

# HURRICANE LAURA (DR-4559-LA)

## ESF 15 - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### DAILY FACT SHEET 9

TUESDAY, SEPT. 8, 2020

#### NAVIGATING THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

#### Key Messages:

- Let's take a moment today to remember **FEMA's core value of compassion**. This is the expression of our care for others. We must be **understanding, empathetic, and inclusive** as we support fellow employees, partner organizations, individuals, and communities. We can demonstrate this every day by:
  - Showing empathy to a disaster survivor and providing relevant information and direction.
  - Supporting a colleague by listening or assisting with a project, or when they are coping with a personal or family emergency.
  - Exercising patience when explaining our processes to one of our partners.

*Hurricane Laura survivors line up to turn in essential documents to FEMA workers at the Jefferson Davis Drive-Thru DRC.*

- So far, FEMA has registered **123,971 Louisiana survivors** and put **more than \$36 million** in the hands of residents, including **nearly \$19 million** for housing assistance

and **more than \$17 million** for other needs assistance. SBA has distributed **\$1.4 million** to **3,482 applicants**.

- Federal disaster assistance is authorized for residents in **Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Grant, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Rapides, Sabine, Vermilion, Vernon and Winn parishes**. More parishes may be designated for assistance in the coming weeks.
- Assistance can include grants for **temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses**, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.
- To apply, **file an insurance claim at the same time you register with FEMA**. If you have insurance, you must file a claim. You can register with FEMA online at [disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov) or by calling **800-621-3362**
  - Disaster assistance applicants, who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY, should call **1-800-462-7585** directly.
  - For those who use **711** or Video Relay Service (VRS), call **1-800-621-3362**.
  - The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from **7 a.m. to 10 p.m.** daily.

## **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:**

- **USACE also** opened a **Blue Roof Sign-Up Center** at the Lake Charles Civic Center, 900 Lakeshore Dr. Hours are **9 a.m. to 5 p.m.** daily.
- **Operation Blue Roof** is the priority residential mission for USACE, providing homeowners and renters in disaster areas with fiber-reinforced sheeting for damaged roofs before permanent repairs are made. To sign up for this free service visit: [www.usace.army.mil/blueroof](http://www.usace.army.mil/blueroof) or call **888-ROOF-BLU (888-766-3258)**.
- USACE completed **its first roof installation** on Sept. 6. For social media coverage:
  - On Facebook, go to this [post](#)
  - On Twitter go to this [post](#)
  - On Instagram, go to this [photo](#)

- For more information about **Operation Blue Roof** and the people who get them installed, watch this [video](#).

### Individual Assistance:

- Registering with any other agency does not constitute a registration with FEMA.
- If you already called FEMA to register for assistance for damage caused by the recent storms and flooding, you will not need to reapply. You can call the FEMA Helpline and speak with a representative if you have questions.
- Federal funding is also available to state and local governments and some private, nonprofit organizations in **Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Grant, Natchitoches, Vermilion, Vernon and Winn parishes** for debris removal, emergency protective measures, roads and bridges, water control facilities, public buildings and contents, public utilities and parks, recreational, and other facilities (Categories A – G).
- In response to COVID-19, FEMA will be conducting **remote inspections** where inspectors contact survivors by phone to ask about the type and extent of damage sustained. Remote inspections provide a new way of **evaluating damage** -- comparable to traditional, in-person inspections – and **speed up the delivery of recovery assistance** to survivors based on eligibility. If you had minimal damage you will not automatically be scheduled for a home inspection. If you find **significant disaster-caused damage** after applying to FEMA, you can request an inspection.
- Applicants using a relay service such as videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel, should provide the specific number assigned to that service. It is important that FEMA can contact you, and you should be aware phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number.

