



# FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Application Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### Getting Started

#### When is the deadline to apply?

Applications, letters of recommendation, and supporting materials must be received by March 4, 2024, 11:59 p.m. PST. Application materials must be submitted through the online portal or emailed to [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov).

#### How do I complete my application?

You have two (2) options for completing a Youth Preparedness Council (YPC) application.

##### **Option 1: Online Application – apply online through the YPC application portal.**

To complete an online application, visit the application [portal](#).

##### **Option 2: Email Application – apply by completing a PDF application and submitting via email.**

To apply through email, download a [PDF version](#) of the application form and submit it via email.

Make sure you have the most recent version of Adobe Reader to view and edit the file. You can download Adobe Reader at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. Applicants must input responses directly into the application form, which is an editable PDF. Be sure to save a downloaded copy of the PDF to your computer.

When submitting, please clearly label all files (e.g., FirstName\_LastName\_ApplicationForm), including the application form, letters of recommendation, and any optional supplemental material and submit as attachments to your email. Send all material in one (1) email to [FEMA@Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA@Prepare@fema.dhs.gov). Remember that we must receive consent from your parent/guardian before we can review your application.

#### Who will review my application?

FEMA Headquarters and regional staff will review applications. You can learn more about FEMA's ten regional offices here: [www.fema.gov/regional-contact-information](http://www.fema.gov/regional-contact-information). Semi-finalists will be asked to participate in a virtual (e.g. Zoom) or telephone interview.

### Who Can Apply?

#### Who can apply to join the YPC?

Each applicant must be a current 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, or 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student who has done at least one of the following:

- Participated in community activities;
- Served in a leadership role;
- Lived through a disaster and shared their experiences; and/or
- Participated in a preparedness activity or training related to emergency preparedness.

#### I applied last year and was not selected to the YPC. Can I apply again?



Yes! Unfortunately, we are unable to accept all qualified applicants in a given year. Previous applicants are encouraged to reapply. There is a space on the application form to indicate whether you have previously applied.

### **Can someone who serves on a local preparedness organization (e.g., a Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT) apply to serve on the YPC?**

Yes, any 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, or 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student who is engaged in their community may apply to serve on the YPC.

### **Can I nominate someone for the YPC?**

We encourage you to share the application with youth who you think would be a good fit for the YPC. However, FEMA will only consider applications submitted directly by applicants themselves. That is, you cannot apply for someone else. If you are 18 years or older, writing a letter of recommendation for an applicant is a great way to show your support.

## **Requirements and Materials**

### **What makes a complete application package?**

A complete package includes the following attachments submitted either via the application portal or in one email:

- Parent/guardian consent for your application to the YPC (see below).
- One application, which includes your answers to the narrative response questions.
- Two letters of recommendation.
- Any supplemental materials that you feel support your application (optional).

Please clearly label all attachments (e.g., FirstName\_LastName\_ApplicationForm; FirstName\_LastName\_Recommendation1).

If the files are too large to send in an email, you may want to consider:

- Uploading supporting materials, videos, and information to file sharing websites (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox, or YouTube for videos, etc.) and providing the link rather than attaching the files. Applicants can put links directly into the “Description” fields in the “Supplemental Materials” section of the application. **Note:** When sharing links, please ensure that you are securing the file link by setting permissions so that only [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov) can access it and/or password protect the link.
- Compressing pictures or reducing the resolution of pictures.
- Converting text and/or images to PDF files.

If you have a problem submitting your application materials, please email [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov) for assistance.

### **How do I provide parent/guardian consent?**

If you are under the age of 18, your parent/guardian must provide consent for your application. We cannot review your application without this consent.





- If you are applying online through the application portal, please ensure your parent/guardian submits the online consent form attached to your application.
- If you are applying by email, please ensure that your parent/guardian emails [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov) and includes: 1) their full name, 2) your full name, and 3) the following statement:

*I confirm that I am the parent/guardian of the applicant listed above, and I consent to their application to FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council (YPC). This consent includes their submission of the initial application and, if selected as semi-finalist, a video conference interview with FEMA headquarters and regional staff (including contractors).*

We will reach out to applicants if we do not receive the appropriate parent/guardian consent.

### **What are the requirements for the narrative responses on the application form?**

You may address all narrative response questions/topics on the application form by either written or video response.

#### **Written Response**

If responding in writing, please adhere to the character limit (including spaces) provided for each response. Once you have reached the limit, the application will not accept any more characters. You may need to rework your response to fit within the designated character allotment.

