

FEEA: The Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund Emergency Hardship Loan Program

Tragedy and hardship can strike any family. And when they do, high, unplanned, out-of-pocket expenses can lead a family down a destabilizing and difficult financial path, forcing them to seek high interest loans, default on their debts, or even file for personal bankruptcy. FEEA offers eligible federal employees confidential, no-interest, no-fee loans to help them bridge their financial gaps in times of emergency. FEEA has provided over 11,000 loans to federal employees, totaling nearly \$8,000,000 since 1986.

Program Purpose: To help prevent a debt spiral for federal employees, when a specific emergency event creates an acute financial problem that can be alleviated with a short-term loan.

Loan Ceiling: \$1,500 is the regular upper loan limit, and the exact amount of the loan provided will be decided by FEEA. In very rare cases, additional funds beyond the \$1,500 limit may be available; FEEA will notify applicants if they qualify for higher amounts.

Individuals Eligible for Loans: Full-time or part-time, permanent federal civilian or postal employees, employed with the federal government for more than one year. Temporary, seasonal, or contract employees are not eligible for FEEA loans. In order to serve those most in need across the entire federal civilian workforce, FEEA only in the rarest of circumstances will grant a second loan to an individual who has previously received one. Individuals who are in the process of, have filed for, or have received an extension for bankruptcy in the last 5 years, in most cases, are not eligible for FEEA loans (including if the bankruptcy has been dismissed or discharged).

Eligible Hardships: In order to be eligible for a loan, the federal employee must have suffered one of the following hardships within the six months preceding the loan application:

- Severe illness, injury, or emergency dental work of employee
- Severe illness or injury of employee's immediate family member
- Death of employee's immediate family member
- Major loss/damage to primary residence due to natural disaster such as fire, flood, or hurricane

- Victim of domestic violence with immediate need for safe housing
- Victim of violent crime
- Victim of identity theft

Immediate family members, for purposes of this program, include the federal employee's parent, sibling, child, or legal dependent or legal spouse.

In cases where the financial hardship is related to the federal employee being on leave without pay, the leave must have been approved (no AWOL or disciplinary action) and the employee must have returned to work before applying for the loan.

While we recognize there are other hardships that may befall federal employees, FEEA unfortunately does not have the capacity to assist with emergencies other than those listed. Financial difficulties that pre-date a tragedy or are ongoing in nature are also beyond the scope of this program.

Eligible Loan Expenses: Approved loans will be disbursed by check made out to the creditor and sent to the employee for delivery to the creditor. Please note FEEA will not pay student loans, credit card bills, or make checks out to employees directly.

- Rent or mortgage payments
- Medical or dental bills (portion not covered by insurance)
- Home utilities (gas, electric, water)
- Funeral expenses
- Emergency travel*
- Temporary lodging needed due to a new natural disaster*

*If an applicant has other expenses, like emergency travel to attend a funeral or assist a sick family member, they must use their own funds to cover those expenses and FEEA will use its loan funds to cover the other expense categories above, up to the approved loan amount.

Please note our ability to give loans is subject to the availability of funding. FEEA relies on both the prompt repayment of loans and donations by concerned individuals and institutions to support its work.

Loan Repayment: Loans are generally repaid within ten months of receipt via equal payments per pay period. The formula for loan repayments is:

Total Loan Amount ÷ 10 = Monthly Loan Repayment.

For example, a \$1,500 loan would be repaid over 20 consecutive pay periods (for those on a bi-weekly pay schedule) at a rate of \$75 per pay period.

Loans are repaid through payroll allotment from the federal employee's payroll administrator to Wesbanco Bank. Wesbanco then remits the loan repayments to FEEA each month. Employees must open a personal savings account with Wesbanco and initiate a payroll allotment for the required loan repayment amount to this Wesbanco account. Once an employee initiates the payroll deduction, it will continue each pay period without further action on the employee's part. This is accomplished when they set up their allotment in the payroll servicer, i.e., MYPAY, POSTALEASE, EMPLOYEE EXPRESS or NFC. The allotment must remain open until FEEA notifies the employee their loan has been repaid in full. If your loan is approved, you will also need to complete the required Wesbanco payment transfer/allotment authorization forms (provided electronically after loan approval) before receipt of loan payments.

