



Transitional Sheltering Assistance

FEMA Policy FP 104-21-0008

BACKGROUND

FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) provides Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA), a non-congregate sheltering form of assistance for eligible displaced disaster survivors taking refuge in emergency shelter locations when an incident results in the need for short-term emergency sheltering options. This policy supersedes FEMA Policy 104-009-20, *Transitional Sheltering Assistance (Interim)* (August 2020). This policy is effective as of the date of signature and will remain in effect until it is revised, rescinded, or superseded.

PURPOSE

This policy defines the framework, policy details, and requirements for using TSA to provide temporary sheltering, e.g. hotels and motels, for eligible survivors, as they transition from emergency shelters to temporary or permanent housing solutions in response to a Presidentially declared emergency or major disaster declaration, hereafter “Stafford Act declarations.”

PRINCIPLES

- A. TSA will provide temporary, non-congregate sheltering to survivors to alleviate immediate threats to life when the President declares an emergency or major disaster that includes federal assistance to individuals and households under Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), and emergency sheltering pursuant to either Section 403 or 502 of the Stafford Act.
- B. FEMA will provide milestones, including end dates, to help manage expectations and emphasize the short-term nature of this temporary sheltering solution.
- C. FEMA will activate TSA based on demonstrated need for non-congregate sheltering, as substantiated by data-informed, situational analysis.
- D. FEMA will clearly communicate information about this assistance to survivors in a simple, effective, and timely manner. This communication will be accessible for people with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and low literacy.
 - FEMA will foster state (including the District of Columbia), tribal, or territorial governments’ (STT) understanding of the scope, benefits, limitations, including



costs of TSA which uses the General Services Administration (GSA) published per diem rate for lodging.

- E. FEMA will use standard criteria, including a survivor’s Individuals and Households Program (IHP) status, to determine household eligibility.
- F. FEMA will coordinate with the STT and available whole community partners to increase access to wrap-around services and resources for disaster survivors, including people with disabilities and other individuals with access and functional needs.

REQUIREMENTS

When authorized, TSA provides assistance under emergency or major disaster declarations that include federal assistance to individuals and households under Section 408 of the Stafford Act, and emergency sheltering pursuant to either Section 403 or 502 of the Stafford Act. This policy supplements and is in accordance with Chapter 2, Section IX, of FEMA Policy 104-009-03, *Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide (IAPPG)* (Version 1.1) (May 2021).

A. AUTHORIZING TSA

Outcome: FEMA anticipates approval of TSA when necessary to prevent human suffering or to protect and preserve public health or safety.

FEMA may authorize TSA under any of the following conditions:

1. The current shelter capacity does not meet the sheltering needs of the displaced population.
2. Congregate shelter support resources are inadequate to sustain existing shelter needs (e.g., shelter operators and other partners project they will be unable to sustain congregate shelter operations).
3. There is a need to return facilities serving as congregate shelter(s) to their pre-disaster use (e.g. schools, arenas, convention centers).
4. Rental resources, as determined by FEMA in coordination with the STT, are not sufficiently available and/or priced within fair market rent standards to meet the needs of the displaced population within the affected areas.

B. REQUESTING TSA

Outcome: The STT must submit their written request through the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and Regional Administrator (RA) to FEMA Headquarters (HQ). When the request package is submitted to the Individual Assistance Division Director (IADD) for final review and



FEMA

approval, a signed letter with the FCO's recommendation and RA's concurrence must be included.

FEMA's IADD may approve the request, deny the request, or ask for additional information prior to a final decision. The STT request package must include and/or address any conditions identified in Section A Authorizing TSA and:

1. STT Activation Request Letter signed by the Governor/Tribal Chief Executive (TCE) or Governor's or TCE's Authorized Representative, identifying the conditions in the current disaster to support the TSA request.
2. A signed, fully executed, and accepted Resource Request Form.
3. Specific length of time the STT is requesting TSA be made available, to include justification for requested duration.
4. Identification of which Individual Assistance (IA) designated counties the STT is requesting TSA.
5. FEMA, in coordination with the STT, will conduct an analysis to determine the locations of participating hotels, motels, or other facilities to be utilized for TSA.
6. Acknowledgement of the STT cost share for TSA.
7. An assessment of utility outages in identified counties along with estimated restoration dates, if applicable.
8. Based on preliminary damage assessment information, the period of anticipated displacement or inaccessibility from their pre-disaster home or community exceeds the ability of the STT to shelter these survivors.
9. A description of the nature and extent of any other planned non-congregate sheltering activity, the intended population, and a transition plan for each population, if the STT plans to request other federally supported non-congregate shelter options.

C. PERIOD OF ASSISTANCE

Outcome: To define the authorized period of assistance.

Based on the disaster conditions and resource analysis, the IADD may approve the initial period of TSA for not less than 30 days and up to 180 days from the date of the disaster declaration.



D. CONDITIONS OF INITIAL REGISTRANT ELIGIBILITY

Outcome: To define the eligibility framework for displaced registrants with a disaster caused longer need for emergency sheltering.