#### **Video Response**

If responding via video, you must address all narrative response questions from the application form in one video recording. To submit your video, upload your video to a video-sharing website (e.g., YouTube) and provide the link in the indicated field in your application. When sharing links, please ensure that links are secured by setting permission to "unlisted." Remember that you should submit one video that responds to all narrative questions, and that your video must be no longer than seven (7) minutes.

### **Who should I ask to write my letters of recommendation?**

Letters of recommendation must come from adults 18 years of age or older who are familiar with your involvement in the community. Examples of people who may write letters of recommendation include group leaders, teachers, advisors/counselors, school administrators, coaches, employers, and community or faith leaders. Family members, relatives, or guardians may not write letters of recommendation. Letters may be submitted in English or in Spanish.

### **What types of supplemental materials can I submit?**

You can submit any materials that you feel will support your application. Possible supplemental materials include news articles that you have written or in which you were featured, relevant materials you have developed, or pictures or video of a community activity in which you took part. Be creative! Showing your activities and impact will strengthen your application.

All supplemental materials must be submitted online with the application or included in the same email as the rest of the application materials. Please clearly label supplemental materials (e.g., FirstName\_LastName\_SupplementalDocument1).

Please note that supplemental materials are not required.





## Selection Notification

### Will I get a notification when my application is received?

FEMA will send an email confirming receipt of your application. If you do not receive a confirmation email within three (3) business days, please resend your application or email [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov).

### When will I find out if FEMA selected me for the YPC?

FEMA will select and notify new YPC members by June 2024. FEMA will also notify applicants that are not selected at that time.

### Are there any monetary rewards associated with being selected for the YPC?

There are no cash rewards associated with being selected for the YPC. Please note that there is also no financial support for projects associated with the council and that there is no cost associated with participation in the council.

## Responsibilities

### If selected, what will be required of me on the YPC?

Participants are expected to share their perspectives on emergency preparedness with FEMA and their communities. The 2024 YPC program begins in July. Members attend a virtual kickoff meeting, and then are expected to serve on the council for a full year. During their term on the council, members work together as a team to develop a preparedness project. Members are also expected to attend the YPC Summit which will be held in Washington, DC in July of 2025.

Members are also required to participate in mandatory group conference calls. These calls allow members to provide updates on their projects, pose questions to FEMA staff, and provide feedback to FEMA and each other. Members are permitted to miss one call per year. Throughout the year, council members also meet in small groups to discuss their work and/or to attend office hours with FEMA staff.

Members are expected to submit monthly activity logs that include information about progress they have made, challenges they have faced, and their participation in community activities.

Members who do not fulfil council responsibilities may be released from the council and/or not invited to participate in the YPC Summit.

For more information on the requirements, please see the [YPC Member Roles and Responsibilities](#).

### What is the YPC Summit? When and where does it take place?

Members selected for the 2024 YPC are expected to attend the YPC Summit upon completion of their term in the program. This Summit will be held in Washington, D.C. during July of 2025. More information will be provided as the date approaches.

#### Attendance is mandatory for all YPC members.

The YPC Summit provides an opportunity for council members to meet FEMA representatives and council teammates, begin thinking about their projects for the year, and learn more about FEMA's organizational structure and basic project management skills. Sessions during the YPC Summit cover





a range of topics. In some sessions, YPC members are given the opportunity to share their ideas and questions with FEMA and community partners. In other sessions, new members prepare for the projects they will develop during their time on the YPC.

Each YPC member must be accompanied to the Summit by a parent/guardian or parent-approved chaperone. More details about the Summit and Summit-related travel will be provided as the date approaches.

### How much will the YPC Summit cost?

In accordance with federal travel regulations, YPC members and chaperones will be reimbursed for expenses associated with the YPC Summit. Members and chaperones are asked to pay some expenses up front (see details below) and are reimbursed by FEMA after the YPC Summit. If this structure poses a hardship, please be in touch with program staff.

YPC members and their chaperones are reimbursed for:

- **Travel:** FEMA will pay for transportation via common carrier — air, rail, or bus transportation—in advance of the Summit. Travel includes transportation to and from the airport, train station, etc. Reimbursement for parking and local travel—transportation to and from YPC Summit-related events—will take place after the Summit. **Note:** Transportation for personal excursions, such as sightseeing, is not reimbursable.
- **Lodging:** FEMA selects location and pays for lodging in advance of the Summit.
- **Meals and incidental expenses:** Expenses in this category are reimbursed at a flat, per diem rate.

More information will be provided as the date of the Summit approaches.

### Additional Questions

Please email additional questions to [FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Prepare@fema.dhs.gov).

