



**STATE OF NEW MEXICO**  
**Department of Homeland Security and  
Emergency Management**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**DHSEM encourages eligible New Mexicans to apply for COVID-19 funeral assistance**

*FEMA has already distributed more than \$2.4 million in aid across the state*

**Santa Fe, NM** – On Wednesday, the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) issued a reminder that eligible New Mexicans can apply for financial assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The COVID-19 pandemic has caused so much pain and suffering for families both around the world and right here in New Mexico. And to help ease some of the financial and emotional burden caused by this virus, FEMA is offering financial support for COVID-19 related funeral expenses.

As part of the 2021 American Rescue Plan, FEMA has already distributed funds to roughly 465 New Mexicans, averaging \$5,200 in aid per registration. Another 860 residents have already been approved for assistance and should receive funds shortly. Still, just one-third of eligible New Mexicans have registered for this program, and there is currently no deadline to apply.

Who is Eligible?

- This program covers funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020, including costs for funeral services, cremations, interments, headstones, and officiant services, among other costs.
  - For deaths that occurred after May 16, 2020, the death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
  - For deaths that occurred from January 20 to May 16, 2020, any death certificate that does not attribute the cause of death to COVID-19 must be accompanied by a signed statement listing COVID-19 as a cause or contributing cause of death.
- Assistance is available to US citizens, non-citizen nationals, and qualified aliens.

## How to Apply?

- Call the dedicated toll-free phone number below to get a COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application completed with help from FEMA representatives. Multilingual services will be available. No online applications will be accepted.
  - **844-684-6333** | TTY: **800-462-7585** (open Monday to Friday from 9am to 9pm ET).
  - FEMA has also produced a video that provides program details and application instructions: [ASL #FEMA: Providing Financial Assistance for COVID-19 Related Funeral Expenses - YouTube](#).
- Funeral Assistance information by language: [中文](#) | [Español](#) | [Kreyòl Ayisyen](#) | [한국어](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [Français](#) | [عربي](#) | [हिन्दी](#) | [Português](#) | [Русский](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Bengali](#)

FEMA cannot provide financial assistance that duplicates any source of funding that is specifically designated to pay for a funeral prior to the death or for a death not attributed to COVID-19. Additional information and FAQs can be found at [COVID-19 Funeral Assistance | FEMA.gov](#). Some common FAQs include:

- Can I apply for COVID-19 Funeral Assistance even though I've already applied for a recent disaster event? --> Yes.
- Are pre-planned and pre-paid funerals eligible for COVID-19 Funeral Assistance if the individual died from COVID-19? --> No.
- Can I apply for assistance with funeral expenses for a death that occurred outside the United States? --> No.
- Is life insurance considered a duplication of benefit? What if I used life insurance to pay for funeral expenses? --> FEMA does not consider life insurance proceeds, death gratuities, or other forms of assistance not specifically intended to defray funeral costs as a duplication of benefit.

“New Mexicans who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 are eligible for financial support from the federal government.” said **DHSEM Secretary Bianca Ortiz-Wertheim**. “Losing a loved one always brings heartbreak, and hopefully this support can make a difference in the lives of our friends, family, and neighbors who have been effected by this virus. DHSEM and our federal partners want all eligible New Mexicans to register for this program, and FEMA representatives are available to guide you through every step of the application.”

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*DHSEM works to protect the people of New Mexico and the nation through a comprehensive and coordinated program of mitigating hazards, preparing for emergencies, preventing attacks, and recovering from disasters.*