial inspection of record stated 1000 damaged windows and the FEMA Correction Inspection (FCOR) returned 10 damaged windows; OR

2. The initial inspection of record stated 20 damaged electrical panels and the FCOR returned 1 damaged electrical panel.

i. The recoupment team will determine if a gross error occurred and finalize the reissue process.

D. Processing Ineligible Decisions

1. Ineligible Reasons Include:

NOTE: DO NOT reissue if the applicant is NO longer eligible.

2. Returned Funds:
E. Joint-Option Disaster Information (ONA Only)

1. If processing a Joint Option Disaster:
   a. ONA categories are only processed by the state, territorial, or tribal government.
   b. FEMA staff is authorized to process Housing Assistance (HA) categories.

2. If incoming mail generates a WP to a FEMA processing queue:
ii. If an additional WP is NOT available in a state processing queue; AND

1. There are NO HA categories to address:

2. There are HA categories to address:

   c. CLICK Submit.

**F. Appeals**

Appeals for Returned and/or Reissue of Financial Assistance are processed using standard appeal procedures. Refer to the Appeal Processing SOP for more information.

**G. Exceptions**

There may be unique scenarios NOT specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, Disaster SOPs or other posted information:

   i. If after review by the IHP Helpdesk Specialist or Supervisor/POC it is determined additional clarification is required, the IHP Helpdesk Specialist or Supervisor/POC will:
IV. EXAMPLES AND FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. **What are high risk and low risk stamps?**
   
   a. (b)(7)(E)

   b. High risk and low risk stamps include:
      
      (b)(7)(E)

2. **How to add a Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter?**
   
   (b)(7)(E)
3. When is the Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter needed?

   a. For a check: If the applicant has NOT received a check, you may need to mail a Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter. To determine if the Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter is required.

   b. For an EFT: If the award was sent via EFT, the Schedule Number begins with NE. EFT payments DO NOT require a Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter. These awards usually show in the applicant's bank account within 48 hours after the Schedule Date.

4. What is the meaning of the Treasury Status letter codes in the Finance window in NEMIS?
V. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

**Business Day:** A business day is defined as any day of the week, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and federally recognized holidays.

**FEMA Verified Loss (FVL):** The total dollar amount of IHP eligible disaster-caused damage to real and personal property as verified by FEMA. The FVL represents the total potentially eligible damage, but due to insurance coverage, the financial Housing Assistance maximum, and other eligibility factors; an applicant may NOT ultimately receive assistance for their full FVL.

**Financial Housing Assistance Maximum:** Financial assistance for Home Repair Assistance and Home Replacement Assistance for owner-occupied homes is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI).

**Financial Other Needs Assistance Maximum:** Financial assistance for Other Needs Assistance, Personal Property Assistance, Transportation Assistance, Moving and Storage Assistance, Medical Assistance, Dental Assistance, Funeral Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and Miscellaneous Other Items is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor CPI.

**Minor children:** For the purpose of issuing IHP Assistance to a household on behalf of a minor child: an underage household member who lives in the affected residence with the parent(s) or legal guardian who also live at the affected address but did NOT apply for IHP assistance.

**Refuse to honor or cash a check:** The bank would NOT accept the Treasury check as issued by FEMA.

**Reissue:** The process of reviewing the file, confirming the applicant continues to be eligible for the returned assistance, and resending the eligible award.

**Rejected Funds:** The financial institution did NOT accept the EFT or wire transfer from FEMA.

**Returned funds:** Occurs when FEMA receives funds issued to an applicant because the award was undeliverable, the applicant requested a Request to Stop Payment and Reissue Disaster Assistance Check letter, or the funds were returned voluntarily.

**Surviving household member:** The surviving person(s) occupying the residence in which the applicant(s) registered for, and is the person requiring assistance with disaster-caused needs. An occupant that can be substituted on the application as an eligible applicant and meet the eligibility criterion.
Voluntarily returned: The applicant, co-applicant, or authorized representative willingly returned the IHP funds to FEMA or the US Treasury, without a programmatic obligation or request from FEMA.

