Creating an Account and Uploading Documents to a Survivor's DisasterAssistance.gov Account

The following document provides the steps for survivor applicants (applicants) to create a user account on the DisasterAssistance.gov website. Online accounts allow easy access to application information as well as perform basic tasks such as upload needed documents to meet FEMA applicant requirements.

In order to provide self-service capabilities, an online account on DisasterAssistance.gov allows the applicant to view the status of their application and:

- Upload documents using their computer or mobile device.
- Change correspondence preferences (email or U.S. Postal Mail), mailing address, phone number, etc.

Applicants **must have an online account** to view FEMA correspondence online on the DisasterAssistance.gov website. **This account is different from a FEMA application for assistance.** There are two ways an applicant can create an account:

1. Creating an account after applying for assistance offline not using the DisasterAssistance.gov website.
2. Creating an account after applying for assistance online using the DisasterAssistance.gov website.

Contents

Creating an Account and Uploading Documents to a Survivor's DisasterAssistance.gov Account 1
Creating an Account on DisasterAssistance.gov 1
Creating an account after applying for assistance 1
Creating an account after applying for assistance online 8
Uploading Documents to DisasterAssistance.gov 10
Logging into the applicant's account 10
Uploading documents to the applicant's account 13

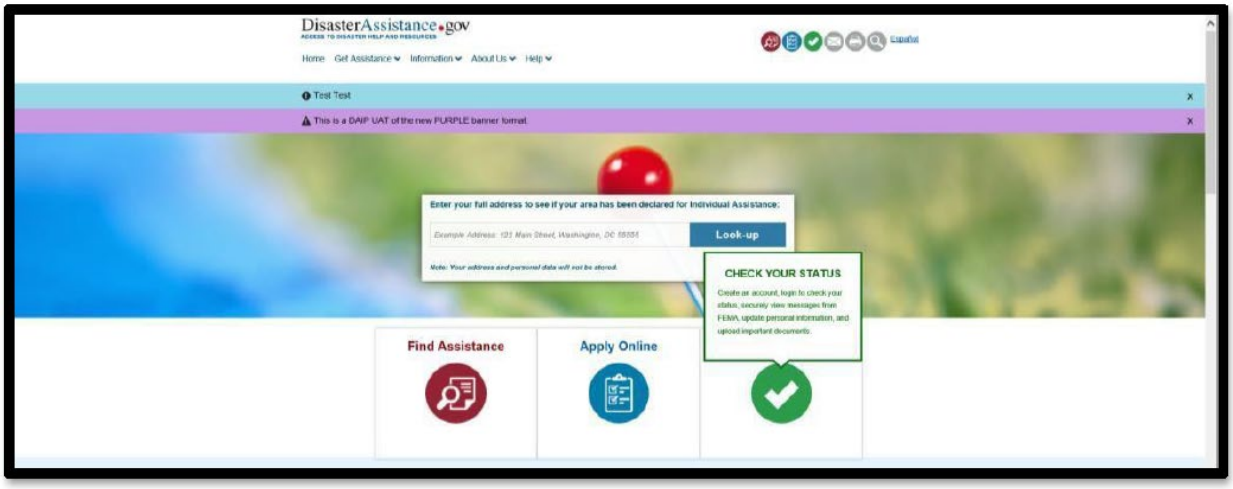
Creating an Account on DisasterAssistance.gov

Creating an account after applying for assistance

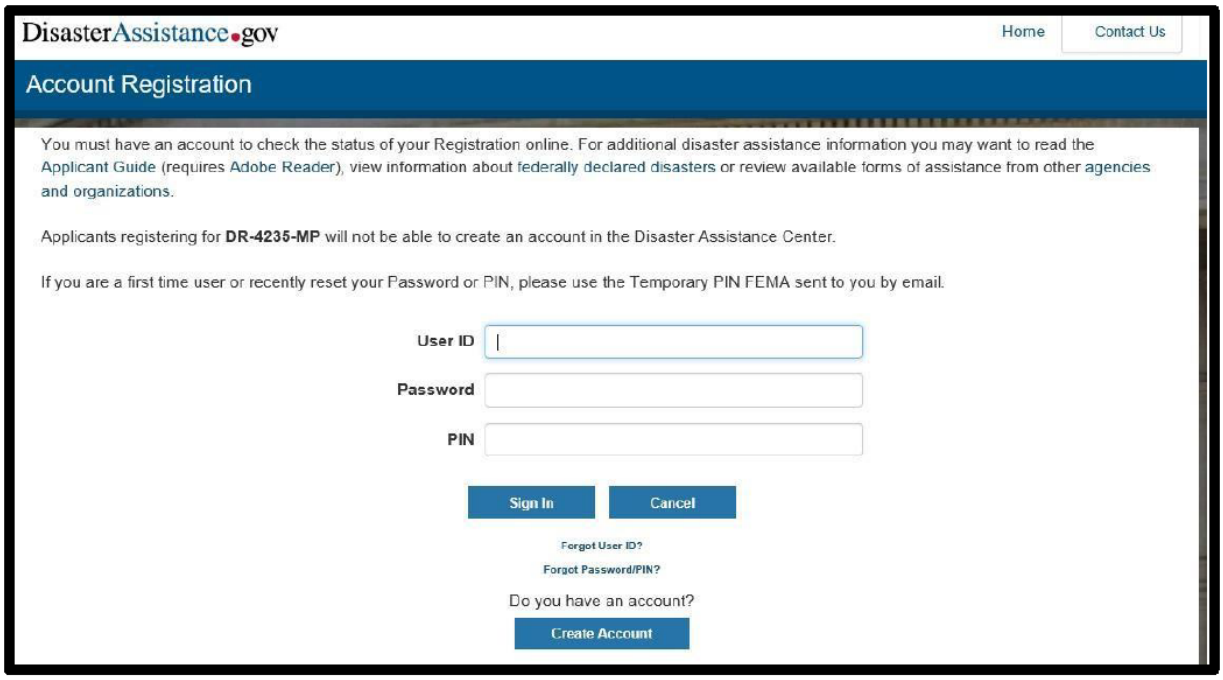
To create an account after applying with FEMA Call Center, a DSA agent, or during a previous online session, the survivor can follow these steps:

NOTE: Applicants can create an account any time after a FEMA application has been completed.

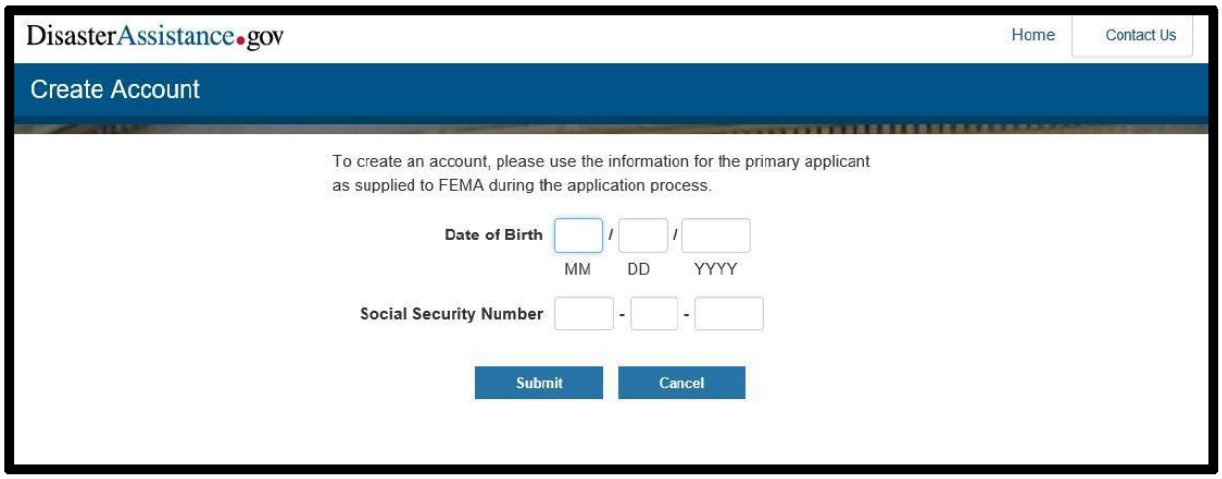
1. Select the ***Check Status*** button/icon on the Home Page of DisasterAssistance.gov (the green checkmark).



Select ***Create Account*** (located at the bottom of the screen).