If a loan recipient departs federal employment, they must immediately pay the full balance of their loan directly to FEEA by check or credit card. Please contact FEEA for more information.

FEEA reserves the right to seek repayment for defaulted loans using all legal means available.

Loan Application: Applications must be completed online. We do not accept applications or original supporting documentation through email, fax, or mail. Please read all instructions and gather all required documentation before starting your online loan application. You must complete all sections of the application in full and attach all required supplemental documentation before clicking the "submit" button. Our system does not accept incomplete applications. FEEA does its best to review complete loan applications and process those approved as quickly as possible, generally within 7 business days. Applicants are encouraged to complete their applications as early as possible.

Please collect electronic copies of the following supplemental materials before completing and submitting your application to FEEA (all documents must be attached in PDF format only):

- Most recent SF-50 (Standard Form 50-Notification of Personnel Action). Check with your agency's human resource office if you don't have a copy.
- Most recent employee and spouse (if married) leave and earning statement(s).
- Evidence of Hardship (e.g. death certificate, complete FMLA application)

and approval, detailed doctor's note, leave & earnings statement showing approved leave without pay, police or insurance report, etc.). Depending on the hardship FEEA may need to review more than one document to prove hardship and/or FEEA may request additional documentation.

- Copy of bill(s) for which you are requesting assistance (e.g. mortgage, utility, or medical bill), based on the list of eligible loan expenses.
- Signed copy of FEEA's credit release authorization form, found on the last page of the application instructions.

Loan Adjudication: Complete applications are evaluated based on FEEA's available resources, the applicant's emergency situation, the degree of financial need, and the applicant's ability to repay a loan. The applicant's credit history will be reviewed via TransUnion as part of the loan review process. Applicants who do not show sufficient ability to repay a loan will NOT be approved. FEEA may request additional documentation as part of the review process, including information on all outstanding debt.

Credit Counseling: In some cases, applicants may qualify for reimbursement of an initial counseling session with an accredited credit counseling agency. FEEA will provide more information to qualifying applicants.

DETAILED APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1 – Personal, Employment, and Emergency Information

Please complete the Personal and Employment Information sections of the form. Items marked with a red * on the form are required.

Please Note:

- For the Household Members Detail, please give us the names of all people who live in your home with you and their relationship to you ex. (name of person)-spouse; (name of person)-daughter; etc.
- For the work phone number, please give us your direct line number (if you have one) and/or include your extension number.

Next, complete the Emergency Situation information as follows:

What is the reason for your loan request?	Choose from the drop-down list of emergency situations. Your emergency must fit one of these descriptions in order to be eligible and must have occurred within the last 6 months.
What expenses are you seeking payment for?	Please check the box(es) next to the type(s) of expenses you are asking us to help with. The listed expense categories are the only ones FEEA can assist with.
Please describe the circumstances leading you to seek a loan from FEEA.	Please be specific in describing the emergency situation you selected as the reason for your loan request. Tell us: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what happened• when it happened• why it caused you to fall behind financially

Then, click “next” to continue your application or “save” if you need to finish later.

Section 2 – Personal Finances

Please complete all items in this section truthfully and accurately. For any income or expense item that doesn’t apply to you, please enter a “0” in order to continue. Leaving any item blank will result in an error message and you will not be able to

complete your application. Please note that we will compare the information you provide in this section with the required documentation attached to your application and with your credit report. You may be asked to provide additional information about anything that does not match the available documentation.

If you are married and your spouse works, you MUST include your spouse’s income information and documentation with your application.

When finished, click “next” to continue your application or “save” if you need to finish later.

Section 3 – Creditor Information, Attachments, and Verification Statements

Payee Information: Please enter all information for up to two creditors you are asking FEEA to pay on your behalf. All loan checks are made out directly to the creditor and the maximum total amount is \$1,500. Allowable creditors include landlord, mortgage company, utility companies, funeral homes, contractors performing post-disaster repairs, and medical/dental facilities. FEEA does NOT make payments to credit card companies, auto loans, or to loan applicants directly (except for reimbursement for approved emergency travel).