**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBRS</td>
<td>Coastal Barrier Resource System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Disaster Recovery Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSA</td>
<td>Disaster Survivor Assistance Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFT</td>
<td>Electronic Funds Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCOR</td>
<td>FEMA Correction Inspection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFC</td>
<td>FEMA Finance Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDV</td>
<td>Identity Verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>Individual and Households Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONA</td>
<td>Other Needs Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Point of Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS</td>
<td>Program Management Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPU</td>
<td>Specialized Processing Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Workpacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Appeal Processing
  - Fraud Review
  - Identity Verification
  - Outbound Calls and Third Party Verifications

- Resources
  - Helpline NPSC Caller Services Reference Guide
  - Web NEMIS Appeals Reference Guide
## Special Handling Queries

***ALL processing employees must read this section***

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<th>I. Important Information</th>
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<td>IV. Related Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Links to Related Guidance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This section describes information that every employee must read before processing Special Handling Queries.

Purpose:

■ For cases locked or under Program Management Section (PMS) or NCT review:
  - DO NOT process the workpacket (WP) if the file contains indications of being Under Review and/or locked from further processing.
    - SEND an email for review to the IHP Helpdesk.
      - INCLUDE the following on the email:
        ▪ Subject Line: DR #, Reg #, and a subject that includes Under Review.
        ▪ Body: A description of the request and list of processing actions pending.

■ The following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidance on how to address and process Special Handling Queries.

■ VERIFY the Special Handling Query for each disaster prior to processing eligibility determinations. Special Handling Queries may result when:
  - Disaster Specific Operating Procedures (DSOP) are implemented for a specific disaster (DR); OR
  - The business rules in the National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS) flag an application and a manual review is required.
    - Cases with an active WP in the FEMA Special Handling queue may include an auto-generated determination.

Prior to Processing:

■ Sequence of Delivery
- Housing Assistance (HA)
  - Temporary Housing Assistance, if eligible; AND
  - Home Repair Assistance or Home Replacement Assistance.

- Other Needs Assistance (ONA)
  - Funeral Assistance, if there is a pending funeral review;
  - DO NOT hold/deduct funds when processing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) item awards.
  - DO NOT delay processing other eligible funds to await a funeral decision.
  - Personal Property Assistance; AND
  - All other categories, if funds are available under their respective maximum amount of assistance.

- Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Maximum (system limit only):
  - In an effort to minimize errors, the system will generate a popup if the total combined payment exceeds $100,000.
  - Total combined payments include (in any combination)
    - HA
    - ONA
    - ADA related line items
  - Temporary Housing and ADA related line items are NOT counted toward the financial HA and ONA maximums, so in rare instances an applicant’s total award may exceed $100,000.
ADA assistance reviews are only assigned to a limited group of Specialized Processing Unit (SPU) staff.

- DO NOT process ADA RP items unless specifically assigned.

- If a WP with RP ADA line items is identified outside of the FEMA Special Handling queue:
# II. PROCESS

## A. Processing Eligible Assistance

**PROCESS** Special Handling Queries following the instructions in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Handling Query</th>
<th>Review Reason</th>
<th>Guidance</th>
<th>Disaster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADA Items</td>
<td>Real and/or Personal Property ADA line items are recorded at the time of inspection.</td>
<td>D(7)(E)</td>
<td>All disasters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross DR</td>
<td>Cross DR(s) or consecutive DR(s).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Default – All DRs from 1786 forward with potential cross-DR duplication issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generator</td>
<td>Generators may be processed as Personal Property (PP) or Miscellaneous/Other Expense.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Default – All DRs from 1786 forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compliant</td>
<td>The damaged dwelling address (DDA) has a National Flood Insurance Reform Act (NFIRA) requirement.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Default – All DRs from 1786 forward with cause of damage (COD) = Flood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funeral</td>
<td>To allow for maximum funeral award.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Default – All DRs from 1859 forward with potential funeral awards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Four new Residence Types added to Registration Intake (RI):

1. College dormitory;
2. Assisted living facility;
3. Military housing; AND

NEMIS business rules are NOT set to auto-pay Rental Assistance when applicants register with one of these types of residence.