1. To be eligible for TSA, registrants must:
 - a. Complete a valid registration with FEMA for federal disaster assistance within 60 days from the date of declaration.
 - b. Not be linked with another valid registration for FEMA assistance as a duplicate registration.
 - c. Be either:
 - i. A U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified non-citizen; or
 - ii. A parent or guardian of a minor child who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified non-citizen applying for assistance on behalf of a child, as long as they both live in the same household and the parent or guardian is registered as the co-applicant.
 - d. Have a primary residence located in an area designated for TSA.
 - e. Pass identity verification.
 - f. Pass occupancy verification.
 - g. Have a current location of:
 - i. Mass shelter (including churches/houses of worship); or
 - ii. Hotel/motel; or
 - iii. Car; or
 - iv. Place of employment; or
 - v. Tent.
 - h. Registrants must meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - i. The home is physically inaccessible to any member of the pre-disaster household due to disaster-caused damages; or
 - ii. Home damage was caused by the declared event and occurred within the incident period; or
 - iii. Have a completed FEMA Home Inspection and corresponding Damage Assessment indicating the home is not safe to occupy, one or more essential utilities are not functioning, or the home is inaccessible due to the disaster.



E. CONDITIONS OF CONTINUED REGISTRANT ELIGIBILITY

Outcome: To define the continued eligibility framework and review cycle throughout the period of assistance.

Generally, every 14 days, FEMA will review registrants' eligibility for continued TSA. Registrants who meet the conditions of continued eligibility may remain in TSA. The review period may be extended to accommodate holidays, to align eligibility reviews across multiple TSA activations, or due to other exigent circumstances.

This policy delegates authority from the IADD to the FCO to change a registrant's TSA eligibility status due to extenuating circumstances and with sufficient justification.

1. Registrants are no longer eligible to remain in TSA if any of the following criteria apply:
 - a. The registrant has completed a FEMA registration and does not meet the conditions for a referral to FEMA Housing Assistance.
 - b. The registrant voluntarily withdrew from further consideration from the Individuals and Households Program.
 - c. The registrant's pre-disaster primary residence is safe to occupy based on FEMA's Damage Assessment.
 - d. The registrant will occupy the damaged dwelling while repairs are being made, based on information provided during the FEMA Home Inspection and/or recorded through casework or calls to the FEMA Helpline.
 - e. The registrant has applicable insurance providing Additional Living Expense or Loss of Use coverage.
 - f. The registrant does not respond to FEMA outreach efforts after three contact attempts.
 - g. The registrant is included with another household already receiving FEMA IHP assistance.
 - h. The registrant chooses not to accept Direct Temporary Housing Assistance when offered.
 - i. The registrant has been licensed into a FEMA Temporary Housing Unit (THU).
 - j. The registrant no longer needs TSA because emergency temporary repairs have been completed.



FEMA

- k. The registrant does not comply with the TSA Terms and Conditions.
 - l. The registrant has received two months of FEMA Rental Assistance and rental resources, as determined by FEMA in coordination with the STT, are sufficiently available and priced within fair market rent standards to meet the needs of the displaced population within the affected areas.
 - m. The registrant has obtained alternate temporary or long-term housing, based on information recorded through casework or calls to the FEMA Helpline.
2. Each eligibility review will include all initial and continued eligibility criteria, as listed in Sections D and E. Additional eligibility factors will be implemented at each eligibility review interval. See the Appendix.
- a. As determined by the IADD or designee, in consultation with FCO and RA, additional eligibility factors from the Appendix may be adjusted due to disaster-specific circumstances. STTs will be notified in a timely manner about any adjustments to additional eligibility factors.
 - b. When a registrant becomes ineligible for TSA, FEMA will notify the registrant they have seven days remaining in TSA. Notification will be in the form of a phone call, text, and/or email depending on the registrant's identified communication preference documented in the registrant's FEMA application.
3. Registrants are required to sign a Terms and Conditions document at their initial check-in to a TSA hotel. By signing the Terms and Conditions, registrants agree to abide by TSA program guidelines to remain eligible for TSA. This document notes that in some instances an expedited check out will be required, such as:
- a. When a registrant is licensed into a THU, they will be limited to three additional nights in TSA to coordinate their move.
 - b. When a registrant identifies repairs have been made to the damaged dwelling, or they have obtained alternate housing, they will be limited to three additional nights in TSA to coordinate their move.
 - c. When fraud is indicated, registrants may be notified of immediate termination of TSA eligibility.
 - d. When there is a credible belief that a registrant is a threat to themselves or others, registrants may be notified of immediate termination of TSA eligibility.

F. MODIFICATION OF TSA IMPLEMENTATION

Outcome: To define the modifications the IADD may authorize when implementing TSA.