*FEMA Region 6 Administrator Tony Robinson hands ice out to Hurricane Laura survivors in Louisiana.*

**Beware: after all disasters, it is common for some people to try to take advantage of survivors by posing as official disaster aid workers. If you are**

**suspicious of a potential fraud or are a victim of fraud report it to the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. Complaints may also be made by contacting local law enforcement. Please spread the word and be on the lookout for suspicious behavior.**

## **Drive-Thru Disaster Recovery Centers:**

- A second drive-thru FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) opened this week in Jefferson Davis Parish and a third is preparing to open this in Ouachita Parish. Survivors can visit Drive-Thru DRCs to have disaster application documents scanned into their case file or ask questions about federal disaster assistance.
  - The centers operate under strict COVID-19 protocols to ensure visitors are safe.
  - Masks or face coverings are required for entry and service. You will remain in your car. A specialist wearing a face mask will receive your documents through the window and return them to you.
  - No appointments are necessary. Hours are **7 a.m. to 7 p.m.** daily.
  - So far, locations include:

### **Calcasieu Parish School Board**

3310 Broad St.

Lake Charles, LA 70615

### **Lacassine High School**

409 Algonia Ave.

Lacassine, LA 70650

## Monroe Civic Center

401 Lea Joyner Expressway

Monroe, LA 71202

*(set to open Thursday, September 10; hours will be 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)*

- Eligible Hurricane Laura survivors may now **be reimbursed for purchases like a generator, chainsaw and carbon monoxide detector** through FEMA's Other Needs Assistance program. ONA may also reimburse eligible survivors for carbon monoxide detectors, smoke detectors, humidifiers, dehumidifiers and weather radios.
- It is important to remember, and help inform everyone, that survivors should **never use a generator inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area**. Keep these devices outdoors, away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. There are **25 confirmed fatalities** to date. **Nine** of those were due to **carbon monoxide poisoning** from generators.
- **Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas** that can cause **sudden illness and death**. It is produced any time a fossil fuel is burned.

### How To Appeal Denial of Assistance:

- If you received a letter saying you are ineligible for FEMA assistance, **don't be discouraged**, you just may need to provide additional information. In fact, **missing documentation** and **not enough damage to essential living spaces** are among the most common reasons you can initially be found ineligible.

- **Examples of missing documentation** include an insurance settlement letter, proof of residence, proof of ownership of the property or proof that the damaged property was your primary residence at the time of the disaster.
- The goal of FEMA housing assistance is to ensure people live in safe, sanitary and functional housing.
- FEMA assistance is not insurance. **Your home may have suffered storm damage, but if it did not affect essential living space, you may not be determined eligible for assistance.** FEMA considers the kitchen, bathrooms and occupied bedrooms as essential living spaces.
- If you think an error was made regarding your case, you have the right to appeal. The appeal must be in writing and include new information or documentation. Start the process and get assistance with your appeal letter by calling FEMA at **800-621-3362** or TTY: **800-462-7585**. Lines are open daily from **7 a.m.-11 p.m.** Help is available in most languages.

## Survivor Questions Online:

- FEMA staff are working to answer an above-average volume of Hurricane Laura-related email questions submitted through the FEMA app and the FEMA.gov contact-us form.
- The goal is to respond quickly and helpfully and when available, provide relevant FEMA documents and products to answer all survivor questions from.
- Frequent concerns needing to be addressed include:
  - Photos of hand-written letters intended as FEMA aid applications or letters of appeal regarding a denial of assistance.
  - Emailed complaints about account login PIN issues on [disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov).
  - Concerns over being kept on hold for extended periods on the FEMA Helpline.
  - Annoyance at being immediately denied, upon applying for aid online.
  - Uncertainty over not knowing where to go for one-on-one application assistance.

## U.S. Small Business Administration:

- SBA has a Virtual Disaster Loan Outreach Center (VDLOC) and a Virtual Business Recovery Center (VBRC) available to assist survivors. The website to apply is <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov> and the Customer Service Center can be reached at **800 659-2955**.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration provides low-interest loans to eligible homeowners and businesses whose insurance or FEMA assistance doesn't cover all recovery costs.
- Call 1-**800-659-2955** or visit [disasterloanassistance.sba.gov](https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov).

