



## DISASTER RECOVERY SERIES

# TIMELY INFORMATION

## Foreign Nationals

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### **TALKING POINTS: Disaster Benefits Available to Foreign Nationals and Undocumented Aliens**

- All individuals, regardless of citizenship status, that have been impacted by a major disaster are eligible for short-term, non-cash, in-kind emergency disaster relief programs. These include search and rescue, medical care, shelter, food and water. All impacted individuals are also eligible for Disaster Legal Services and Crisis Counseling.
- U.S. citizens; non-citizen nationals; and qualified Aliens impacted by a major disaster are eligible to receive individuals and households assistance under Section 408 of the Stafford Act. This assistance may include funds to help with the repair or replacement of a home, clothing, and other essential needs. Eligible applicants are also eligible to receive expedited assistance, including assistance in the form of debit cards.
- A “qualified alien” generally includes persons in possession of an alien registration receipt card, anyone with legal permanent residence, or those with legal status due to asylum, refugee, admission into the U.S. for humanitarian purposes, withholding of deportation or domestic violence.
- Persons lawfully present in the United States that are not eligible to receive benefits under Section 408 include, but are not limited to, those with temporary tourist visas, student visas, work visas and temporary resident cards (INS Form I-688).
- Only a single member of a household needs to be eligible to qualify that household for assistance under FEMA’s Individuals and Households Assistance Program. A minor child may be eligible when the other members of the household are not; an ineligible parent or guardian may complete an application on behalf of an eligible child applicant. A household of individuals with mixed immigration status may be eligible for FEMA disaster assistance.
- FEMA does not collect information on the immigration status of other household members.
- There has been no change in the law or FEMA’s policy regarding the delivery of services to individuals. The same policies and procedures have been in place since Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996, including the response and recovery efforts in Florida during the 2004 Hurricane Season.

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