

# Priority Housing Access for Displaced Households

What does this program do?

**If you live in USDA Rural Development-financed multifamily housing or apartments and are displaced from your home because of a natural disaster, you can receive priority placement in other USDA RD-financed multifamily properties.**

**IMPORTANT: While a FEMA number is not required to request a LOPE, we strongly recommend you get one. If you have been displaced by a federally declared disaster such as a hurricane, flood, tornado, forest fire, or earthquake please register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA - available at this link: [fema.gov/](https://fema.gov/)). You will be given a FEMA number to use when applying for different types of federal assistance, including housing assistance outside of the USDA.**



QR code for the USDA RD Multifamily Housing webpage

## Letters of Priority Entitlement:

If you are living in USDA RD-financed multifamily housing and have been displaced by a natural disaster, you can apply for a Letter of Priority Entitlement – or “LOPE” – allowing you to receive priority placement in vacant units or move to the top of waitlists in USDA RD or U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD)- financed multifamily housing.

A LOPE can be used at USDA RD or HUD-financed properties anywhere in the U.S. or its territories. However, if you apply for priority placement at a HUD-financed property you will also need a FEMA number.

## How do I get a Letter of Priority Entitlement?

There are several ways to get a LOPE.

- Request a LOPE directly from USDA RD by calling 1-800-292-8293 or emailing [MultifamilyHousing@usda.gov](mailto:MultifamilyHousing@usda.gov).
- Contact your property management company. In some cases they may have a LOPE letter ready for you already.

You will find a map of USDA RD-financed Multifamily Housing rentals at this link: [tinyurl.com/RD-MFH-map](https://tinyurl.com/RD-MFH-map).

## Is a disaster declaration required?

Not always. The property management company can help you figure out if you are eligible or you can contact the USDA RD Multifamily Housing staff. A staff list is available at [tinyurl.com/RDMultiFamily](https://tinyurl.com/RDMultiFamily) or call 1-800-292-8293.

## What are some LOPE guidelines?

- You must be able to prove you lived in an eligible USDA RD-financed multifamily housing property at the time of the disaster.
- If you receive a rental subsidy at your current USDA RD-financed multifamily rental, your subsidy can follow you to your new rental.
- A LOPE expires 120 days after it is issued. However, USDA RD can extend the LOPE if you request an extension.

## What governs this program?

Letters of Priority Entitlement are referenced in 7 CFR Subtitle B, Part 3560, available at this link: [tinyurl.com/RD-7CFR-B-3560](https://tinyurl.com/RD-7CFR-B-3560).

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**NOTE: Because information changes, always consult official program instructions or contact your local Rural Development office for help. A list is available at this link: [go.usa.gov/xJHPE](https://go.usa.gov/xJHPE). You will find additional resources, forms, and program information at [rd.usda.gov](https://rd.usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.**

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