

FEMA Assistance for Privately Owned Access Routes

FEMA may provide assistance to repair privately owned access routes, such as driveways, roads or bridges, that have been damaged by a disaster. Assistance is intended to restore access to the owner's primary residence.

Only owners of a primary home may be eligible for assistance.

- Access routes to vacation and secondary homes are not eligible.

A FEMA inspection is necessary to determine if repairs are necessary for a vehicle to access the property.

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The applicant should meet at least one of the following conditions:

- The driveway, road, bridge is the only access to the property and/or repair or replacement of a secondary route is necessary for practical use.
- No one can access the home due to damaged infrastructure.
- The safety of the occupants could be adversely affected because emergency services vehicles, such as an ambulance or a fire truck, cannot reach the residence. However, this will only be considered if access was available before the disaster occurred.

If an inspector was not able to access your primary home because of damage to the route, homeowners may have to make an appeal.

- Homeowners may have to call FEMA's helpline at **800-621-3362** for information on how to file an appeal and clarify that the access route to the home prevented an inspection.

After the FEMA inspection, an applicant may initially receive a small amount to hire a contractor for a repair estimate.

- FEMA may provide the applicant or applicants with an initial amount to cover the cost to pay a contractor to inspect and provide an estimate for the repair of the disaster-damaged driveway, road or bridge. After a contractor estimate is received, an appeal must be filed with FEMA to complete the process.

When multiple households share a privately owned access route, assistance is shared among the applicants.

- FEMA encourages all homeowners to apply for assistance to help all affected households. And additional coordination and documentation with FEMA will be necessary, including:
 - Written consent from all applicants as pertains to the shared privately-owned access route.
 - A declarative statement affirming any assistance FEMA provides will be used to make repairs to the access route and the applicant understands they are responsible for securing permits and complying with local codes and ordinances. Also, that applicants do not have an established Homeowner's Association or Covenant responsible for repair of the access route, or the established Homeowner's association or Covenant is unable to receive assistance from the SBA or private insurance to repair the access route.
- Depending on the size, damage and insurance coverage an applicant has each homeowner may be provided with a different amount for their share of the cost of repairs to the access route.
- In some cases, more than one owner may receive funds for a contractor's estimate.

Assistance will not be provided for upgrades

- Repair awards will not include improvements to the access route's pre-disaster condition unless improvements are required by current state, local and tribal government building codes or ordinances.

Access and Functional Needs

- An applicant with access and functional needs who requires entry for particular vehicle may be approved for additional funds to improve the access if required for safe passage.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

- SBA, FEMA's federal partner in disaster recovery, may be able to help. Private-property owners, established homeowner associations and properties governed by covenant may apply for low-interest disaster loans directly through SBA. These funds may qualify to be used to repair or replace private roads and bridges.

For the latest information on California's recovery from the severe winter storms, flooding, twitter.com/Cal_OES, facebook.com/CaliforniaOES, [@FEMARegion9/Twitter](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion9) and Facebook.com/FEMA.

FEMA FACT SHEET: DR-4699-CA

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency or economic status. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call the Civil Rights Resource line at 833-285-7448.