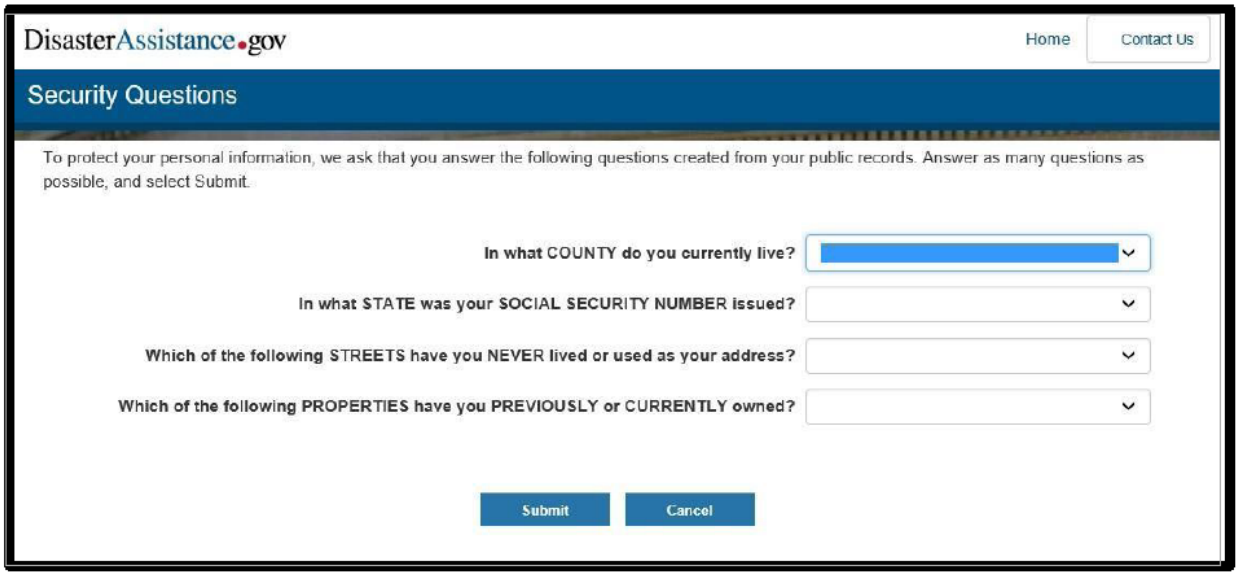


2. Enter the date of birth and Social Security Number of the person who registered for assistance and ***Submit***.

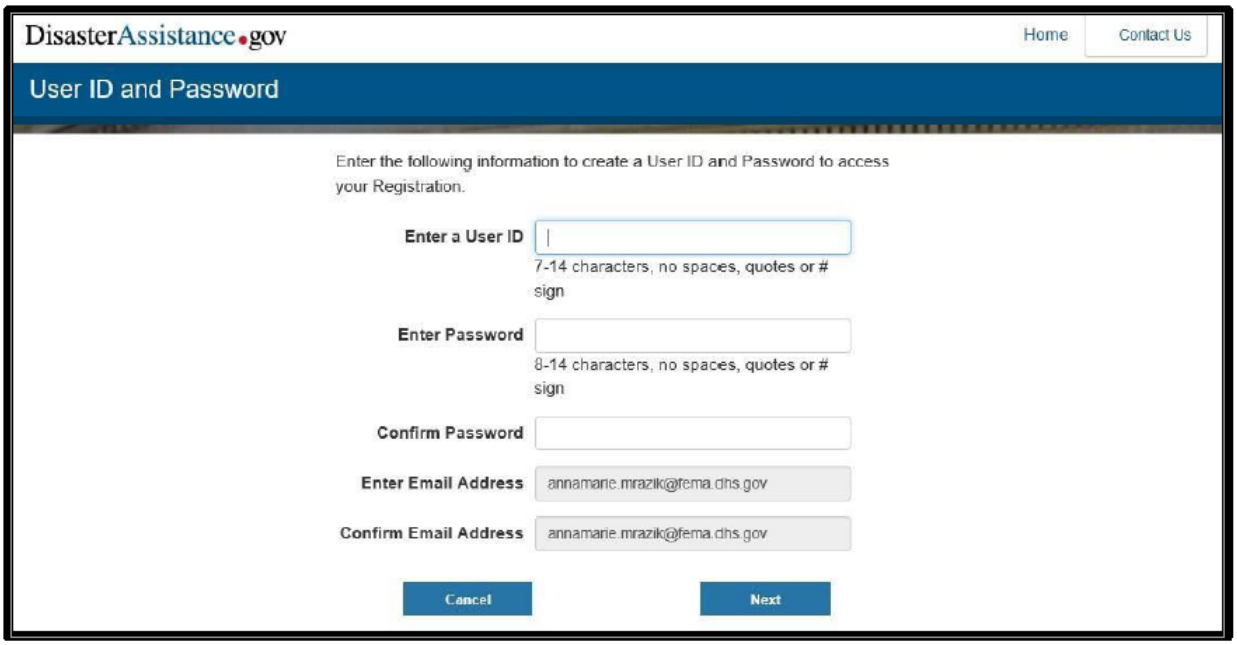


A list of security questions, based on public records, will display. The applicant must be able to answer the security questions presented. (More than one attempt to answer the questions correctly is offered. A different set of questions is offered each time.)

If they are unable to answer the questions, or if there is not enough public-records data to offer questions (example: little to no credit history), then they will not be able to create an online account and will need to call the Call Center for updates. The following shows the screen the applicant sees for answering these questions:

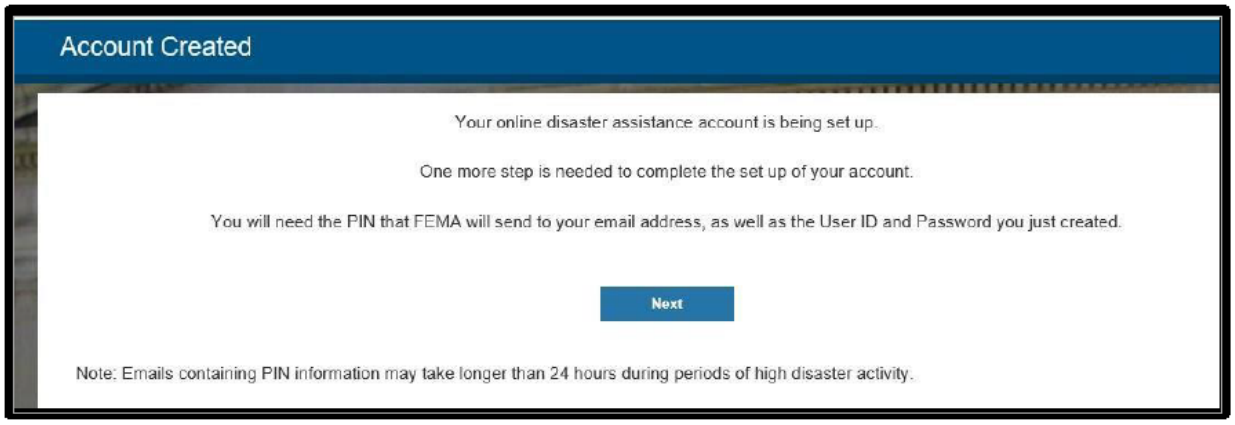


3. After the applicant answers the security questions correctly and selects the Submit button, they will next need to create a User ID and Password to access their account.
    - If the applicant entered an email address during the application for assistance process, the email address will be pre-populated on the page in the “Enter Email Address” and “Confirm Email Address” fields.
    - If they did not enter an email address during application for assistance, they will need to input an email address at this time.

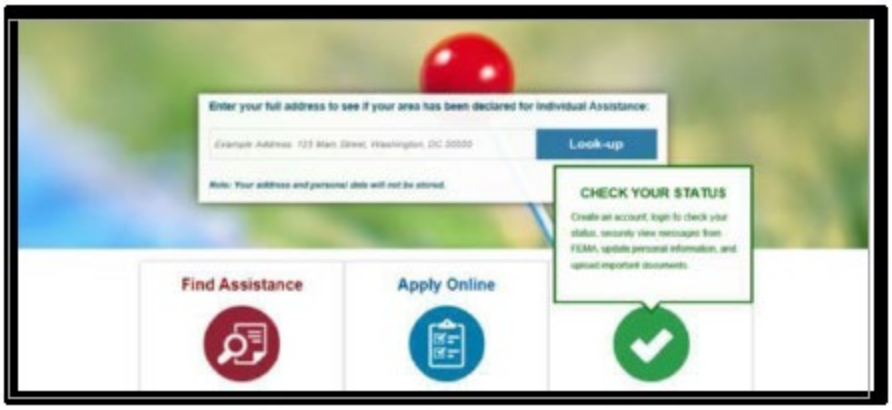


After selecting the ***Next*** button, the applicant will see the Account Created screen, letting them know that their account is being set up. A unique temporary Personal Identification Number (PIN) will be sent by email with the new account PIN number.

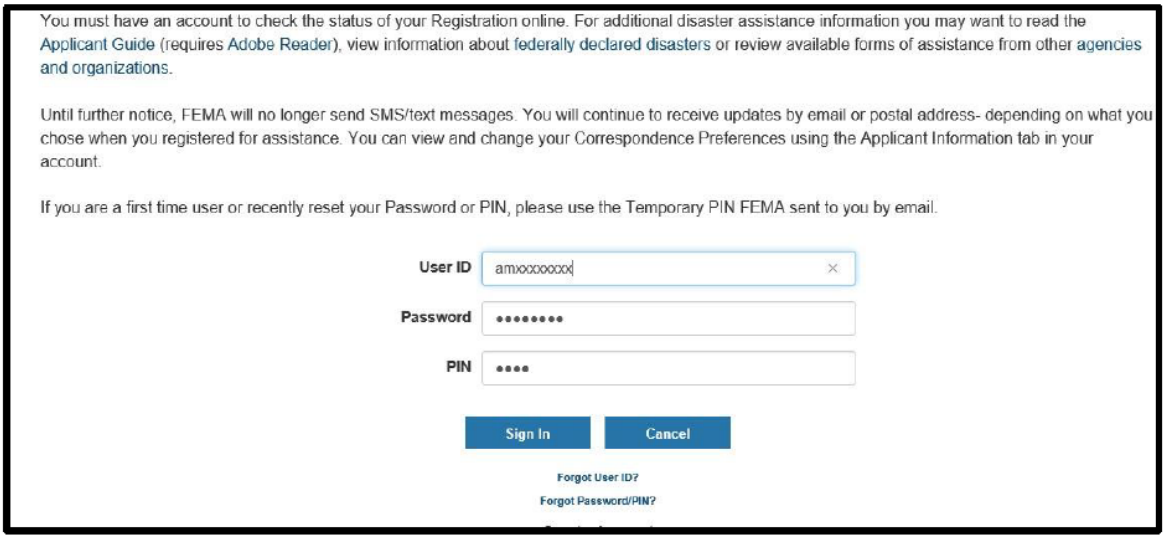
- The applicant must wait until they receive the temporary PIN before they can access their account.
- This process can take up to 24 hours.



