



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

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Commissioner

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

## General Information System (GIS) Message

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### Section 1

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<b>Transmittal:</b>	21 TA/DC052 Upstate and New York City
<b>Date:</b>	July 16, 2021
<b>To:</b>	Subscribers
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, HEAP Coordinators, WMS Coordinators, Medicaid Directors
<b>From:</b>	Alison Maura, Director of Temporary Assistance and HEAP Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Subject:</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) COVID-19 Funeral Assistance
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Temporary Assistance (TA) Questions, TA Bureau (518) 474-9344 or <a href="mailto:otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov">otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a> .
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1 – Funeral Assistance FEMA blue</a> <a href="#">Attachment 2 – Funeral Assistance Flyer</a>

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### Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, has begun providing financial assistance for funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020, for deaths specifically related to coronavirus (COVID-19). This program is administered to eligible applicants directly by FEMA. Reimbursement for eligible funeral expenses incurred by the applicant will be provided with 100 percent federal funding. No funds are earmarked to the State or local governments for disbursement. Districts are encouraged to provide information regarding the availability of this program to applicants or recipients of public assistance as an additional resource available to them.

COVID-19 Funeral Assistance is intended to assist with expenses for funeral services and interment or cremation. This assistance is limited to a maximum financial amount of \$9,000 per funeral and a maximum of \$35,500 per application.

Applicants for burial assistance must, if they meet the conditions below, explore and apply for the FEMA reimbursement as an available resource. Additionally, if an applicant for or recipient of Temporary Assistance benefits receives FEMA funeral reimbursement and the funds remain available to them, these monies must be considered as a resource in initial or on-going eligibility determination.

Applicants must meet the following conditions to qualify to receive FEMA funded COVID-19 Funeral Assistance:

- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien. There is no requirement for the decedent to have been a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien.
- FEMA must be able to verify the applicant's identity.
- Funeral expenses must be incurred by the applicant after January 20, 2020.
- A medical examiner, coroner, or other certifier indicated that COVID-19 played a role in the decedent's death on the death certificate.
- Applicants may also submit a statement or letter from the death certificate's certifying official, medical examiner or coroner that attributes the death to COVID-19 fatalities that occurred between January 20, 2020 through May 16, 2020.
- The death occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.
- No other applicant received Funeral Assistance funds for the same decedent.

To apply, individuals are directed to call the dedicated toll-free phone number below to complete a COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application with help from FEMA's representatives. Multilingual services will be available. No online applications will be accepted. Districts are not able to apply on behalf of an individual, the individual seeking the assistance must call to apply.

**COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Line Number**  
**844-684-6333 | TTY: 800-462-7585**

**Hours of Operation:**  
Monday - Friday  
9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time

For more information, including a listing of what documentation an individual will need to have ready prior to calling, please access the FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance FAQ at:  
<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance/faq>.

FEMA has provided the attached public facing flyers about the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Program. Districts are encouraged to display these flyers in their waiting area. Individuals seeking more information about the FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance must call the toll-free number provided above or visit FEMA's website at: [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov).