

# Recovery Update: Alaska West Coast Storm

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## Key Messages

- Survivors in the **Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAs) of Bering Strait, Kashunamiut, Lower Kuskokwim, and Lower Yukon** affected by the severe storm, flooding and landslides that occurred Sept. 15-20 can apply for State of Alaska and FEMA disaster assistance.
- With the onset of winter and unpredictable flying weather, FEMA Housing Inspectors will no longer be traveling to communities to conduct inspections in person. As a result, **housing inspections are fully transitioning to a remote model**, where they are done over the phone.
  - This method has already been in use to support communities with few registrations or to do follow-up with communities that have already been visited. These housing inspectors have significant knowledge of the damage, the communities, and any disaster specific assistance that is being provided on this event.
- FEMA has established an Alaska-specific disaster hotline staffed in Anchorage. Survivors are encouraged to call: **1-866-342-1699**
  - The hotline is available Monday through Saturday, **9 AM – 6 PM AKDT** and is closed on Sunday.
  - TTY users dial 711 or, TTY users with an out-of-state area code, dial **800-770-8973** for Alaska relay service.
  - Applications can also be submitted at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or via the FEMA mobile app.
- Total number of FEMA registrations (as of Oct. 26): **852**
  - Total amount **disbursed: \$3,805,311**
  - Housing: **\$1,290,225**
  - Other Needs: **\$2,515,085**
- The state of Alaska also provides an Individual Assistance program to those affected by disaster. FEMA is coordinating closely with state officials to make sure survivors applying for state programs for Individual Assistance are referred to FEMA's application process.
- Survivors can apply for disaster assistance from the State of Alaska by:



# FEMA

- Calling **1-844-445-7131**
- Or going online at [ready.alaska.gov/IA](https://ready.alaska.gov/IA).
- **Survivors should apply for both state and federal disaster assistance programs.** Applicants that do not apply for both programs may be ineligible for one or both disaster assistance programs.
- If your subsistence gear or equipment was damaged due to the September storms, make sure to apply to both the State of Alaska and FEMA's disaster assistance programs to see if you are eligible. If you are eligible, FEMA may be able to cover damaged personal property and subsistence equipment, while the state may pay for damaged structures, such as fish camps. **Even if you cannot travel to your property to document damage, you should still apply as you may be eligible for assistance.** For help, contact FEMA's disaster assistance hotline at **1-866-342-1699** or contact the State of Alaska's hotline at **1-844-445-7131**.

## Types of Disaster Assistance Available

- **Both FEMA and the State have Individual Assistance programs** that may provide assistance for housing repairs and replacement of personal property, which includes damaged furniture and appliances.
  - Survivors may receive funding for damaged subsistence items, such as fishing equipment, ATVs, boats, outboard motors, smoke houses and snow mobiles.
  - **State assistance may cover damage that FEMA cannot.** For example, FEMA may provide funding for the damaged contents of fish camps but cannot provide grants for the damaged or destroyed camp structures. However, the State may provide grants to repair or replace fish camp structures.
- **FEMA has approved Critical Needs Assistance for survivors.** Critical Needs Assistance includes a one-time \$700 payment per eligible household for lifesaving and life-sustaining items, which can include water, food, first aid, prescriptions, infant formula, diapers, consumable medical supplies, durable medical equipment, personal hygiene items and fuel for transportation.
- **FEMA is including a shipping supplement of \$1300 in the housing grant** to help cover the additional cost of transporting repair materials and supplies for eligible survivors.
  - **Applicants should keep track of their shipping receipts.** If they have shipping expenses for repair materials over \$1,300, they are encouraged to submit those receipts to FEMA for potential reimbursement.
  - If you have already applied and received home repair assistance from FEMA that did not include this additional amount, you will get this supplement as a separate payment. Survivors who have questions about their eligibility for the additional shipping cost can call the FEMA hotline.
- Accepting a FEMA grant will not affect Social Security benefits, Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or other federal programs.
- **Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)** is a state managed, federally funded program that provides up to 26 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals who have lost work as a direct result of a major natural disaster.

- Applicants must first apply for regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits by calling **(888) 252-2557** or **(907) 269-4700**, 10 AM to 3 PM (AKDT) Monday through Friday. Applications for DUA must be submitted no later than **November 2, 2022**.
- **Free Disaster Legal Services (DLS) Hotline is available for low-income disaster survivors who can't afford legal help.** Call **1-(888) 478-2572** Monday through Friday from 9:00AM to 5:00 PM (AKDT) for legal assistance with disability issues, landlord/tenant questions, replacement of legal documents, the FEMA appeal process and other disaster-related legal matters.

## Preparing for Winter

- FEMA and the State of Alaska have established a **Mass Care Task Force** to respond to the needs of the communities for food, water, shelter and other critical resources through the winter. Efforts include:
  - Coordination of multi-agency operations for movement of emergency repair supplies to allow survivors to shelter in place in the winter.
  - Coordinating with other government agencies and voluntary organizations to provide funding, services, and manpower to support winterization and sustainment efforts.
- Communities in need of mass care, shelter, or feeding assistance should contact their local Emergency Operations Center.

## Application Process

- When applying with FEMA, survivors should be prepared to provide information on income, homeowner or renters insurance (if applicable), and report information on damage to the affected residence.
- To be eligible for FEMA financial housing assistance, **applicants must include proof of occupancy**, such as a lease or rental statement, a bank statement or pay stub, utility bill or an official letter from a Tribal Community leader.
- **Survivors without a physical street address** may have challenges applying via the FEMA online application. These survivors are advised to apply by calling FEMA's Alaska disaster assistance hotline **(1-866-342-1699)**.
- **If applicants lose their internet connection in the middle of applying online**, they should call the FEMA Alaska hotline to complete the application. If applying online with the State of Alaska, their incomplete application will automatically be sent to Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) caseworkers who will follow-up to complete the application.

## U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

- Residents who applied for disaster assistance from FEMA may be referred to SBA to apply for a low-interest disaster loan. Long-term, low-interest disaster loans for businesses, nonprofits, homeowners and renters may be available to cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other sources. You are not required to take out a loan, but failure to fill out the application may prevent you from receiving certain types of FEMA funding.

- Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for more information on SBA disaster assistance. For people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

## Public Assistance

- On September 23, 2022, Public Assistance funding was approved in Alaska for emergency protective measures under the Public Assistance program for REAAs Bering Strait, Kashunamiut, Lower Kuskokwim and Lower Yukon.
- PA's Emergency protective measures include efforts that save lives or protect public health or safety, such as overtime for first responders and temporary repair of roads, bridges and other infrastructure.
- FEMA will reimburse **100 percent** of the cost for emergency protective measures for the first 30 days from the first date of the incident period, starting Sept. 15.

## Accessibility

- FEMA is committed to providing equal access to our programs and services without discrimination. If you require a reasonable accommodation, call or text **907-727-6221** or email [FEMA-language-access-request@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-language-access-request@fema.dhs.gov). You can also let staff in the field know you require an accommodation such as spoken language resources, mobility assistance, or sign language interpreting services. If you feel you have experienced discrimination, call the FEMA Civil Rights Resource line at **833-285-7448** or **800-462-7585** (TTY/TDD) or email [FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov).