



Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell

Representing Alabama's Seventh Congressional District

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): How to Receive Disaster Assistance?

Q: Who should I contact if I am in need of shelter, food or water?

A: Please contact the following organizations for food, water, and shelter:

- The Red Cross
1-800-REDCROSS(733-2767)
- Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives
(334) 954-7440
Toll Free
(877) 273-5018
- Boutwell Auditorium
1931 8th Ave. North
Birmingham, AL 35203
- The Salvation Army
2130 11th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35234
(205) 328-5656
www.salvationarmyalm.org
- Gloryland Baptist Church
1829 Circlewood Drive
Birmingham, AL 35214
Contact: Charlie Andrews
(205) 791-0312
- Garywood Assembly of God (Food only)
2730 Allison Bonnett Memorial
Bessemer, AL 35023
- Tastee Kitchen (Food only)

1324 Pinson Valley Pkwy
Tarrant, AL 35217
Contact Chef EL
(205) 841-2223 or (205)370-3434

- The Salvation Army
2902 Greensboro Avenue
Tuscaloosa, AL 3543
(205) 758-2804
www.salvationarmyalm.org
- Temporary Emergency Services (food and water only)
1705 – 15th Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
(205) 758-5535
- Tuscaloosa Area Shelter
Belk Activity Center
2101 Bowers Park Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35403
(205) 562 3200
- Veterans and VA Employees
Veterans call-(800) 507-4571
VA Employees call-(866) 233-0152
- Dial 211 for emergency assistance. Phone lines have been activated by the Alabama Emergency Management system. Please utilize this system for immediate services and follow instructions as prompted by the operator.

Q: I am currently without power, how do I report this outage? When should I expect my power to be restored?

A:

- Alabama Power Company is working to restore outages as quickly as possible. Their crews have been working day and night. Restoration estimates cannot be made until a full inspection and evaluation of the damage is complete. In order to report power outages please contact:
- Alabama Power
To report a power outage
1-800-888-2726
For Residential Customer Service

1-800-245-2244
For Commercial Customer Service
1-888-430-5787

Q: How do I report a gas leakage?

A: Please contact the following company to report a gas leakage:

- Algasco
1-800-292-4008

Q: I have not heard from a family member, how can I locate them?

A: In order to locate a family member, you should:

- Call the American Red Cross at 1-800-REDCROSS(733-2767)
- Visit www.safeandwell.communityos.org. The American Red Cross allows for concerned family and friends to search the list of those who have registered themselves as “safe and well” by clicking on the “Search Registrants” button. The results of a successful search will display a loved one’s first name, last name and a brief message.
- Visit <http://www.saturn.org/>. This site is operated by the Salvation Army.
- Verizon Wireless has mobile cell phone service centers in Tuscaloosa and the Birmingham area for residents to contact friends and loved ones.
 - In the Birmingham area they are located:
 - The Pleasant Grove Athletics Complex, 959 Fourth St., Pleasant Grove, and Hill's Foodland Grocery, 851 Park Road, Pleasant Grove. Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sunday, noon-6 p.m.
 - In the Tuscaloosa area they are located:
 - In the parking lot of the Verizon retail store in Tuscaloosa at 2340 Mcfarland Blvd. E. Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sunday, noon-6 p.m.

Q: Where can I get my medication if the pharmacy is closed?

A:

- Please dial 211 for immediate assistance with receiving prescription medication. These phone lines have been activated by the Alabama Emergency Management system.

Q: I am disabled and physically unable to leave home. I need medical attention, who should I contact?

A:

- Please dial 211 or 911 for immediate assistance with receiving medical attention. The 211 phone lines have been activated by the Alabama Emergency Management system.

Q: Do I qualify for the FEMA Public Assistance Grant Program?