4. Once the PIN email is received, the applicant will go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov and select the ***Check Status*** button/icon on the Home Page.

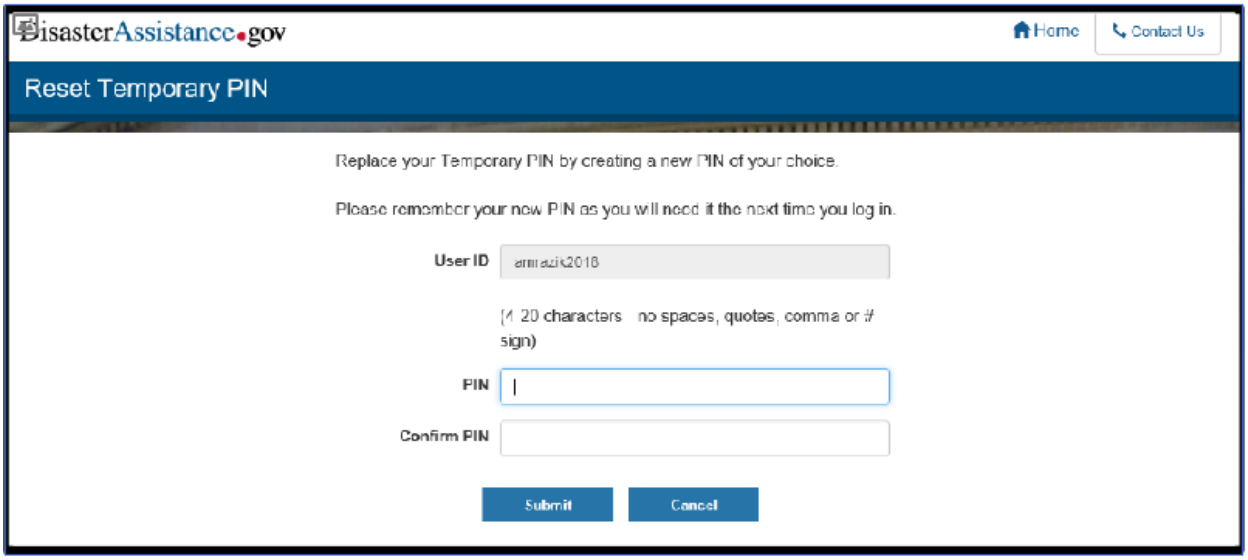


5. After selecting ***Check Status***, the applicant enters the User ID, Password they created and enter the temporary PIN they received in the email.



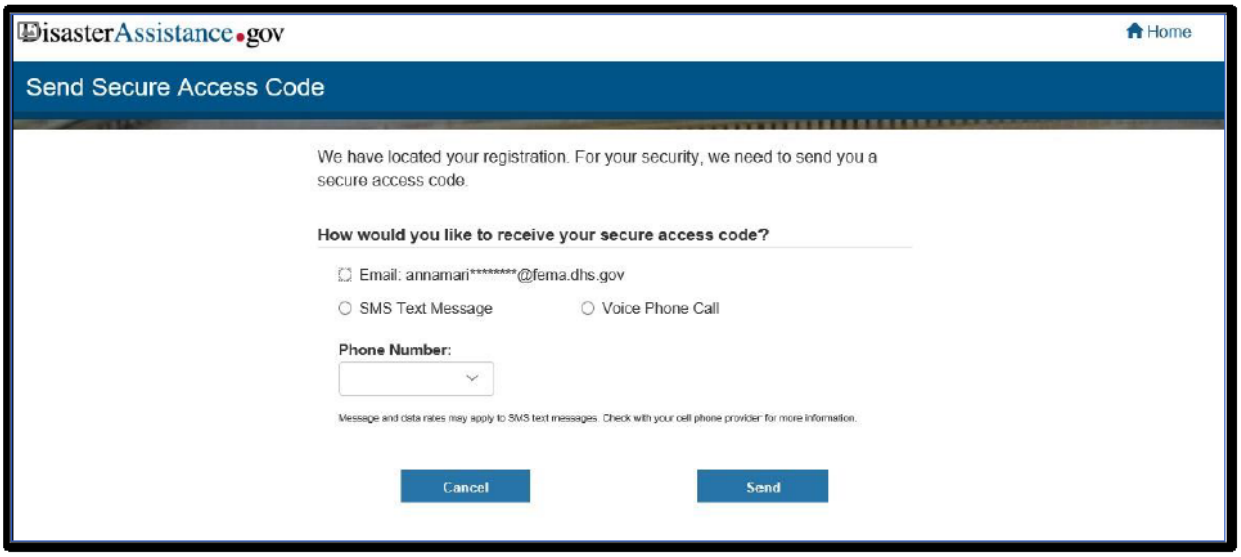
6. The applicant will see a screen, Reset Temporary PIN, where they will enter the temporary PIN (sent via email) and create a permanent PIN. After entering a permanent PIN, the applicant will select the Submit button.

   NOTE: The temporary PIN must be changed to a permanent PIN to complete the account creation process.

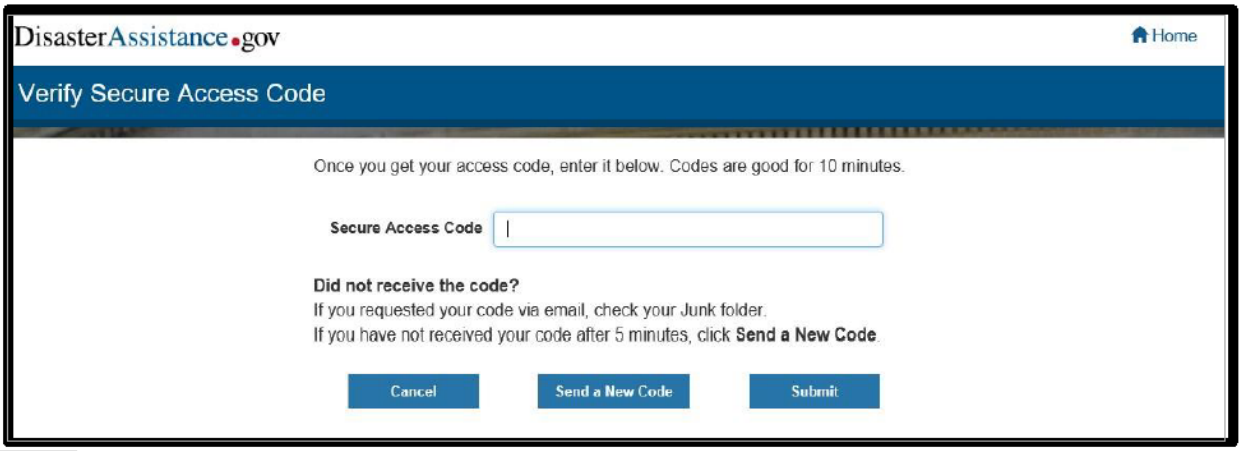


7. Next, the applicant will see a screen to check their identity. The applicant will enter their Social Security Number and then select the Submit button.

8. Before the applicant can view their account, they must enter a system-generated security access code:
    - The secure access code must be entered each time the account is accessed.
    - The secure access code can be sent via email, text, or voice phone call.
      The email and phone numbers are retrieved from the applicant's information.



9. Once received and entered, the applicant will get access to their account. The applicant can now access their account and all related information and documents, as well as perform basic tasks such as upload documents to their account to support their application.