## Health Tips for Survivors and Responders:

- Remember to hydrate with water or sports drinks when working in the Louisiana heat removing debris or other storm clean up. Heat-related illnesses can be deadly but are preventable. Watch for symptoms like muscle cramps, nausea and dizziness.
- Treat heat stroke or intense sunburn as serious medical conditions. Get the person in the shade and quickly call **9-1-1**.
- Take frequent breaks and call **9-1-1** for medical emergencies.

### Covid-19 Safety

- Take care of yourself first. If you feel sick, please **contact your supervisor** immediately
- Don't forget to complete accountability daily and **have your PPE with you at all time**

- Social distance when possible (wear your face covering)
- Report an emergency by calling **9-1-1** or **contact your Supervisor, Safety Officer or Security Officer.**

### **Sheltering Assistance:**

- **Emergency housing** remains a major focus, as impacted residents are filling up designated facilities. **12,732 hurricane survivors** are sheltering in Louisiana in **5,451 hotel rooms**.
- If you need shelter, **text LASHELTER to 898-211** for information about where to go or **call 211**.

### **Food Assistance:**

- The disaster has disrupted thousands of residents' ability to buy and prepare food. State agencies and volunteer groups are playing a central role in providing meals to residents.
- The Salvation Army is operating **16 feeding units** and the state is supporting **eight food banks** in the impacted areas.
- With the help of partners, the **American Red Cross** continues to provide meals and personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies across the impacted area. It has **11** feeding locations in **nine** cities and **five** parishes. **Meals** are at noon and 5 p.m. and free to anyone affected by the disaster.
- For information about the American Red Cross in Louisiana, go to [redcross.org/louisiana](https://redcross.org/louisiana) or [@arclouisiana on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/arclouisiana)

### **Debris Removal:**

- The **Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development** has launched a public website with a real-time map showing how many roads have been cleared of debris. The site, [511la.org](https://511la.org), also features maps showing roads due to be cleared within the next 24 hours.

## Flood insurance:

- NFIP Policy holders should follow these steps:
  - For NFIP policyholders taking pre-flood measures, up to **\$1,000** in reasonable expenses may be covered to protect your insured property, and **up to \$1,000** to move your insured property away from a flood or imminent danger of a flood.
  - Keep all receipts and record the time spent performing the work to submit to the insurance adjuster when you file your claim.
  - Contact your insurance agent to report your loss. If you can't remember the name or number of the insurance company that services your FEMA flood policy, call the NFIP at **877-336-2627** to find out. Or email [Floodsmart@FEMA.dhs.gov](mailto:Floodsmart@FEMA.dhs.gov).

## Louisiana Resources:

- The State of Louisiana has launched an online hub for Hurricane Laura information at [hurricanelaura.la.gov](http://hurricanelaura.la.gov), which highlights news and links to resources.
- The governor's office has also established a **Laura-specific texting list** to give people wanting updates on Hurricane Laura. Text **LAURA to 67283** to receive updates.
- Survivors can also access resources to help with their recovery at [emergency.louisiana.gov](http://emergency.louisiana.gov)
- According to the Louisiana Public Service Commission, **more than 139,000** Louisiana customers are still without power due to Hurricane Laura. To keep track of the outages visit <https://lpsc.louisiana.gov/outages/map/q2r>

## FEMA Online:

- **FEMA photographers and videographers** continue to produce videos providing updates and key information to survivors. Go to: [FEMA Hurricane Laura](#) to watch.
  
- **Follow FEMA on social media** at [FEMA online](#), on Twitter [@FEMA](#) or [@FEMAEspanol](#), on [FEMA Facebook page](#) or [FEMA Espanol page](#) and at [FEMA YouTube channel](#). Also, follow Administrator Pete Gaynor on Twitter [@FEMA\\_Pete](#).
  
- To download the **FEMA Mobile App**:
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  - On an Apple Device: Text **APPLE** to **43362 (4FEMA)**