FEMA

At the written request of the STT, when accompanied by sufficient justification, including a recommendation from the FCO and/or RA (see Section A of this policy), the IADD may authorize one or more of the following:

1. The addition of counties not initially designated for TSA.
2. An increase in the applicable GSA lodging rate of up to 300%.
 - a. The applicable rate can subsequently be decreased to the GSA lodging rate.
 - b. Such requests must include information or specific data justifying the requested increase or decrease to the GSA lodging rate.
 - c. Any adjustment to the established lodging rate will be applied during the next eligibility review.

G. EXTENDING TSA

Outcome: To define the RA's authority to extend TSA up to the maximum 180-day period of assistance.

If the IADD authorizes TSA for less than the maximum 180-day period of assistance, the RA has the authority to extend TSA for any remaining days up to the maximum 180-day period. In coordination with the FCO, the STT can submit a written request to extend TSA to the RA.

1. The request must:
 - a. Be received a minimum of 14 days prior to the end of the approved TSA period of assistance.
 - b. Include the dates for the previously approved TSA period(s) of assistance associated with the event.
 - c. Specify circumstances justifying an extension (e.g., continued lack of rental resources, inability to access impacted areas, demonstrated need for and progress of a direct housing mission).
 - d. Include the end date for the requested extension.
 - e. Include a transition plan describing the actions and/or components assisting registrants' transition to temporary or permanent housing solutions, e.g. including STT or local housing and community development organizations.



H. ENDING TSA

Outcome: To define the conditions for ending TSA.

TSA will end when any of the following conditions are met:

1. The STT does not request an extension prior to the end of the authorized TSA period of assistance.
2. The RA denies an extension request beyond the authorized TSA period of assistance.
3. The period of assistance reaches 180-days from the date of declaration.

I. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Outcome: Under Section 308 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5151, and other federal civil rights laws, recipients of FEMA financial assistance must ensure relief and assistance activities be accomplished in an equitable and impartial manner, without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, or economic status.

1. STTs and TSA lodging providers must ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to its services and programs, which may include taking appropriate steps to ensure effective communication and complying with applicable physical accessibility requirements, such as those identified under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act.
2. STTs and TSA lodging providers must provide meaningful communication and program access to individuals with limited English proficiency.

Keith Turi
Assistant Administrator, Recovery Directorate

July 26, 2021

Date



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REVIEW CYCLE

FEMA Policy 104-21-0008, Transitional Sheltering Assistance, will be reviewed, reissued, revised, and/or rescinded within four years of the issue date.

AUTHORITIES and REFERENCES

Authorities

- A. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended, § 403.
- B. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended, § 408.
- C. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended, § 502.

Note: Policies do not have the force and effect of law, except as authorized by law or as incorporated into a contract.

References

- A. FEMA Policy 104-009-03, *Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide (IAPPG)* (Version 1.1) (May 2021).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Following the annual review of this policy, FEMA will consider changes necessary to FEMA Policy 104-009-03, Individual Assistance Program and Policy Guide.

QUESTIONS

Direct all questions to Zachary Usher, Branch Chief, Mass Care Voluntary Agency Community Services, at Zachary.Usher@fema.dhs.gov.



APPENDIX: Additional Continued Eligibility Criteria

FEMA will conduct continued eligibility reviews throughout the TSA activation. Generally, the first eligibility review will be conducted 14 days from the date of TSA activation to allow timely registrant notification. In addition to all initial and continued eligibility criteria, additional factors will be considered at each eligibility review period. The chart below identifies the continued eligibility review sequence, the criteria used and accompanying explanation. Any of the listed criteria indicates the registrant no longer has a need for emergency sheltering. Eligibility review criteria are cumulative and will continue throughout the duration of the approved TSA activation.

Eligibility Review	Criteria	Explanations
1		
	Housed	Registrant reports being back in damaged dwelling, alternate housing, or new rental unit; being a pre-disaster recipient of housing assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); housing paid by other entities; etc., therefore the registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance.
	No Habitability Repairs Required	FEMA damage assessment indicates no disaster-caused damage preventing the registrant from moving back to their primary dwelling. The registrant is able to return to the pre-disaster dwelling and will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance
2		
	Access and or Utilities Have Been Restored	The registrant was eligible due either to their pre-disaster residence being inaccessible or not available due to the disaster, or because their essential utilities were not functional due to the disaster. Access and/or utilities have been restored, and habitability repairs are not required. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at/ or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance
	Appeal finds Home is Safe to Occupy	A damage assessment appeal indicates the home is now habitable and safe to occupy. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance



FEMA

	Not checked in within 30 days	Registrant was notified of TSA eligibility and has not checked into a hotel in 30 days or more from notification. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance.
	Accessibility Status Not Updated	The registrant indicates the dwelling is inaccessible at the time of registration and has not updated their accessibility or received a FEMA damage assessment. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance
3		
	Licensed into FEMA Direct Housing	FEMA licensed a registrant into a direct housing option. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at or before the end of the current TSA period of assistance the registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA provided 3 days' notice to allow for a timely transition into Direct Housing
	Refused HUD Housing Assistance	The registrant was referred to HUD and refused HUD housing assistance. The registrant will become ineligible for continued TSA at the end of the current TSA period of assistance