

## **National Flood Insurance Program Talking Points**

- As of May 31, 2018, across Texas, over 91,100 claims have been submitted. By the end of May 2018, the claims closure rate for Texas was 99.6%. Out of the 91,100 claims in Texas, approximately 76,000 claims were closed with payment. The average closed claims is over \$115K.
- For Texas alone, as of May 31, 2018, FEMA and its Write Your Own (WYO) companies paid out more than \$8.7B to policyholders which put them on the road to rebuilding and recovery.

### **Proof of Loss Deadline**

- FEMA wants policyholders to receive every dollar they are due based on the coverage in their policy and the covered flood damage that occurred.
- FEMA and its WYO partners remain committed to ensuring that policyholders have every reasonable opportunity to finalize their claim and receive every dollar they are entitled to under their policy.
- The Standard Flood Insurance Policy (SFIP) requires policyholders to submit a signed Proof of Loss within 60 days following the date of loss.
- In the aftermath of catastrophic flooding events, FEMA may need to implement enhanced claims payment processes to ensure the fast and fair adjustment and settlement of claims. Following Hurricane Harvey, the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration used his authority under the Standard Flood Insurance Policy and FEMA's regulations waive the initial Proof of Loss requirement and grant an extension beyond the 60 day proof of loss timeline to one year
- NFIP policyholders who are satisfied with the payment amount or have received policy limits are not required to file a proof of loss.
- If the policyholder has a NFIP claim and believes their payment did not include all covered damage, FEMA granted an extension up to 365 days following the date of loss. This unprecedented 365 day extension immediately following the flood provided policyholders with a clear and predictable deadline for a policyholder to work with their NFIP flood insurance carrier.
- If the policyholder has a NFIP claim and believes their payment did not include all covered damage, then the policyholder will need to work with their NFIP flood insurance carrier to submit a proof of loss. The one year deadline does not prevent policyholders from submitting a proof of loss because the insurer can request an individual waiver of the filing deadline for otherwise valid claims.
- For additional payment requests, the policyholder will need to contact their NFIP flood insurance carrier to submit a signed proof of loss along with supporting documentation such as bills, receipts, cancelled checks, photographs and other related documents. Policyholders can submit their proof of loss and supporting documentation, even if it is after the one year deadline. Their

insurer will evaluate their claim to determine whether coverage applies, and the NFIP will pay such agreed-to amounts.

- For more information please visit:  
<https://www.floodsmart.gov/flood/how-do-i-file-my-flood-claim>
- Policyholders may reference the Claims Handbook located at FEMA.gov at:  
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/6659>. FEMA created the Handbook to provide policyholders tips about what to do before and after a flood, including filing a claim, and the steps involved in appealing a denied claim.
- FEMA encourages all flood insurance policyholders with questions to talk to their NFIP flood insurer. Your NFIP flood insurer can help clarify how the flood insurance policy applies to your claim and take immediate action.
- The NFIP has a very policyholder-oriented system in place to assist policyholders with their claims.
  - FEMA recommends policyholders to first contact their adjuster or insurer and work directly with them. The adjuster and insurer are usually in the best position to quickly answer questions and explain coverage.
  - If issues arise in the claims process, policyholders may consider free alternative resources to assist them with their claims and answer general questions, including the following:
    - For general questions, the NFIP Call Center at 1-800-427-4661.
    - The Office of the Flood Insurance Advocate at <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-flood-insurance-advocate>.
    - Policyholders who have had all or part of their claim denied by their insurer might consider filing an appeal directly with FEMA, which is free. Policyholders can learn more at <https://www.fema.gov/flood-claim-appeals-and-guidance> webpage.
- If policyholders do not have contact information for their insurance company, a list of the WYO insurance companies and their contact information can be located here:  
[https://nfipservices.floodsmart.gov/sites/default/files/Toll-Free%20Number%20by%20WYO\\_08\\_7\\_2018.pdf](https://nfipservices.floodsmart.gov/sites/default/files/Toll-Free%20Number%20by%20WYO_08_7_2018.pdf)
- Policyholders can also contact the NFIP call center at 1-800-427-4661 with questions about requesting additional payments, or any general questions regarding the NFIP.

### FEMAs steps to educate policyholders

- The NFIP took proactive steps to engage with Harvey-affected policyholders by directly engaging with policyholders and providing resources to local elected officials and community leaders.
  - FEMA knew that Harvey recovery would be a big task. That is why FEMA engaged early-on with Houston-area local government officials who could provide critical claims handling information to NFIP policyholders.
  - FEMA also built relationships with numerous local non-profits and legal aid groups engaged in Harvey recovery efforts so they could help NFIP policyholders resolve their claims as soon as possible.
  - FEMA also engaged directly with Harvey-affected policyholders through follow-up calls and postcards that provided instructions on how to request additional claim payments.
  - Moreover, FEMA has and will continue to conduct on-the-ground outreach events that have to date reached over 1,100 policyholders and future policyholders. These include NFIP Claim Open Houses, workshops, Insurance Agency consultations, Real Estate Agent Association Outreach Events.
  - FEMA has directly fielded over 2,050 requests for assistance
  - FEMA's WYO partners have stood up an entire new office in Dallas, TX to be able to provide support to policyholders and ensure that everyone had good contact. They dedicated an examiner to each policyholder and gave them direct phone numbers so customers wouldn't have to call a 1-800 and have to be redirected, but get right to their person.

Flooding represents the most common and costly natural disaster. All 50 states and 98 percent of counties in the U.S. have experienced a flood event. We encourage homeowners and business owners to be covered. More information on flood insurance can be found at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>.