



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
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**OMB ISSUES GUIDANCE TO SPEED DELIVERY OF BENEFITS TO HURRICANE  
VICTIMS AND PREVENT IMPROPER PAYMENTS**

Building on the President's pledge to streamline the process for registering for hurricane relief and the Administration's efforts to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) today issued guidance to federal agencies to eliminate bureaucratic barriers to the quick distribution of benefits to qualified individuals in need, while taking the necessary steps to verify eligibility for such benefits.

"We are delivering on the President's pledge to help hurricane victims quickly and seamlessly register for relief," OMB Deputy Director for Management Clay Johnson III said. "These common-sense measures, many of which are already in place, ensure that people who have lost everything won't wait for bureaucracy. The reforms ensure victims will receive relief in a cost-effective manner that prevents fraud and abuse. Taxpayers should expect their money to be spent wisely and only on real needs."

The new guidance is the result of information on best practices agencies are employing to streamline benefit delivery and apply compensating controls.

The guidance reminds Federal agencies to assist individuals in re-acquiring personal documents and speed the delivery of needed assistance by waiving traditional enrollment criteria that require such documents, since many evacuees' personal belongings were destroyed or are unavailable. Federal agencies must also give hurricane victims the opportunity to avoid filling out multiple and duplicative applications for different agencies' benefit programs by allowing victims to authorize the sharing of personal information among agencies.

To ensure that the new benefit procedures do not lead to waste, fraud, or abuse, the guidance instructs Federal agencies to sunset the procedures and step-up post-payment verification procedures. To compensate for front-end controls that have been limited or waived, federal agencies will increase post-payment audits, offset the amount of future payments where overpayments have been identified, and increase the number of post-payment auditors.

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