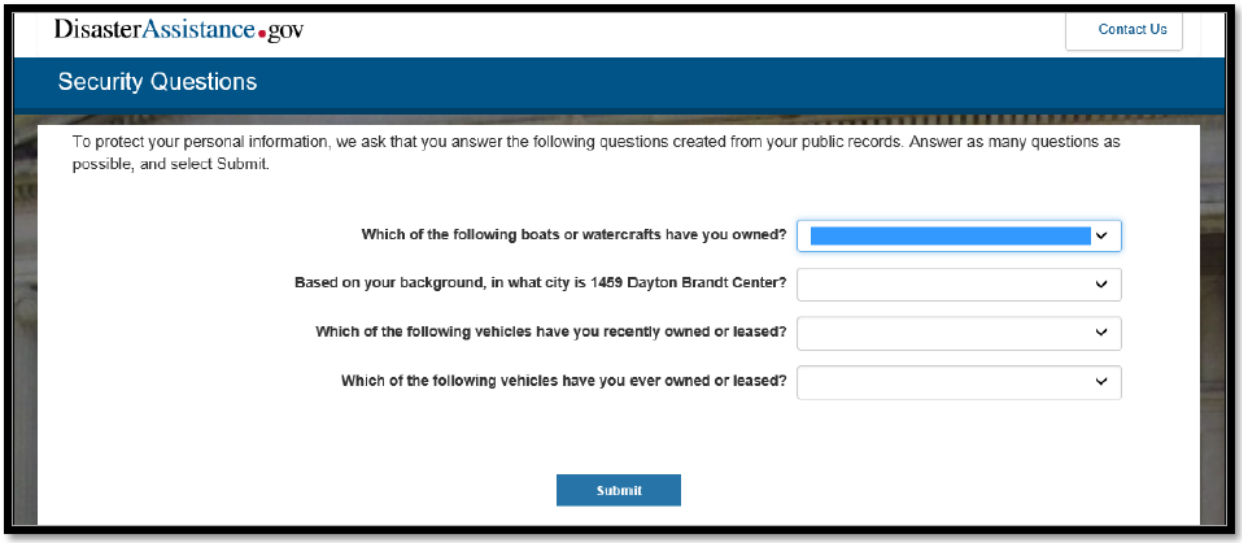


Creating an account after applying for assistance online

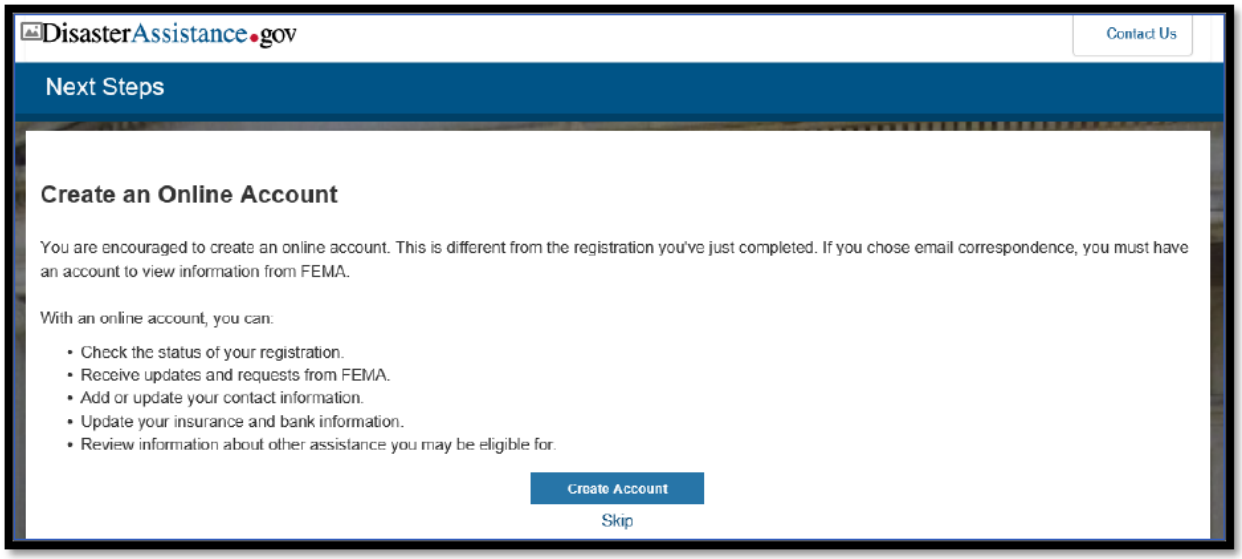
After completing an application for assistance successfully on the DisasterAssistance.gov website, the applicant will be prompted to create a user account. The last screen of the application for assistance screens is the Preview page.

1. When the applicant sees this screen, they can either select the **Edit** button and make changes or select the **Submit** to complete and finish their application.

2. After submitting the application, the security questions will appear for any applicants who passed identity verification (IDV) and have public information (e.g. credit history) to create security questions.
    - The questions presented are created using public records.
    - The applicant must answer the questions correctly in order to create an online account.
    - The applicant is provided more than one chance to answer the questions. A different set of questions is offered each time.



3. If the security questions used for identity verification (IDV) are answered correctly, the applicant is prompted to create an online account.



Please refer to Steps 4 – 10 in the previous section to complete the account creation process.

Uploading Documents to DisasterAssistance.gov

Document upload is one of the features available to applicants. However, an applicant MUST have an online account to be able to upload documents. The previous sections of this document how to create an account. The following will show images of the screens to help understand the options and features the appear to an applicant.

Applicants can send requested document by several methods, including:

- US Mail or FAX
- Uploading the documents to their online account via:
    - Desktop computer or laptop
    - Mobile smart device (e.g. iPhone, Android)

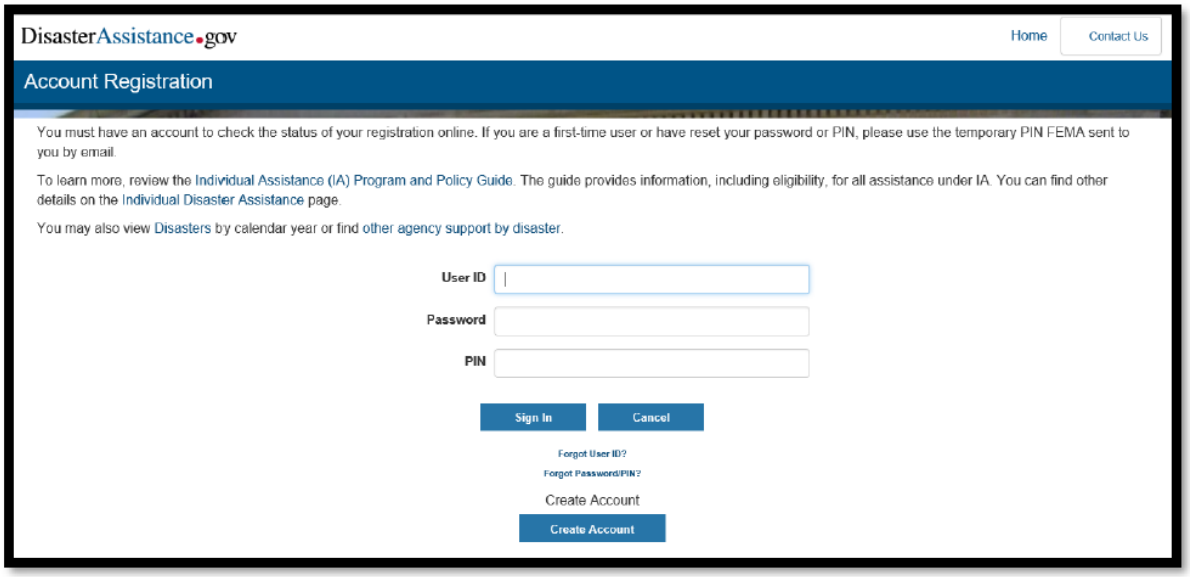
The following screens will show what the applicant sees when uploading documents to their online account.

Logging into the applicant's account

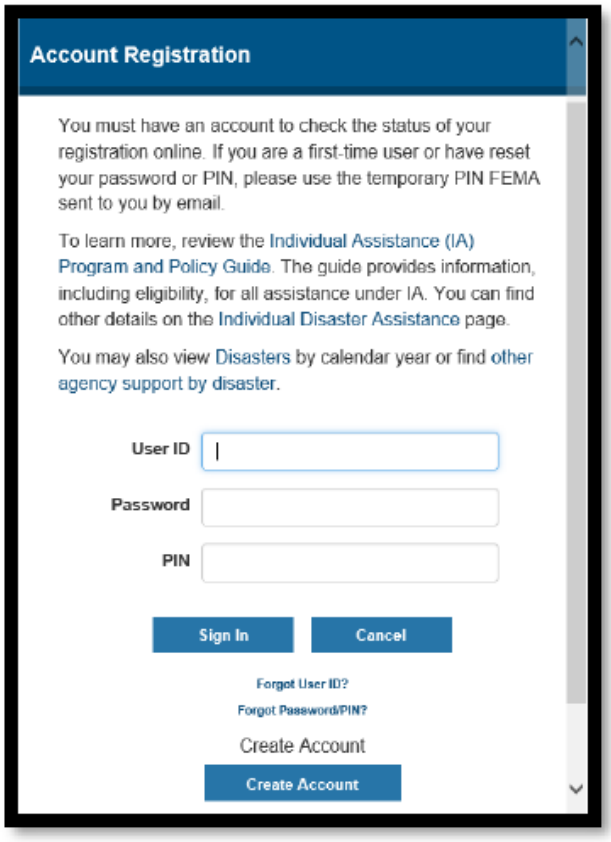
1. Once the account is created, the applicant will sign into the account, entering their User ID, password, and permanent PIN and select the **Sign In** button.

   NOTE: the image below shows other available options for applicants if they forget their User ID and/or password. This is the same screen that will display to create a user account as well.

   Desktop view:



Mobile view (Android device):

