



FEMA

November 21, 2018
DR-4407-CA FS 002
Cal OES News Desk: (916) 800-3943
FEMA News Desk: (916) 718-8540

Fact Sheet

Housing Options

Government and non-profit recovery organizations are working diligently to assist individuals and families impacted by the recent wildfires have a safe place to stay while they wait to return to evacuated areas or begin their recovery if their home was burned.

Housing solutions may be grouped into emergency, intermediate and long-term options, and will vary by community and household. Experience shows that over time, most survivors will find a solution that works for them, and sometimes that means relocating temporarily or accepting longer commuting distances to work and school while communities begin rebuilding after disasters.

Redevelopment also takes time. Some of California's fire-affected communities face safety and access limitations. Before a broader clean-up effort can begin, local, state and federal agencies will implement a thorough removal of household hazardous waste that will be followed by organized removal of fire debris.

During the weeks and months of clean-up, survivors will assess their long-term housing options and available financial resources. Through this process, the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with state and federal partners will work closely with local authorities, non-profit organizations, businesses and survivors.

What Survivors Can Do Now: Contact Your Insurance Company and Apply for Disaster Assistance

- Survivors who have insurance should contact their insurance company and then register with FEMA.
 - FEMA cannot duplicate insurance or other benefits. However, FEMA may be able to help survivors with **uninsured** or **underinsured** losses or if their insurance settlement is delayed. Applicants should notify FEMA of their situation and provide insurance company documentation.
- Survivors in the following California counties: **Butte, Los Angeles, and Ventura**, who were affected by the recent wildfires are encouraged to register for disaster assistance with FEMA if they haven't already. Once registered, households may qualify for assistance through the joint federal/state Individuals and Households Program (IHP) and State Supplemental Grant Programs.

- Survivors can apply online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.DisasterAssistance.gov) or by phone at **(800) 621-3362 or (TTY) (800) 462-7585**. Applicants who use 711 or Video Relay Service may call (800) 621-3362. The toll-free numbers are open **7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week**.
- To be considered for assistance, at least one person in the household must be a U.S. citizen or by legal definition a qualified alien or non-citizen national with a Social Security number. This may include a child.
- The California State Supplemental Grant Program may assist with any eligible items not already addressed by the IHP.

Emergency Shelter

- If survivors have need of emergency shelter, there are a number of open, safe shelters with spaces available in Northern and Southern California. Wildfire survivors can find a shelter by contacting 1-800-REDCROSS or use the Red Cross Shelter Finder app, which populates the location of open shelters in all states. You can also text ‘SHELTER’ and a Zip Code to 43362 (4FEMA).

Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA)

- Transitional Sheltering Assistance is available for survivors in **Butte County**.
- TSA provides short-term lodging assistance for evacuees who are not able to return home for an extended or indeterminate period following a disaster because their communities are either uninhabitable or inaccessible due to disaster-related damages.
- Applicants who have been notified as being eligible for TSA may stay in an approved hotel or motel for a limited period of time and have the cost of the room and lodging taxes covered by FEMA.
 - For those who are eligible, FEMA will authorize and fund, through direct payments to participating hotels/ motels, the use of hotels/motels as transitional shelters. The applicant is responsible for all other costs associated with lodging and amenities, including, but not limited to incidental room charges or amenities, such as telephone, room service, food, etc.
- Participating hotels/motels are listed at femaevachotels.com. Survivors authorized to use TSA should contact establishments to check on room availability.

Critical Needs Assistance

- Critical Needs Assistance (CNA) is available for Survivors in **Butte County** in the fixed amount of \$500 in accelerated disaster assistance.
- CNA is provided to eligible individuals and households that may be used for life-savings and/or life-sustaining items such as, but not limited to, water, food, first aid, prescriptions, infant formula, diapers, personal hygiene items, and fuel for transportation.

Rental Assistance

- Expedited Rental Assistance may be available for uninsured survivors in **Butte, Los Angeles and Ventura Counties**. Survivors in those counties who are unable to return to their home or have destroyed homes can receive up to one month's rental assistance at the fair market rate.
- FEMA assistance may be available for eligible applicants in the form of grants to help pay for temporary housing, such as renting a place to live temporarily, as well as home repair or replacement. This may include renting an apartment, house, travel trailer or staying at a hotel, bed and breakfast or Airbnb.
- Uninsured lodging expenses may be eligible for reimbursement under the Individuals and Households Program. Displaced survivors who were already staying in hotels are encouraged to register with FEMA and submit their lodging receipts to FEMA. Receipts may be uploaded at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov). Survivors who registered and did not submit receipts may contact FEMA for guidance in submitting documentation.

Low-Interest Disaster Loans

- Additionally, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) offers low-interest disaster loans to businesses of all sizes, homeowners, renters and most nonprofit organizations.
- Homeowners and renters should apply to the SBA, even if they are not sure they will need or want a loan. If applicants are referred to the SBA, failure to complete and return a loan application may stall their federal disaster assistance application. If not approved for an SBA loan, individuals and households may be referred back to FEMA for possible additional grants.

Direct Housing

- FEMA, Cal OES and partner agencies have formed a State-lead Joint Housing Task Force to review all available housing options for temporary/short-term and permanent/long-term housing needs of those affected by the wildfires.
- These may include: direct leasing of available apartments and condominiums that are not generally available to survivors; the placement of manufactured homes and recreational vehicles in existing commercial parks; the placement of manufactured homes and recreational vehicles on private property where codes, conditions and support infrastructure are available.
- The housing task force represents a broad range of agencies and partnerships that also welcome possible innovative housing solutions for the California wildfire recovery.

Summary

- We recognize there may be challenges with existing resources for immediate and long-term housing and are working diligently to identify additional interim and long-term housing options.

- If survivors have questions about their application with FEMA, they may contact FEMA at (800) 621-3362 or visit a disaster recovery center to speak to someone in person.
- Please visit [WildfireRecovery.org](https://www.wildfirerecovery.org) to find a comprehensive list of disaster programs, resources and information.

###

All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585(TTY/TDD).

FEMA's mission: Helping people before, during, and after disasters.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling 800-659-2955, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's website at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster) Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call 800-877-8339.