



FEMA

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News Release

FEMA, State Grants Will Not Affect Social Security or Benefits

NORTH LITTLE ROCK –Arkansas residents rebuilding from the severe storms of late spring will not lose Social Security benefits, pay additional taxes, or give up income-based benefit programs if they accept federal or state disaster aid.

In most cases, the Social Security Administration does not count federal or state disaster aid as income, according to recovery officials from FEMA and the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management.

FEMA/ADEM provided these answers to two common questions:

Question: Will receiving disaster aid result in my income being increased so that I am no longer eligible for Medicaid, welfare assistance, food stamps or Aid to Families with Dependent Children?

Answer: No. Assistance for housing and Other Needs Assistance (ONA) are not counted as income in determining eligibility for any income-based benefit programs funded by the U.S. government.

Question: If I earn more than a certain amount each year, I must repay \$1 of my Social Security payment for every \$2 earned. Will FEMA grants add to my income and require me to repay Social Security?

Answer: No. FEMA grants for housing and ONA are not counted as income.

Residents of nine Arkansas counties affected by the severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding during the period of May 7 to June 15, 2015 may be eligible for disaster assistance. Residents of Crawford, Garland, Howard, Jefferson, Little River, Miller, Perry, Sebastian, and Sevier counties are encouraged to register for assistance with FEMA.

Individuals and business owners who sustained losses can apply for assistance by registering online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or by web enabled mobile device at m.fema.gov. Disaster assistance applicants, who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY, should call 1-800-462-7585 directly; for those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS), call 1-800-621-3362.

The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are available.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.