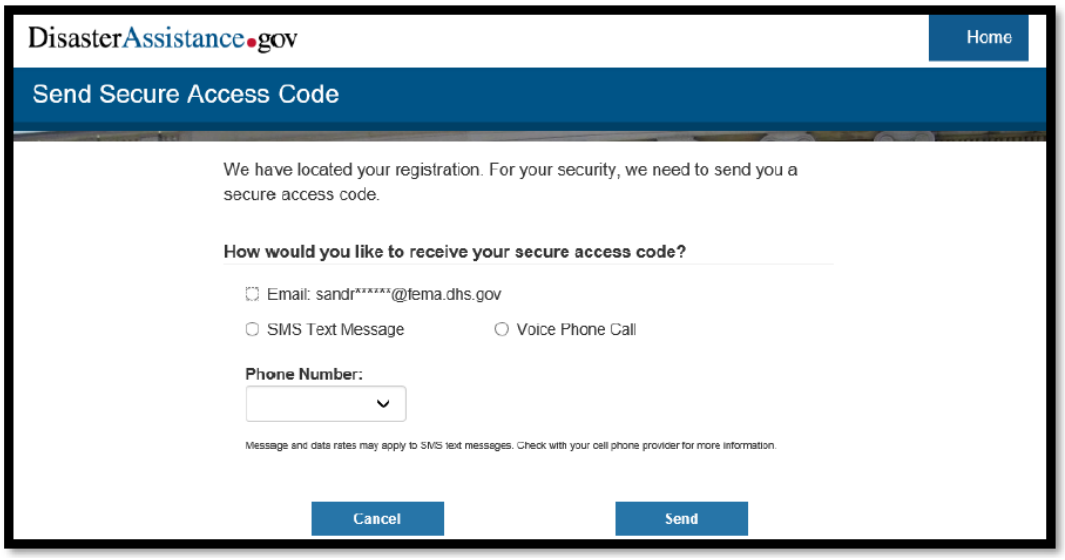


2. After the applicant logs into their account, the Send Secure Access Code screen will display.

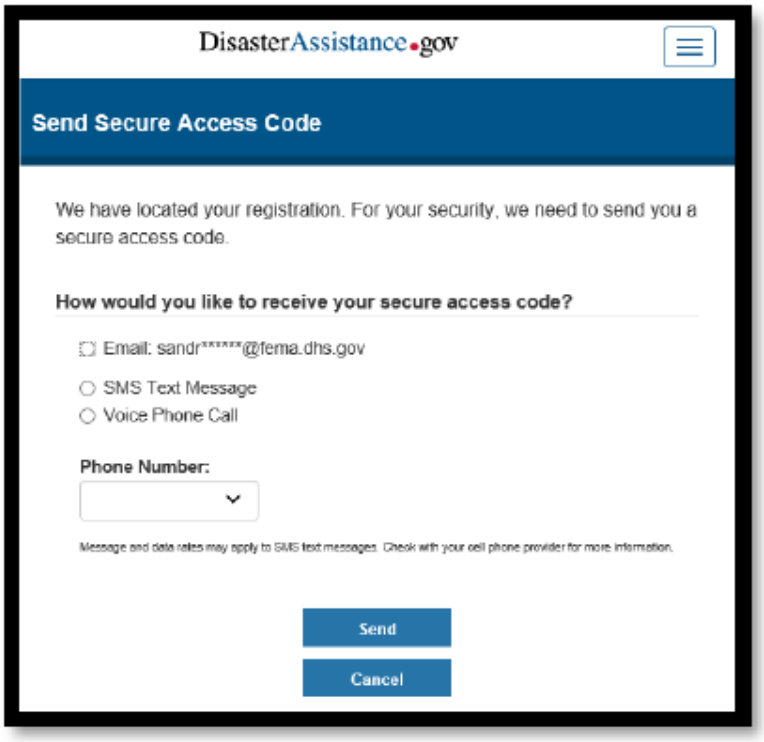
a. Select the method to deliver the code – choose one option: email, SMS text, or phone call.

b. Select the **Send** button.

Desktop view:

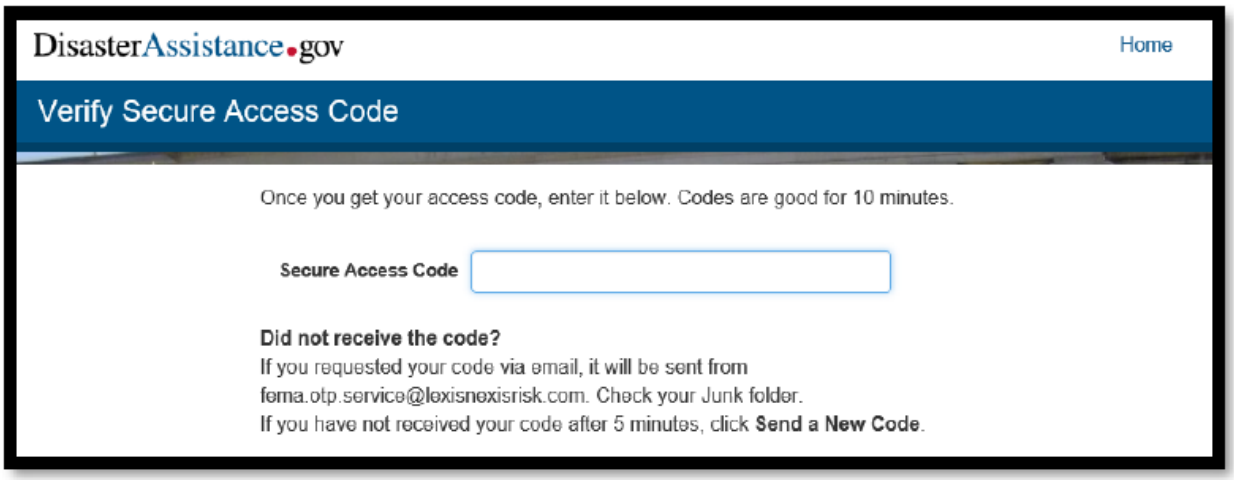


Mobile view (Android):



3. After receiving the Secure Access Code, enter it into the field on the screen, or request a new one if needed.

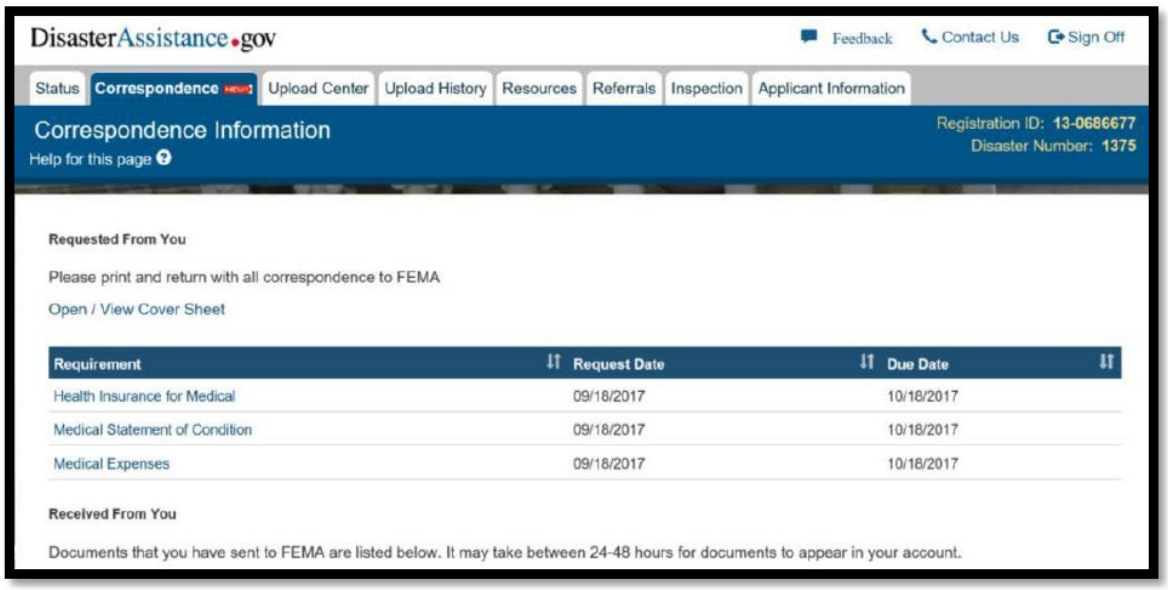
Desktop view:



Mobile view (Android):

Uploading documents to the applicant's account

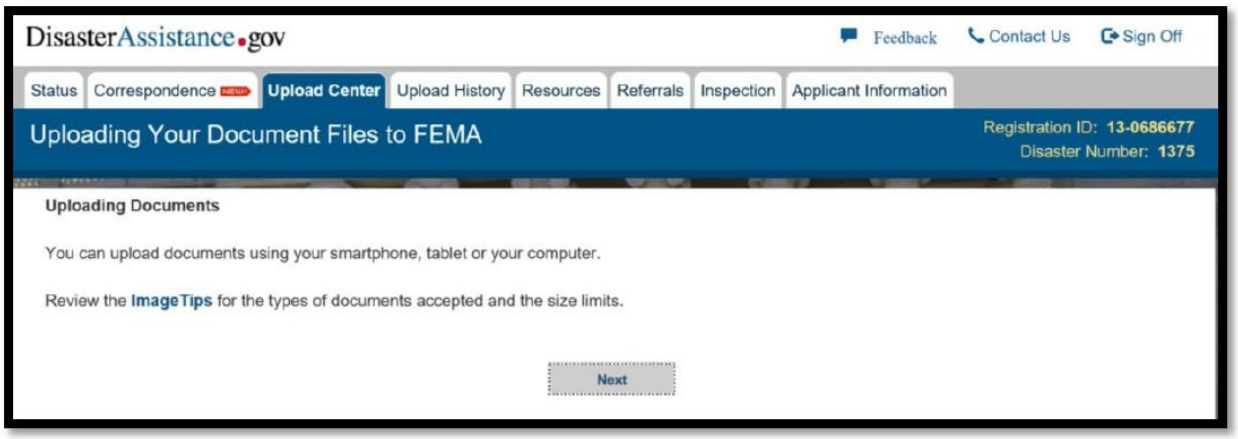
1. Once the applicant accesses their account, a series of tabs will display at the top of the screen. Select the **Correspondence Tab**, then look in the **Requirement** section.



