



FEMA

# BEWARE FEMA HOUSING RESIDENTS FRAUDSTER ARE ON THE PROWL



If someone claiming to be from FEMA asks you to pay rent money for your housing unit, they may be trying to steal from you.

Hurricane Ida survivors do not currently have to pay rent to live in their temporary housing unit. Do not hand over cash or give your financial information over the phone.

If someone asks you to pay rent for your housing unit, call your case manager or the FEMA hotline at 800-621-3362.

### **How long does FEMA direct housing assistance last?**

Direct housing assistance is available to eligible survivors for up to 18 months from the date of the disaster declaration. The 18-month eligibility period is only determined by the date of the disaster declaration (Aug. 29, 2021), not when the applicant moves into the unit.

### **Why 18 months? Can it be extended? For how long?**

The 18-month period is determined by law. The affected state can request that FEMA extend the direct housing mission based on need.

### **Do survivors living in FEMA direct housing have to pay rent?**

No, not during the 18-month period following the disaster declaration. If the program is extended beyond the initial 18 months, FEMA is legally required to charge occupants rent. The rent is based on Housing and Urban Development's (HUDs) Fair Market Rate for the local area. However, FEMA works with low-income survivors to reduce their rent whenever possible.

### **Wait, didn't you just say that direct housing residents don't have to pay rent?**

FEMA is not charging rent to Hurricane Ida survivors at this time. However, FEMA has begun charging rent to the survivors of hurricanes Laura and Delta, because their temporary housing has been extended beyond the initial 18 month period.

### **I got a letter from FEMA saying I have to pay for my housing unit. Does this mean I'm now paying rent?**

In some cases, survivors living in a FEMA temporary housing unit who receive Additional Living Expense (ALE) payments from their insurance companies may receive a letter from FEMA asking them to pay the value of their ALE. This is because ALE payments are considered a duplication of benefits for survivors housed in a FEMA unit. If you have any questions as to the validity of the letter, call your case manager.

### **If I do have to pay rent to FEMA, how do I know if it's for real?**

When FEMA charges rent for a unit, payment will be made electronically or by mail. FEMA caseworkers will not ask for money.