

Disaster Survivors Fairness Act of 2022

Section-by-Section

Section 1. Short title; table of contents.

The Act may be cited as the Disaster Survivors Fairness Act of 2022.

Section 2. Information Sharing for Federal Agencies.

This section directs the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to establish and maintain a web-based, interagency electronic information system titled DisasterAssistance.gov. Authorizing interagency information sharing is necessary for FEMA to develop the universal application authorized in Section 3 of this Act. This section also amends the *Stafford Act* by adding Section 707, which streamlines information sharing authorities by exempting data sharing between disaster relief agencies from requirements established by the *Privacy Act of 1974* and the *Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980*.

Section 3. Universal Application for Individual Assistance.

This section directs the Administrator of FEMA to develop a universal application for federal disaster assistance for individuals in areas impacted by emergencies or major disasters.

Section 4. Repair and Rebuilding.

This section amends Section 408(b)(1) of the *Stafford Act* by removing the requirement that households must be rendered uninhabitable by a major disaster to be eligible for hazard mitigation assistance. Section 408 is amended by making households that have been damaged by a major disaster eligible for hazard mitigation assistance.

Section 5. Direct Assistance.

This section amends Section 408(c)(2) of the *Stafford Act* by authorizing the President to provide direct assistance to individuals and households if applicants are unable to make use of financial assistance for repairs and when there is a lack of available resources for the repair of owner-occupied residences. Direct assistance may be used to repair owner occupied residences damaged by a major disaster and/or rendered inaccessible for individuals with disabilities, and to carry-out eligible hazard mitigation measures that reduce the likelihood of future damage.

Section 6. State-Managed Housing Pilot Authority.

This section gives the Administrator of FEMA the authority to implement the State-Managed Housing Pilot Authority until the issuance of final regulations. This program, created by the *Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018*, sunset in 2020. This section revives the program, removes burdensome requirements for states administering housing programs by striking Section 408(f)(3)(F) of the *Stafford Act*, and implements a 25 percent non-federal cost share to create consistency with other programs across disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

Section 7. Management Costs.

This section authorizes FEMA to provide grantees under Section 408(f) of the *Stafford Act* and subgrantees under Sections 416 and 426 of the *Stafford Act* reimbursement for management costs. This includes reimbursement for efforts to provide crisis counseling assistance and case management services.

Section 8. Post-Disaster Housing Study.

This section directs the Administrator of FEMA to conduct a study and develop a plan that will address challenges with providing housing assistance to survivors of disasters. Specifically, the Administrator is directed to consider the presence of multiple families in a single household and disasters that destroy most homes in a community.

Section 9. Funding for Online Guides for Post-Disaster Assistance.

This section authorizes the Administrator of FEMA to enter into a cooperative agreement with a state agency for the purposes of establishing and operating a website to provide information related to disaster recovery.

Section 10. Individual Assistance Dashboard.

This section directs the Administrator of FEMA to publish an online web tool that displays for each major disaster declaration the number of individual assistance applications received, the number of applications approved and denied, a ranked list of the reasons for denials, the total dollar amount of assistance provided to property owners and renters, and the percentage of housing stock destroyed.

Section 11. FEMA Reports.

This section directs the Administrator of FEMA to submit a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs on the average amount of Individual Assistance received by households at various income levels.

Section 12. Sheltering of Emergency Response Personnel.

This section amends Section 403 of the *Stafford Act* to give the Administrator of FEMA the authority to reimburse states for costs to shelter emergency response personnel.

Section 13. Duplication of Benefits.

This section amends Section 312(b)(4) of the *Stafford Act* to clarify that the President may not impose additional income criteria on eligible disaster relief grant recipients that have also accepted a qualified disaster loan.

Section 14. GAO Report on Preliminary Damage Assessments.

This section directs the GAO to study the accuracy and fairness of FEMA's practices when conducting preliminary damage assessments for the purposes of providing assistance under Section 408 of the *Stafford Act*.

Section 15. Applicability.

This section states that authorizations in Sections 4, 5, 8, 10, and 13 shall only apply to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.