

Funeral Assistance for COVID19 through FEMA

Dear Local Public Health Colleagues

On April 12th, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began accepting applications for its Funeral Assistance Program. The funding for this program was included in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance program allows for **funeral assistance for any COVID-19 related death after January 20, 2020**. The program will assist with expenses up to \$9,000 per funeral, up to a maximum of \$35,000 if applicants are applying for assistance related to more than one death.

Here are some key points about the program:

- **FEMA's call center can be reached Monday – Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time, toll free at 1-844-684-6333, and through TTY at 1-800-462-7585.** The call center can take calls in multiple languages.
- There is currently no deadline to apply for this benefit.
- To be eligible for FEMA's funeral assistance benefit, you must meet these conditions:
 - The death must have occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.
 - The death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
 - The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020.
 - There is no requirement for the deceased person to have been a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien.
 - The program is open to all who qualify, regardless of their income.

RESOURCE: We've created a webpage with more information about the program, links to FEMA guidance, fact sheets in multiple languages, and information about obtaining or amending a death certificate in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-funeral-assistance>. **We are sharing this information and asking our partners to do the same to help get the information to residents across the Commonwealth who may benefit from it.**

As with other disaster assistance programs for individuals, FEMA is not able to duplicate benefits received from burial or funeral insurance, financial assistance received from voluntary agencies, government agencies, or other sources. This is a program will be completely managed at the Federal level by FEMA, however the required documentation of a death certificate may involve government and other key stakeholders as the state and local level.

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COVID-19 Information for Local Boards of Health - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-information-for-local-boards-of-health>

24/7 DPH Epi Line for COVID-19 Case Support

COVID-19 web site: www.mass.gov/covid19

DPH Website: www.mass.gov/dph