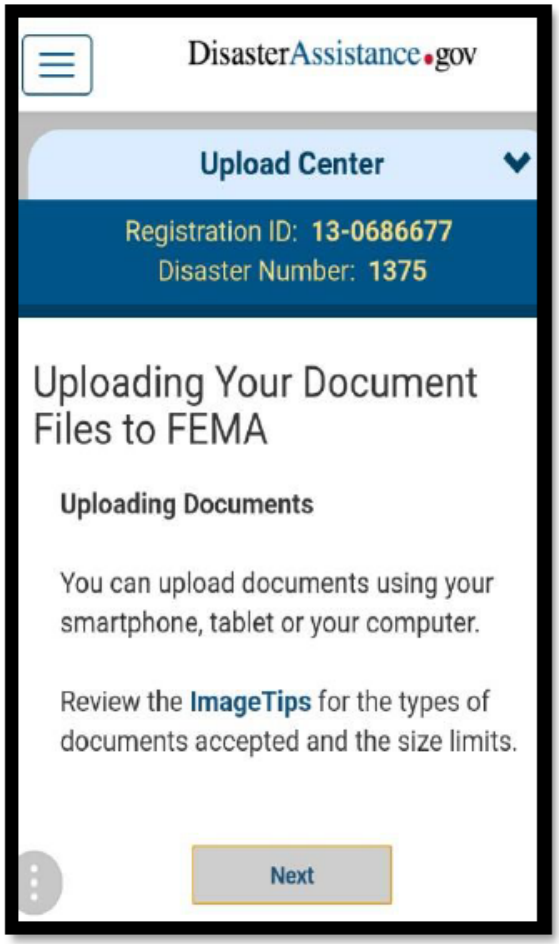
2. The first page of the **Upload Center** has an **Image Tips** link that provides information about the size and types of files that can be uploaded. It also has helpful tips for uploading an image file using a mobile device. After reading the information on the screen, click the **Next** button.

   NOTE: Word documents cannot be uploaded using this feature. Only images of documents or documents saved as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file can be uploaded.

Web view:

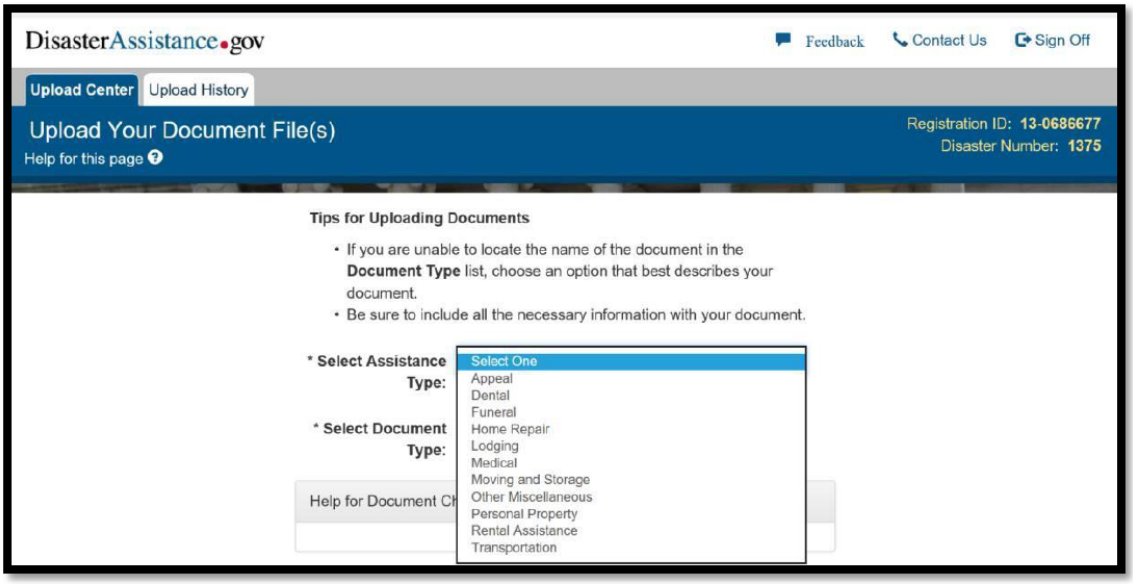


Mobile view (Android):

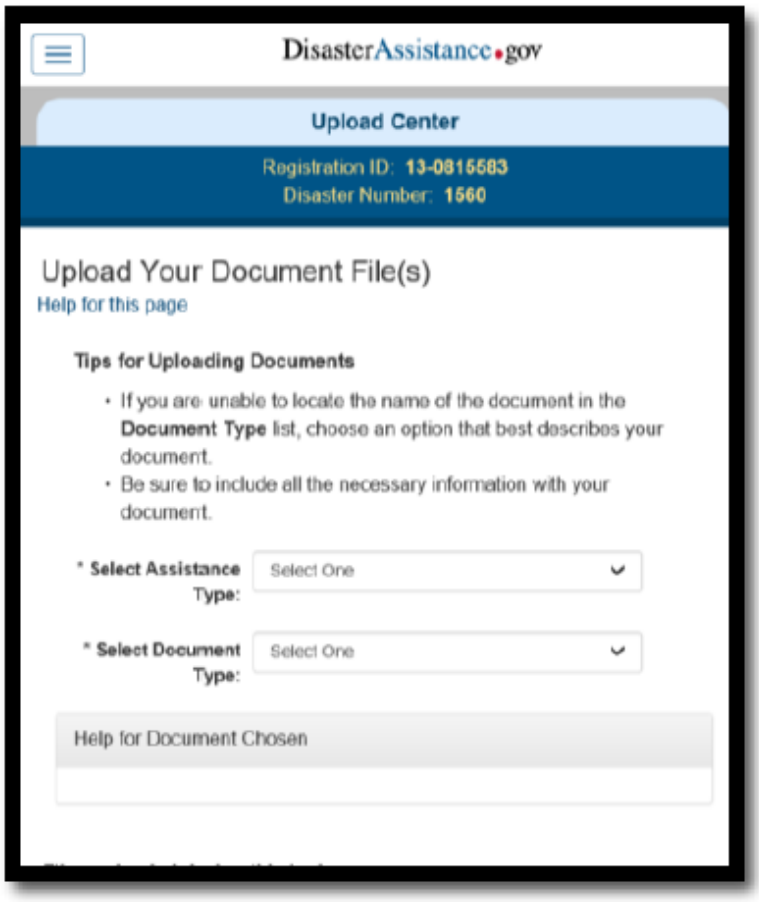


3. From the **Select Assistance Type** dropdown list, choose the option that closely represents and best describes the type of information in the file being uploaded.
NOTE: only one option can be selected from the dropdown list.

Desktop view:



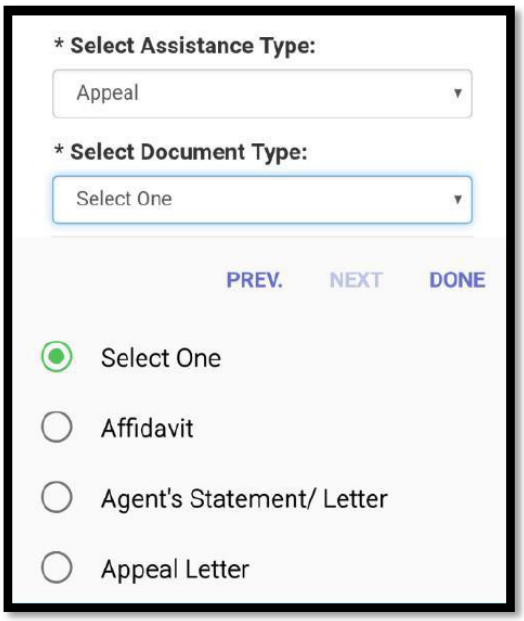
Mobile View (Android):



4. The options in the **Select Document Type** dropdown list will depend on the option selected in the **Select Assistance Type** dropdown pick list. From the Select Document Type dropdown list, choose the option in the list that most closely matches the file contents in the file being uploaded.

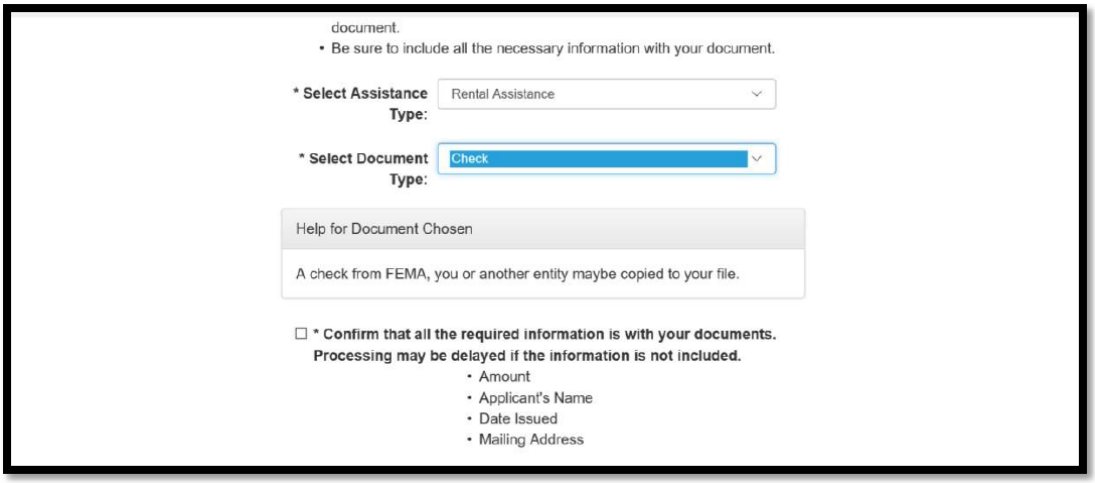
   NOTE: for a mobile device, the dropdown pick list may be replaced with radio buttons for making selections.

