

NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan



COVID-related Deaths & FEMA Assistance

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As we hopefully begin to wind down with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is stepping in to assist with funeral expenses incurred by loved ones of those who have sadly succumbed to this disease.

This assistance was forged through two separate pieces of legislation.¹ These laws will allow FEMA to provide financial assistance for COVID-19-related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020.

FEMA will be working with various groups to get their input for a viable plan to provide this assistance in the best way, and to request their help by reaching out to families and communities.

According to the FEMA website², the following conditions must be met to be eligible:

A. The death must have occurred in the United States, including the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

B. The death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.

C. The **applicant** must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020.

D. There is no requirement for the **deceased person** to have been a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien.

FEMA was scheduled to begin accepting applications in April 2021. Until further information is provided from FEMA, anyone with COVID-19 funeral expenses is encouraged to gather the following documentation:

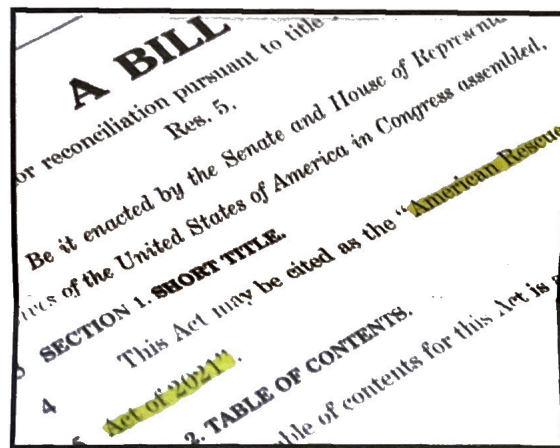
- A death certificate stating that the death was directly or indirectly related to COVID-19 and showing that the death occurred in the U.S., including the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

- Documents verifying the funeral expenses (receipts, funeral home contract, etc.), including the **applicant's name**, the **deceased person's name**, the amount of funeral expenses, and the dates the funeral expenses were incurred.

- Proof of funds received from other sources specifically used for funeral costs. FEMA will not duplicate benefits received from burial or funeral insurance, or financial assistance received from voluntary agencies, government agencies or other sources.

FEMA has stated those eligible for this funeral assistance will receive a check by mail or funds by direct deposit, depending on which option is chosen when an applicant applies for this assistance.

If you have any questions about the information discussed in this article, please contact your Legal Service Plan's National Legal Office at 800-292-8063. ⚖️



1. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

2. The FEMA website is <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>.