Required Attachments: Please attach all required documentation, in PDF format only. We recommend using a personal computer or smartphone (application is mobile-friendly) to complete the application as some federal agency firewalls may block parts of the application from submitting correctly. All required documents MUST be included in order for FEEA to process your application. Please DO NOT attach the same document multiple times or attach items other than those requested. FEEA cannot process your application without ALL required documents and it will slow down the process if we have to email you to request missing items. Required documents include:

Most recent SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action)	The issue date on your SF-50 (or PS-50 for Postal employees) MUST be within the last year.
Most Recent Leave and Earnings Statements	Submit a copy of your current leave and earnings statement. If your current statement shows LWOP, please also submit a copy of the most recent prior statement that does not have LWOP/shows your full pay. <u>Please note: if</u>

	<u>you have had LWOP/FMLA you generally must be back to work full-time in order to apply.</u>
Most Recent Spouse’s Leave and Earnings Statements	If you are married and your spouse works, you MUST submit their last leave and earnings statement (or pay stub)
Evidence of Emergency (FMLA paperwork, death certificate, insurance/police reports, etc.)	You must submit evidence of the emergency situation that caused you to fall behind on your bill(s). Please see the below section “Acceptable Evidence of Emergency” for the documents required for each type of emergency situation.
Copy of bill(s) you are seeking assistance for, based on the listed eligible loan expenses	This must be the most recent version of the bill(s), showing your full outstanding balance(s), and including your name and address, the name of the company that is billing you, your account number, and the date your payment is due. If you are sending a screenshot from your smartphone, please be sure it shows all required information.
Copy of state-issued driver or non-driver ID	Make a copy of your driver’s license or state-issued non-driver ID
Credit Check Waiver	Please print, sign, and scan a copy of the credit check waiver included at the end of these instructions. Must be a physical signature, we do NOT accept electronic signatures on credit waivers. FEEA checks your credit as part of the loan approval process.

Acceptable Evidence of Emergency: The table below details which documentation is appropriate for each type of qualifying emergency. Your hardship must be caused by one of these types of emergencies and you MUST provide the required documentation for your emergency situation.

Severe illness, injury, or emergency dental work of employee	Medical or dental bills not covered by insurance, including the explanation of benefits from your insurance provider; if the emergency included lost pay due to LWOP please provide a detailed doctor's note and pay stub showing approved LWOP; if the emergency included lost pay due to FMLA please provide your complete FMLA application and approval and pay stub showing unpaid leave
Severe illness or injury of employee's immediate family member	Medical or dental bills not covered by insurance, including the explanation of benefits from your insurance provider; if the emergency included lost pay due to LWOP please provide a detailed doctor's note and pay stub showing approved LWOP; if the emergency included lost pay due to FMLA please provide your complete FMLA application and approval and pay stub showing unpaid leave
Death of employee's immediate family member	Death certificate or obituary notice, showing relationship to the applicant and either a bill/receipt for funeral expenses or receipt(s) for out-of-town travel/lodging
Major loss/damage to primary residence due to natural disaster such as fire, flood, or hurricane	Insurance claim/adjustor's report showing uncovered loss and/or deductible due; police or fire report
Victim of domestic violence with immediate need for safe housing	Victim's advocate or counselor statement/report stating applicant is a victim of domestic violence, or Police report
Victim of violent crime	Police report or victim's advocate or counselor statement/report
Victim of identity theft	Police report or report to the Federal Trade Commission (Identitytheft.gov) with documentation of related financial loss or expenses

Terms, Signatures and Verification: For each item, please check the box and type your full name. Your electronic signature will appear in the area below your typed name. Verification of all statements is required in order to be considered for a loan.

Once you have completed all items, complete the security Captcha and then click "send" at the bottom of the page to submit your application. You will receive an automated email when your application is received. If we require additional information to process your application, we will be in touch via email. **Loan processing can take up to 7 business days for a complete application and may take longer if required items are missing.**

If you are approved for a loan, we will send you a link to additional paperwork that must be completed before a check is issued.

If you are not approved for a loan, we will send you an email with the reason for your denial. All decisions are final.