Option #2:

**10 minutes or less:**

Please adapt/add to these brief comments as you see fit to reflect your artist community. Instructions for submitting them online is below. You MUST include the Docket information at the beginning for FEMA to accept them.

RE: Docket FEMA-2023-0003

[Organization name] is pleased to submit these comments to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding the Interim Final Rule (IFR) issued January 22, 2024, amending the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) sections governing the Individual Assistance Program (IHP) in order to increase equity within the program and meet the onrushing impact of climate change.

1. The new requirement that people need to have lived in a primary residence that was damaged by a disaster and that their lost, damaged or destroyed tools need to have been located there in order for them to apply for and receive this aid will leave out an extraordinary number of artists. Visual artists may not be able to work in their home. People may use a space behind their house. Musicians go on tour and may be caught in a disaster. The old Regulation didn’t state that this was necessary. FEMA covers automobiles no matter where they are damaged in the disaster. Please do the same for this provision. Section 206.119(b)(6) *(Feel free to add your own examples here!)*
2. Please make sure that people who have some W-2 income won’t be precluded from applying for this aid. Please make sure people who have S Corps can apply for it. Artists who are self-employed, gig workers, and freelancers often work in these ways. Section 206.119(b)(6)(iv)
3. In terms of documentation that someone is a self-employed artist, can FEMA accept alternative proof of professional activity as an artist, in addition to or in lieu of tax returns? This could include evidence of performances over the past few years, exhibited work, created work, etc. Artists don’t always earn income from their work, and if they do they don’t always earn income every year from their artmaking, even though they are professionals. 206.119(a)
4. In regard to the amount of money that will be provided to artists and other self-employed people to repair/replace their essential tools and equipment, we want FEMA to understand that a professional's tools, like their instruments, cameras or paints, will cost much more than a basic instrument, camera or paint. In order to get back to work and earn their living, what they lost needs to be replaced with comparable quality items. *(Please then cite one or two actual examples if you can to make this concrete for them. It is easy to look up the prices of professional-grade items online).* For example, a professional trombone costs approximately $2,800 at a minimum and many range from $3,500 - $5,800. Section 206.111- Definitions, Essential Tools; Section 206.119(a); Section 206.119 (b)(6)(iv) – Financial Assistance to address other needs. Types of assistance. Personal Property.

[Submit your comments here](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/01/22/2024-00677/individual-assistance-program-equity#open-comment). Submitting these by Friday, March 22 is optimal, but they can be sent after that.

If you would like to view the Rule and other comments in full, [you can view them here](https://www.regulations.gov/document/FEMA-2023-0003-0001).