   Mobile View (Android):
   *(**NOTE:** since the Assistance Type option selected is **"Appeal"** the options displayed are limited to the ones shown.)*

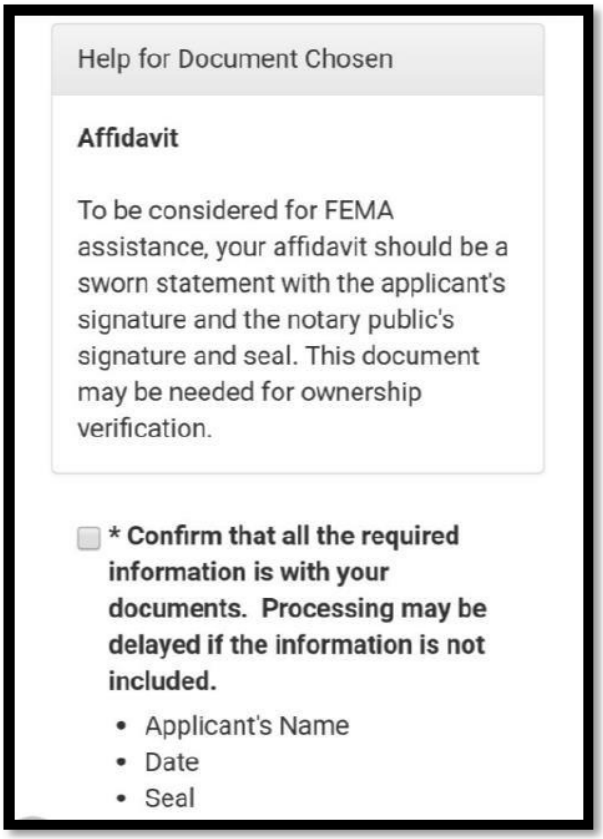


5. The **Help for Document Chosen** section is based on the Assistance Type and Document Type options chosen. Read through the information, then check the **Confirm** checkbox showing that all necessary information is included in the document file being uploaded.

   Desktop view:



Mobile view (Android):

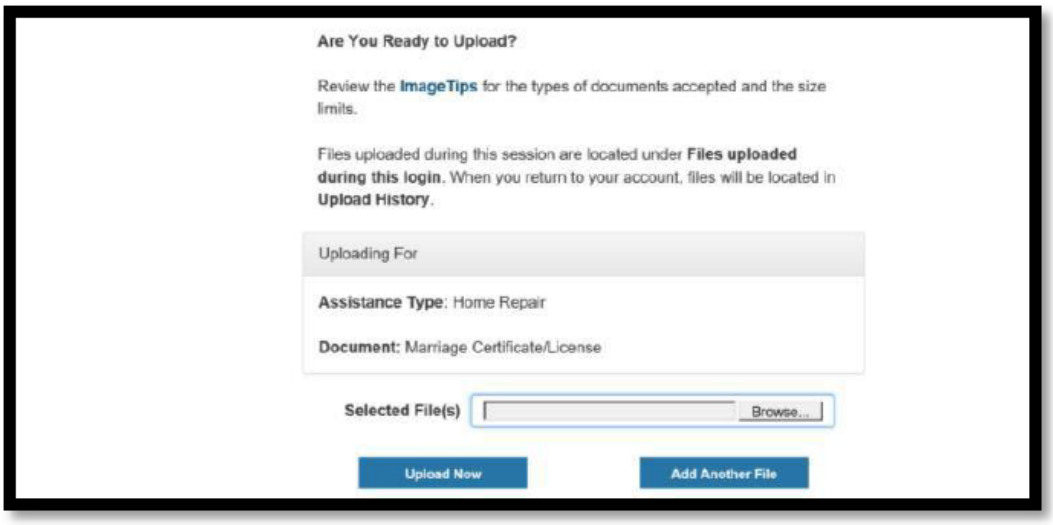


NOTES: An **Image Tips** feature is available, if needed. Some common issues when uploading documents are:

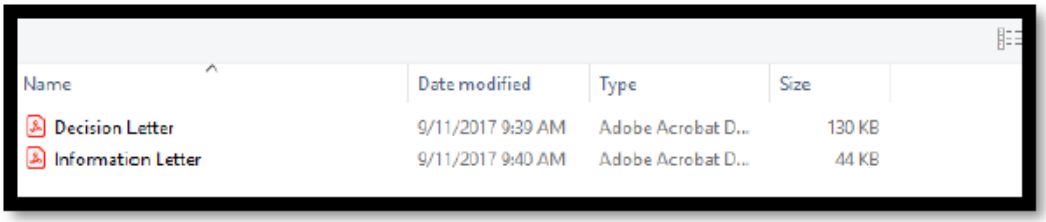
- Files are larger than allowed.
- Files are not of the right type (e.g. Word documents cannot be uploaded.)

6. Next the document to be uploaded needs to be located on the desktop or the mobile device.
7. Select **Browse** (desktop) or **Choose File** (mobile device) to locate the file.
8. Selecting the file will place the name of the file in the **Selected Files** area (next to the Browse button).
9. Once the file is listed, select either the **Upload Now** or **Add Another File** button.

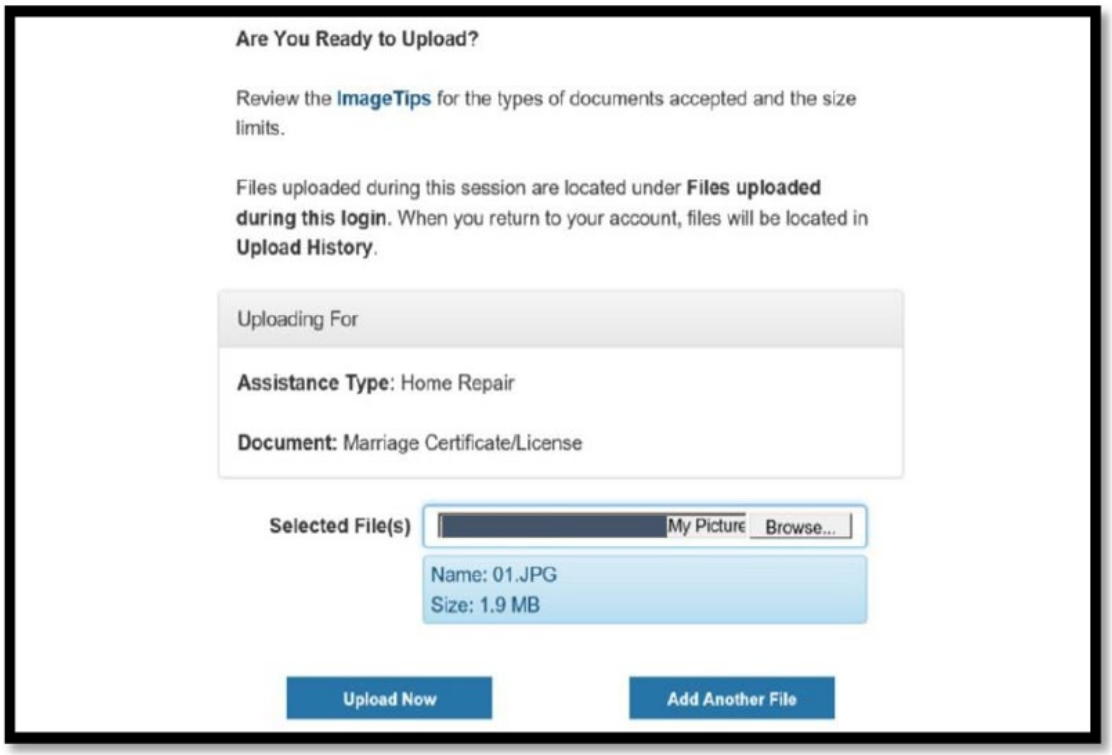
Desktop view:
Browse option and buttons screen:



Example of a search results list for selecting a file to upload:

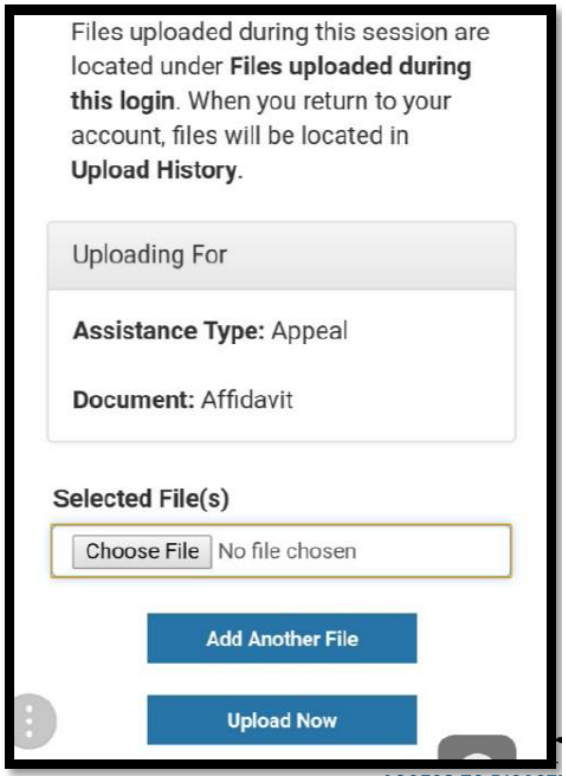


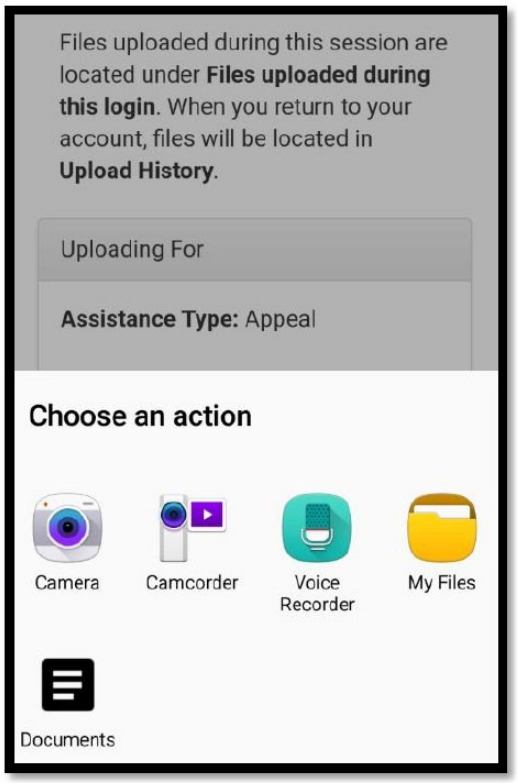
Example of the screen after file is selected:
The name of the file, the file size, and file type will be displayed on the screen.