A:

- Through the Public Assistance (PA) Program, FEMA provides supplemental Federal disaster grant assistance to public entities for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain Private Non-Profit (PNP) organizations
- As soon as practicable after the declaration of disaster, the State of Alabama, assisted by FEMA, conducts the Applicant Briefings for State, local and PNP officials to inform them about the assistance available and how to apply for it.
- A request for Public Assistance must be filed with the State within 30 days after the area is designated eligible for assistance. Following the Applicant's Briefing, a Kickoff Meeting is conducted where damages will be discussed, needs assessed, and a plan of action put in place. A combined Federal/State/local team proceeds with Project Formulation, which is the process of documenting the eligible facility, the eligible work, and the eligible cost for fixing the damages to every public or PNP facility identified by State or local representatives. The team prepares a Project Worksheet (PW) for each project.
- FEMA reviews and approves the PWs and obligates the Federal share of the costs (which cannot be less than 75 percent) to the State. The State then disburses funds to local applicants.
- For small projects totaling \$63,900 and below, payment of the Federal share of the estimate is once the project is approved, and no further accounting to FEMA is required.

- For large projects totaling above \$63,900, payment is made on the basis of actual costs determined after the project is completed, although interim payments may be made as necessary.
- For additional information please contact- (202) 646-3057

Q: I DO NOT have insurance and my home and other personal property has been destroyed. How do I apply for disaster relief?

A:

- If you live in a disaster area declared by the President and need disaster assistance, you may register by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) (hearing/speech impaired ONLY-Call TTY: 1-800-462-7585) or apply online at <http://www.fema.gov/assistance/> and the screens will prompt you through the process. If you get a busy signal when you call the toll-free number try calling in the evening after 10:00 p.m. or on the weekends when fewer people are trying to call.
- When you apply you should have a pen and paper available to write down important phone contacts. You will need your social security number, current and pre-disaster address, phone numbers, type of insurance coverage, total household annual income, and a routing and account number from your bank if you want to have disaster assistance funds transferred directly into your bank account. If you do not have your bank routing number you can find it on: <http://www.fedwiredirectory.frb.org/search.cfm>
- If you live in a disaster area the 211 phone lines have been activated by the Alabama Emergency Management system. Please utilize this system for immediate services and the follow instructions as prompted by the operator.
- Please call 1-800-REDCROSS (733-2767)

Q: I DO have insurance and my home and other property has been destroyed. How do I file a claim?

A:

- If you are an Allstate policyholder you can start the claims process by calling 1-800-547-8676, visiting your local agent or the nearest Mobile Claims Center.

- If you are a State Farm policyholder you can start the claims process by calling 1-800-732-5246 or visiting your local agent.
- If you are an ALFA policyholder you can start the claims process by calling 1-800-964-2532 or visiting your local agent.
- If you are a Farmer's Insurance policyholder you can start the claims process by calling 1-800-435-7764 or visiting your local agent.
- If you are a policyholder with another insurance company please be sure to contact your local agent or claims officer.

Q: How long does it take to get help from FEMA?

A:

- If you have damage to your home or its contents and you are uninsured, a FEMA inspector will contact you within 14 days of applying to set up an appointment to assess the damage to your property. Typically, within about 10 days after the inspection if FEMA determines that you qualify for help, you will receive a direct deposit in your bank account or a check in the mail.
- In areas where there is limited access to properties for inspectors to inspect your home, it may take longer for an inspection. However, FEMA has implemented an expedited assistance process, providing households with \$2000 in assistance prior to a completed inspection.
- Please call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) for any additional information.

Q: What happens after I apply for disaster assistance?

A:

- FEMA will mail you a copy of your application and a copy of "Help After a Disaster: Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program" that will answer many of your questions.
- If your home or its contents are damaged and you do not have insurance an inspector should contact you within 10 to 14 days after you apply to schedule a time to meet you at your damaged home. In areas where access is still severely limited, it may take longer for an inspection.
- If your home or its contents were damaged, and you have insurance you need to work through your insurance claim first and provide FEMA with a decision letter (settlement or denial) from your insurance company before FEMA issues an inspection.
- About 10 days after the inspection, FEMA will decide if you qualify for assistance. If you qualify for a grant, FEMA will send you a check by mail or deposit it in your bank account. FEMA will also send you a letter describing how

you are to use the money (for example: repairs to your home or to rent another house while you make repairs).