DRs 4029 and forward.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undesignated place (county)</th>
<th>Inspection changed DDA and/or ZIP Code to a different county.</th>
<th>All disasters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Effective Date:** September 15, 2021
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renters with Renters/Contents Only Insurance and COID other than flood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligible - Replacement Housing (ERPL) in a Sanctioned Community (SC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary residence Primary: No (Secondary) and inspection issued but NOT primary residence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effective Date: September 15, 2021
### Special Handling Queries

**Effective Date:** September 15, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE Error</th>
<th>Possible NOT primary residence</th>
<th>Default - All DRs from 4217 forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Rdnc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Special Handling Queries

Effective Date: September 15, 2021

Any query name variation including a CBRA identifier,

1. For example:
   a. CBRA Zone
   b. NC Street Names in CBRA
   c. Dare CBRA
   d. Onslow CBRA 1, 2, or 3
   e. Currituck CBRA 1, 2, 3, or 4

NOTE: Some cases may also include a CBRA type stamp or Reg. Status code variation, such as CBRA_RVV.

CBRA

Applicants who may be in a CBRA Zone but the case was NOT flood mapped before returning from inspection.

Disasters with identified CBRA zones, i.e., 4286 SC, 4393 NC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>45 day Registration, HA Max, or FVL Greater than $10K.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Applicants who completed a registration 45 days after the declaration date and through a Remote Inspection have been determined to have Real Property FVL of $10,000 or more; OR
- Applicants who received the HA Max or a real property FVL of $10,000 or more as a result of the initial inspection, regardless of the date of their registration.

Default - All DRs from 4557 forward except DR-4558, DR-4562, DR-4569
When a Real Property (RP) on-site inspection occurs, vehicle damage may be observed and recorded as Destroyed. For these cases, an auto-generated determination cannot occur because salvage documentation must be submitted. For all disasters declared AFTER DR-4695-WV.
Cross-Disaster Occupancy Verification

For DR-4609-TN and forward.

Effective Date: September 15, 2021
Special Handling Queries
Effective Date: September 15, 2021

Duplicate Payments

5(7)(E)

DR-4611-LA
B. Exceptions

There may be unique scenarios NOT specifically identified within this SOP that may require additional assistance.

1. If unable to determine eligibility using available SOPs, DSOPs, or other posted information:

| B(P)(E) |
III. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Definitions

Assisted Living Facility: An assisted living facility is a housing facility for people with disabilities or for adults who can NOT or who choose NOT to live independently. Assisted living facilities, which may include skilled-nursing units, offer a residential setting that provides personal care services, 24-hour supervision, health-related services, and generally have skilled medical staff on duty at all times. **NOTE:** Independent living communities are NOT classified as assisted living facilities or skilled-nursing units. Independent living communities are designed for people, 55 and older, who need little or no assistance with activities of daily living. Although these types of residences may have dedicated medical alert buttons located within the unit, they DO NOT offer 24-hour supervision or health-related services; and, DO NOT have medical staff on duty.

Financial Housing Assistance Maximum: Financial assistance for Home Repair Assistance and Home Replacement Assistance for owner-occupied homes is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI).

Financial Other Needs Assistance Maximum: Financial assistance for Other Needs Assistance Personal Property, Transportation, Moving and Storage, Medical and Dental, Funeral, Child Care, and Miscellaneous Items is limited to a maximum award amount, adjusted each fiscal year based on the Department of Labor CPI.

Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COD</td>
<td>Cause of Damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>Damaged Dwelling Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR</td>
<td>Disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSOP</td>
<td>Disaster-Specific Operating Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERPL</td>
<td>Eligible Replacement Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMR</td>
<td>Fair Market Rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>Individuals and Households Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INPR</td>
<td>Ineligible Not Primary Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INR</td>
<td>Ineligible No Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEMIS</td>
<td>National Emergency Management Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFIRA</td>
<td>National Flood Insurance Reform Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONREG</td>
<td>Non-Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONA</td>
<td>Other Needs Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PND</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Point of Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Personal Property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>Registration Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Workpacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. RELATED GUIDANCE

Please refer to the following:

- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Cross Disaster Processing
  - Financial HA and ONA Maximum and Minimum Awards
  - Flood Zones and Other Protected Areas
  - Funeral Assistance
  - Generator
  - Home Repair Assistance
  - Home Replacement Assistance
    - Insurance Processing for HA and Personal Property
    - Military Personnel and Military Civilian Employees
  - Moving and Storage
    - Personal Property Assistance
    - SBA Referrals
    - Students in College Dormitories
- Resources
  - Disaster Specific Information