



## **Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Access and Functional Needs: Retaining and Recovering Important Documents**

Losing everything in a disaster is devastating. It's even more difficult when you lose important documents - birth certificates, Social Security cards, driver's licenses, tax records, insurance policies, etc. - you need to file insurance claims and federal disaster assistance applications.

When preparing for an emergency, it's best to keep electronic copies on a portable flash drive and paper copies of important papers in a sealed plastic bag to prevent damage from moisture. Be sure to take them with you when evacuating.

If your important papers are lost, many can be replaced by contacting local, state, and federal government agencies and private companies. Disaster survivors must provide proof of citizenship, property ownership or rental occupancy, Social Security numbers, and other personal information when registering for assistance.

Below are some sources to replace your lost documents:

1. Proof of address/residency: Contact your local utility company to obtain a recent bill.
2. Birth certificates: If born in Florida, contact the Florida Department of Health at 904-359-6900. Go to <http://www.floridahealth.gov/certificates/certificates/birth/index.html> for more information. For Florida births from 1917 to the present, contact your local county health department Vital Statistics office at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/county-health-departments/find-a-county-health-department/index.html> for more information. If you were born outside of Florida, please visit [www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm) If you or your child were born outside of the United States and need information on foreign birth records, visit the National Center for Health Statistics at [www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/foreign.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/foreign.htm)
3. Copies of insurance policies: Contact your insurance agent or the insurance company.
4. Replacement driver's licenses or identification cards: Visit the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles at [www.flhsmv.gov/ddl/replace.html](http://www.flhsmv.gov/ddl/replace.html)
5. Replacement vehicle titles: Visit the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and complete the form at <https://www.flhsmv.gov/dmv/forms/BTR/82101.pdf>
6. Social Security cards: Call the U.S. Social Security office at 800-772-1213, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. EDT. The number for TTY users is 800-325-0778. You can request your card online by setting up a My Social Security Account at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/> or visit <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf> to complete the form.
7. Medicare cards: Phone: 800-772-1213 or set up a My Social Security Account at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/> to replace it.

8. Medicaid cards: To request a replacement card, call 1-866-762-2237. Those on Medicaid can print a temporary Medicaid card from their MyACCESS Account. Further information on Medicaid services is available from the Agency for Health Care Administration at <http://ahca.myflorida.com/Medicaid/index.shtml>
9. Federal tax records: Visit the Internal Revenue Service at <https://www.irs.gov/uac/tax-relief-in-disaster-situations> or call 800-829-1040, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. EDT.
10. EBT/SNAP Card (Food Stamps): Visit the Florida Department of Children and Families Customer Service at <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access-florida-food-medical-assistance-cash/ebt-customer-service> or call 1-888-356-3281.
11. Military Records including DD 214s/Separation Documents: Visit the National Archives at <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records> or call 866-272-6272, Option 1. Veterans medical records may be requested in writing through the same website from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC).
12. National Archives Records: Call 866-272-6272 or visit <https://www.archives.gov/>
13. Green Card replacement: Call 800-375-5283 or visit <https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/after-green-card-granted/replace-green-card>
14. Real Estate and property records (mortgage documents, deeds, etc.): Contact a real estate agent, escrow agent, or your mortgage company.
15. Medical and prescription records: Medical and prescription records are tracked electronically. Contact your doctor, clinic, or pharmacy.
16. Warranties for medical assistive devices: Contact the company, doctor, or clinic recommending the equipment.
17. Saving family records: For detailed technical information on how to salvage flood-damaged records and other information of interest to disaster survivors, visit the National Archives at <https://www.archives.gov/preservation/records-emergency/public>.

To register for federal assistance with FEMA:

1. Call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. Multilingual operators are available. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY may call 800-462-7585. If you use 711 or VRS (Video Relay Service), call 800-621-3362. The toll-free numbers are open daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
2. Go online to <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/> for English and <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/es> for Spanish.
3. Download the FEMA mobile app (also in Spanish) at Google Play or Apple App Store.
4. Help is available in most languages with information on the registration process available in ASL at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/111546>

Three ways to apply to the Small Business Administration (SBA) after registering with FEMA:

1. Call SBA at 800-659-2955. If you are deaf/hard of hearing, call 800-877-8339.
2. Apply online using the Electronic Loan Application via SBA's secure website at: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>
3. Apply by mail: Complete a paper application and mail it to SBA at 14925 Kingsport Road, Ft. Worth TX 76155-2243.

Source: Florida Department of Health Bureau of Preparedness and Response and Bureau of Vital Statistics, Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, FEMA, and the U.S. Social Security Administration.