- If FEMA decides that you do not qualify for a grant, FEMA will send you a letter explaining why you were turned down and give you an opportunity to appeal the decision. Appeals must be in writing and mailed within 60 days of FEMA's decision.

Q: I would like to meet with someone in-person and receive more explanation about the disaster assistance programs available. Is there a Disaster Recovery center near me?

A:

- Six disaster recovery centers have opened in four Alabama counties to help those whose homes or businesses were affected by recent storms and tornadoes. The centers will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week until further notice. Representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Alabama Emergency Management Agency and other agencies will be at the centers to explain assistance programs and help survivors apply for disaster aid.
- The disaster recovery centers are located at the following addresses:
 - DeKalb County
Tom Bevell Center
115 Main St. W
Rainsville, Ala.
 - Jefferson County
Union Hill Baptist Church
7049 Taylors Ferry Road
Bessemer, Ala.
 - National Guard Armory
140 Cane Creek Road
Warrior, Ala.
 - Old Ashley Furniture Store
3429 Lowery Parkway
Fultondale, Ala.
 - Marengo County
National Guard Armory

2599 East Coats Ave.
Linden, Ala.

- Walker County
Cordova High School
183 School Road
Cordova, Ala.

Q: My farm or ranch has been damaged. Can FEMA help me?

A:

- If you sustained damages to your home or personal property, you should apply with FEMA for assistance. If you sustained damages to your crops, livestock, farm equipment, barns, dairy, etc., you should contact our local Farm Services Agency office at (334) 279-3500 to inquire about the USDA's disaster assistance program or visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Q: My place of employment was destroyed by the disaster and now I am unemployed and have no way to pay my bills. How do I receive help to pay for my utility bills?

A:

- Unfortunately, FEMA cannot pay utility bills. However, local charitable organizations may be able to help for a short period. We suggest you contact the Red Cross (1-800-733-2767) or your local United Way office (205-251-5131) for a referral to a local agency that may be able to help.
- Contact your employer for additional guidance
- You may also be eligible for disaster unemployment insurance. Anyone who has lost their job because of the disasters is urged to apply. The first step is to file for regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) at www.dir.alabama.gov or by calling 1-866-234-5382. If it is determined that a worker or self-employed individual is not eligible for Unemployment Insurance, the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program may pay benefits to those whose work has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of a disaster.

Q: I have insurance and plan on filing a claim with my insurance agent, but I don't have a place to live. Is there any help for me?

A:

- Yes, please contact local chapters of the American Red Cross (1800-REDCROSS) and other local governmental or voluntary organizations. These organizations regularly use hotel or motel rooms to temporarily shelter the victims of emergencies. These short-term stays provide time for the arrangement of more appropriate housing venues.

Q: My business was completely destroyed in the disaster, where do I go to find funds to begin to rebuild?

A:

- The Small Business Administration (SBA) provides low interest disaster loans to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations to repair or replace real estate, personal property, machinery & equipment, inventory and business assets that have been damaged or destroyed in a declared disaster
- Please contact the Small Business Administration at 1-800-659-2955 or for the hearing-impaired 1-800-877-8339

Q: How can I volunteer or contribute to the disaster relief efforts?

A: Please contact:

- 1-800-REDCROSS(733-2767)
- Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives
(334) 954-7440
Toll Free
(877) 273-5018
- The Salvation Army
2130 11th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35234
(205) 328-5656
www.salvationarmyalm.org
- Tuscaloosa Area Volunteer Contact
 - Mary Green (St. Matthias Episcopal Church) (205) 561-4169
- Temporary Emergency Services
1705 – 15th Street

Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
(205) 758-5535

- Tuscaloosa Area Shelter
Belk Activity Center
2101 Bowers Park Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35403
(205) 562 3200
- The Salvation Army
2902 Greensboro Avenue
Tuscaloosa, AL 3543
(205) 758-2804
www.salvationarmym.org

Q: I have additional questions that are not listed here. How do I get in contact with your office?

A:

- Please contact my Birmingham, AL office at (205) 254-1960