

The names of any person, if known, that FEMA could contact for additional information to support or clarify your allegations.

You may mail your written complaint to the Office of Equal Rights at:
FEMA-Office of Equal Rights
ATTN: CIVIL RIGHTS TITLE VI PROGRAM
500 C St, SW 4th floor
Washington, D.C. 20472-3505

In some cases, you may file a case in the nearest Federal District Court. This option is also available to applicants who have their complaint investigated by FEMA and are not satisfied with the final decision. Once a complaint is filed the Office of Equal Rights will assign a case number to the complaint. The case number and the complainant's name will be used to track the complaint through the complaint process. It will then be reviewed by the FEMA Office of Equal Rights to determine whether it has jurisdiction to investigate the issues you have raised. If your complaint is accepted, FEMA Office of Equal Rights will investigate it and attempt to resolve any violations that are found.

Your Civil Rights and Disaster Assistance

“ The distribution of supplies, the processing of applications, and other relief and assistance activities shall be accomplished in an equitable and impartial manner, without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, or economic status. ”

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended.

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Office of Equal Rights
500 C St. SW, 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20472-3505
(202) 212-3535 (Main)
(202) 646-7651 (TTY/TDD)

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988 (Stafford Act) as amended, is the law that authorizes Federal assistance when the President declares a State to be a disaster area. Section 308 of the Stafford Act, as amended, protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status in all disaster assistance programs.

In addition, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 also protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin in programs that receive Federal financial assistance. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is Federal law that protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination in all programs receiving funds from the Federal government or operated by the Federal government.

Forms of Discrimination that are Prohibited by Civil Rights Laws

There are many forms of illegal discrimination that can limit the opportunity of people to gain equal access to services and programs. Only allegations of discrimination on the stated bases are addressed through the process. Contractors may have other processes to address non-discrimination concerns. Among other things, the Civil Rights process addresses specific allegations of discrimination in operating a FEMA-assisted program.

FEMA cannot, on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, nationality, sex, English proficiency, age, or economic status, either directly or through contractual means:

- Deny program services, aids, or benefits;
- Provide a different service, aid, or benefit, or provide them in a manner different than they are provided to others; or,
- Segregate or separately treat individuals in any matter related to the receipt of any service, aid, or benefit.

Requesting an Accommodation

If a person with a disability requires assistance to access FEMA services, benefits or programs at a Joint Field Office (JFO), Disaster Recovery Center (DRC), or other FEMA facility, that person should make that request to the facility Manager or any designated FEMA employee at the facility. That employee will ensure that required assistance is provided.

Filing a Civil Rights Complaint

If you are an applicant, contractor or recipient of FEMA federal funds, services or benefits (i.e. disaster assistance, grants, contracts or awards) or you represent such parties and believe that discrimination has occurred in receiving or accessing FEMA funds, services or benefits you may contact the FEMA Equal Rights office by calling FEMA's helpline at 1(800) 621-3362. You may also contact FEMA Headquarters' Office of Equal Rights at (202) 646-3535 or (202) 646-3638 (voicemail).

If the matter is not resolved informally, you may file a formal complaint with FEMA, generally no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination. A signed, written complaint should be sent to the Office of Equal Rights.

The complaint must include:

- Your name, address, and telephone number. Your complaint must include a basis. Your complaint must be signed. If you are filing on behalf of another person, include your name address, telephone number, and your relationship to that person (e.g., friend, attorney, parent, etc.)
- The name and address of the agency, institution, or department you believe discriminated against you. This may include a recipient of FEMA funds such as a state or local government entity.
- How, why, and when you believe you or the party you represent were discriminated against. Include as much background information about the alleged acts of discrimination. Include names of individuals whom you allege discriminated against you, if you know them