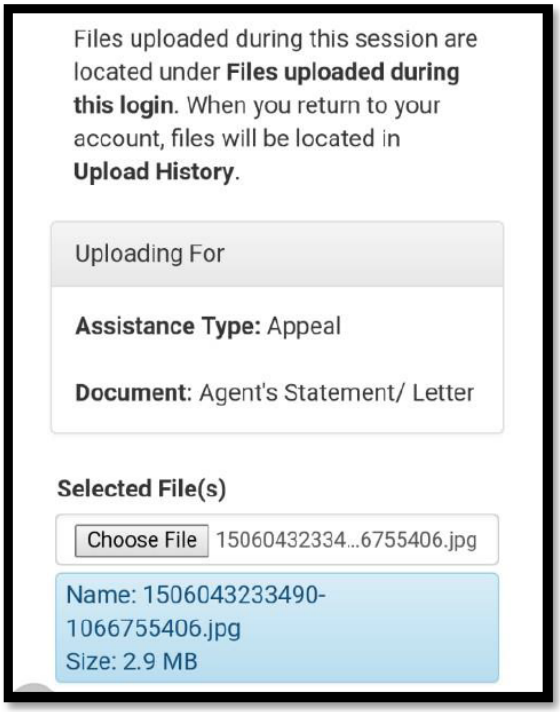


Mobile view (Android):

First image shows the options; second images shows the selectin options Android screen. The third image shows the screen after a file is selected for uploading.







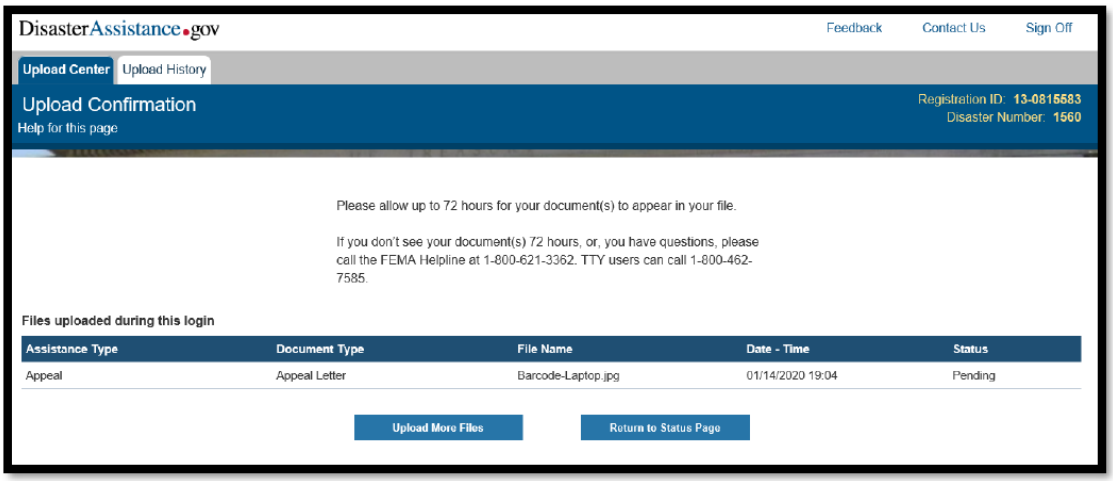
10. Multiple files can be uploaded at the same time. **<u>However, there is a limit of 10 MB on the total size of the uploaded content for the entire session.</u>**

    If the maximum is reached, an error message will be displayed.

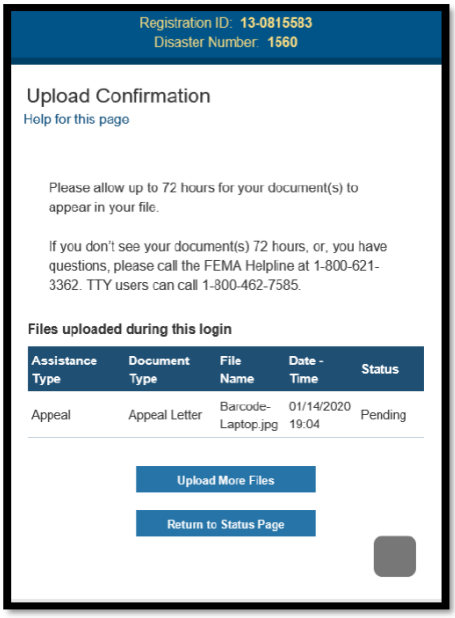
    If the upload is successful, then the applicant will see an **Upload Confirmation** page showing the file(s) uploaded and two buttons: **Upload More Files** and **Return to Status Page**. A message displays to let the applicant know that it may take up to 72 hours for uploaded documents to appear in their account file.

    NOTE: The upload delay could take longer than 72 hours during high disaster activity. Applicants are instructed to call the FEMA Call Center if documents do not appear after 72 hours.

    Web view:

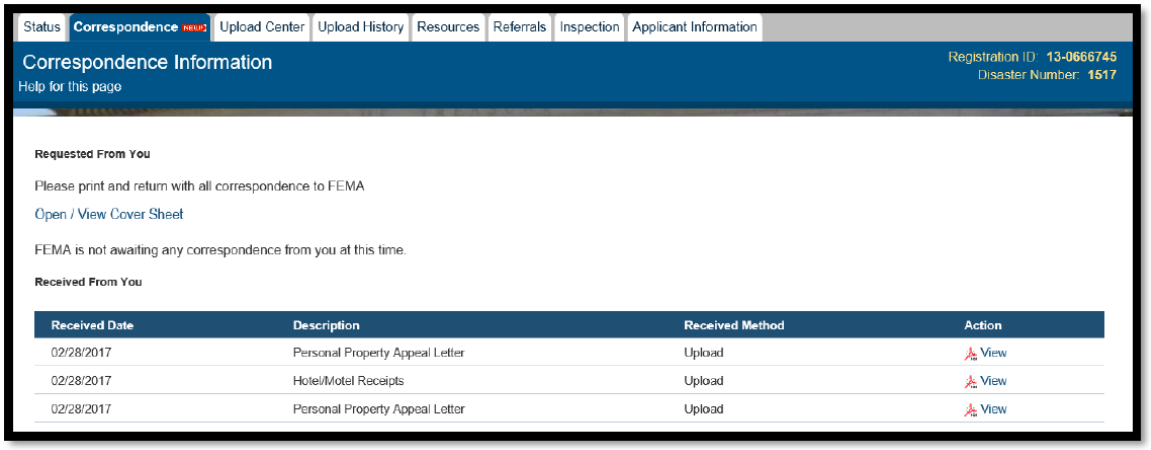


Mobile view (Android):

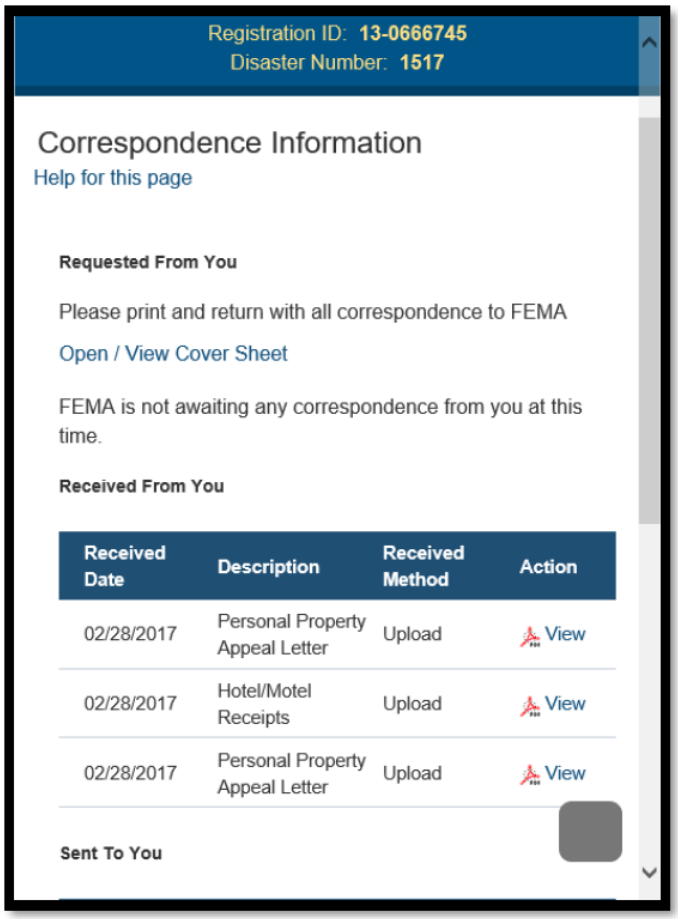


11. Documents that have been uploaded and received by FEMA can be viewed using the **Correspondence Tab > Received From You** section. This table view shows the ***Received Date***, the ***Description***, the ***Received Method***, and the ***Action*** available for that document.

Web view:



Mobile view (Android):



Once finished uploading and reviewing documents, the applicant can then log out of their account.