



FEMA

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News Release

Make Smart Decisions with Louisiana Flood Recovery Funds

Baton Rouge, La. – With more than \$4.3 million in Individual Assistance already in the hands of Louisiana flood survivors, state and federal officials have some advice: Resist the urge to splurge.

State and federal disaster assistance is meant to help people pay for necessities and start to get back on their feet.

Disaster assistance may include grants and loans to help pay for emergency repairs to damaged homes, temporary housing, or other serious disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance or other sources.

A letter explaining a payment's purpose will arrive within a day or two of the check or direct deposit payment. If survivors use payments on anything other than their intended purpose, they may have to repay those funds – and might not be able to receive future disaster assistance.

Survivors who have not yet registered may do so online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov. They may also call 1-800-621-3362 or (TTY) 1-800-462-7585. Those who use 711 Relay or Video Relay Services may call 1-800-621-3362. Help is available in most languages and phone lines are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week until further notice.

The state and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provide assistance to eligible survivors primarily as Housing Assistance and/or Other Needs Assistance. Federal assistance also is available in the form of low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration to help businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters to recover.

FEMA Housing Assistance grants may be used for:

- Temporary rental assistance
- Essential repairs necessary to return a damaged home to a safe and functional condition
- Replacing a home that has been completely destroyed

Other Needs Assistance grants may be used to cover disaster-related expenses, such as:

- Medical, dental, funeral and burial costs
- Replacement of disaster-damaged personal property, specialized tools for employment household items and appliances
- Vehicle repair or other serious needs

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We urge everyone to continue to use caution in areas where floodwaters remain. Monitor DOTD's www.511la.org website for updated road closure information. Look for advisories from your local authorities and emergency managers. You can find the latest information on the state's response at www.emergency.la.gov. GOHSEP also provides information on Facebook and Twitter. You can receive emergency alerts on most smartphones and tablets by downloading the new Alert FM App. It is free for basic service. You can also download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at www.getagameplan.org.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. Follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/femaregion6> and the FEMA Blog at <http://blog.fema.gov>.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations, homeowners and renters fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling (800) 659-2955, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's Web site at www.sba.gov/disaster. Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call (800)877-8339.