

One Month Left to Apply for Disaster Assistance

The clock is ticking on eligibility for federal disaster assistance.

Iowans have one month left to register for federal and state grants to help with uninsured costs they incurred as a result of the tornadoes, floods and severe storms that affected most of the state over the summer.

The last day applications for individual assistance grants will be accepted, according to officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), is Sept. 29.

“I encourage all Iowans who have been affected by this year’s severe weather to register for federal and state assistance,” said Gov. Chet Culver. “The individual assistance program is here to help, and although the deadline is fast approaching, there is still time for Iowans to utilize this important program.”

Sept. 29 is also the deadline to apply to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for a loan to cover disaster-related losses to real and personal property.

As the result of a federal disaster declaration, Iowans in 78 counties are eligible to register for federal and state aid related to the tornadoes, severe storms and floods across the state from May 25 through Aug. 13.

“You may think now that you don’t need assistance, but you may later have unexpected expenses,” said Bill Vogel, FEMA’s federal coordinating officer. “It’s definitely in your best interest to get your name in the system before the Sept. 29 deadline. because after that date, it’s too late.”

Individuals can register by telephone or online at www.fema.gov. To register by phone, call toll-free **800-621-FEMA (3362)** or TTY **800-462-7585**. These resources can also be used to ask questions about or check the status of previously filed applications and to find out about appeals.

Information about SBA programs is available by calling 800-659-2955 or online at www.sba.gov.

To date, more than 37,497 Iowans have registered for disaster assistance and more than \$424.8 million in state and federal assistance has been approved.

FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

SBA is the federal government’s primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover

the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For information about SBA programs, applicants may call 800-659-2955 (TTY 800-877-8339).

Temporary housing assistance from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) does not require that an applicant file for an SBA loan. However, an applicant must complete an SBA loan application to be eligible for additional assistance under the part of the Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses. There are other ONA grants such as public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses that do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan to be eligible. FEMA will process applications for housing assistance regardless of whether the applicant has applied for an SBA loan and eligibility determinations for applicants requesting FEMA's temporary housing assistance will not be held up because the applicant has or has not filled out an SBA application.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, nationality, age, disability, English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY Call 800-462-7585.