



# FEMA

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## Private Sector Advisory

### **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTINUES RESPONSE TO HURRICANE HARVEY**

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its federal partners continue to mobilize personnel and resources to support state, local and tribal efforts throughout Texas and Louisiana. More than **21,000** federal staff are deployed in support of Tropical Storm Harvey response.

While rescue efforts continue in many areas, recovery efforts are beginning for many communities. As of August 31, 2017:

- More than 33,800 people sought refuge in more than 240 Red Cross and partner shelters in Texas. Six shelters are also open in Louisiana serving another 450 people.
- Many areas are inaccessible. Federal, state and local search and rescue teams continue to reach those in stranded areas.
- U.S. Coast Guard and the Texas National Guard are transporting supplies and volunteers where they are needed most.
- Approximately **53,000** pounds of medical equipment and supplies have been deployed to affected areas

The top priority remains protecting lives and the safety of those in affected areas. The following commodities have been provided by FEMA to the states of Texas and Louisiana for distribution by local communities.

- Texas
  - More than **1,900,000** meals;
  - More than **1,960,000** million liters of water;
  - More than **4,700** blankets; and
  - More than **1,400** cots
- Louisiana:
  - More than **416,000** meals;
  - More than **414,000** liters of water

A Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator (FDRC) is being appointed to help with long-term planning and recovery. The FDRC oversees an assessment of impacted communities and helps to develop a recovery support strategy. That strategy helps these hard-hit communities gain easier access to federal funding, bridge gaps in assistance, and establish goals for recovery that are measurable, achievable and affordable.

FEMA has received more than **364,000 registrations** for assistance, the largest registration after any single event. More than **103,000** of your neighbors have already been approved for **\$66.4 million** in assistance with FEMA and we want to help you.

The [FEMA mobile app](#) (in English and Spanish) provides disaster recovery tips and residents and business owners are able to register for assistance through [the FEMA mobile app](#) or [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov).

The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** has received **2,118** disaster loan applications primarily for homes. The SBA has fielded **5,221** calls and completed **451** property damage inspections.

[Short-term housing assistance and other immediate funding](#) is available to survivors who register. Survivors whose homes are uninhabitable or inaccessible may have access to short-term lodging at eligible hotels. FEMA can also provide up to two months of expedited rental assistance to those eligible. When survivors register, they will also receive information on other resources in their area, including available services from other federal agencies.

For survivors who have suffered damage and have federal flood insurance, FEMA's [National Flood Insurance Program](#) is issuing advance payments of up to \$5,000 for building and contents damages prior to an adjuster's inspection to help get funds into the hands of survivors as soon as possible. If a policyholder has photos and receipts of out-of-pocket expenses, they may receive an advance payment of up to \$10,000. As of 2:30 pm EDT on Thursday, August 31, over **51,000** claims have been submitted in Texas.

To help people affected by this disaster, FEMA has created a webpage with [resources](#) and additional information for People with Disabilities and Others with Access & Functional Needs. Information is available in the following languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Urdu](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

More than **3,500** FEMA employees are working in support of Tropical Storm Harvey response.

### ***Other Ongoing Federal Efforts:***

The **American Red Cross (Red Cross)** has more than **2,000** disaster workers on the ground, and hundreds more are enroute, including a group of highly-skilled volunteers from the Mexican Red Cross who will help support shelters, distribute aid, and connect with Spanish speaking disaster survivors inform them about support available. Red Cross estimates that it has shelter supplies in the area for nearly **70,000** people. Red Cross is expanding its feeding operation with trailer of kitchen supplies on the ground to support eight kitchens, each able to produce 10,000 meals a day. To date, more than **250,000** meals and snacks have been served. Red Cross continues to deliver blood and platelets to partnering hospital in flood affected areas.

The DHS **Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)** and FEMA have developed guidance for impacted states, localities, and other federal recipients on how to effectively communicate with the whole community and carry out their disaster-related activities in a non-discriminatory manner. The guidance is available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/tips-effectively-communicating-protected-populations-during-preparedness-response-and>.

The **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)** deployed more than **450** AmeriCorps members to the region to support American Red Cross shelter and feeding operations, and FEMA's disaster damage assessments and logistics. AmeriCorps members are also working to stand up a Volunteer Reception Center. Additional requests for AmeriCorps disaster response teams are in development. These teams are trained to provide expert manpower for shelter operations, debris removal, and volunteer and donations management.

The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** has released a [statement](#) on the explosion at an Arkema facility in Crosby, Texas. EPA field personnel are in Unified Command coordinating seven teams identifying and evaluating potential hazards posed by orphaned containers. The teams will determine actions needed to stabilize or remove items.

The **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** has provided care to more than **500** patients through the Federal Medical Station established in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center and two urgent care sites in nearby cities. In addition, HHS has more than **1,000** personnel on the ground in Texas and Louisiana. Declared public health emergencies remain in effect for Texas and Louisiana to allow health care facilities to provide care unimpeded.

The DHS **National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD)** is helping facilitate access to communications and other critical infrastructure as recovery efforts begin. Of note, NPPD is supporting critical emergency communications through multiple avenues: Emergency responders placed **1,599** Government Emergency Telecommunication Service (GETS) calls on Tuesday, August 29, 2017. NPPD has posted a [US-CERT alert](#) on Potential Hurricane Harvey Phishing Scams attempting to take advantage of efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to hurricane survivors. Deployed NPPD workers are helping to maintain or establish coordination with owners and operators of priority facilities to determine their facility status.

The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** announced that as of Aug. 31, the SBA will offer an automatic 12-month deferment of principal and interest payments for SBA-serviced business loan and disaster loans that are in “regular servicing” status for residents and businesses in the declared counties.

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** is working in partnership to support the local, state, and federal response to Hurricane Harvey. USACE has more than **150** personnel engaged and operating in coordination with county, state, and FEMA partners. USACE is focused on flood mitigation and reservoir operations, temporary emergency power, debris technical assistance, navigation restoration, and infrastructure assessments.

The **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)** is working with the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** Office of Coast Survey and the USACE to conduct a survey of navigational aids in the greater Houston Metro Area. In addition, the Coast Guard captain of the port is opening certain ports and waterways in Brownsville (no restrictions) and in Corpus Christi (with restrictions). Mariners are advised that although some channel surveys have been conducted, the Coast Guard has not completed channel surveys in all inlets, harbors, and channels to confirm safe transit.

The **Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)** is providing more than **645,000** gallons of fuel in several locations. The DoD active-duty military personnel have rescued/assisted more than **1,200** people to date. **USNORTHCOM** deployed **73** helicopters, **three** C-130s, and **eight** para-rescue teams for search and rescue and evacuation. Approximately **6,300** active-duty military personnel are deployed to the affected area. DoD has stood up three additional Incident Support Bases (ISB) at Fort Hood, Joint Base San Antonio, and Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort-Worth to support forward distribution of supplies and equipment to the affected area.

The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** continues to monitor the status of communications networks, and is coordinating with providers and government partners on communications status and restoration in the affected areas. Visit [www.fcc.gov/harvey](http://www.fcc.gov/harvey) for a daily communications status report for areas impacted by this storm as well as additional resources, including tips for communicating during an emergency.

The **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** has information for people who want to help Hurricane Harvey survivors, and for those who are dealing with and recovering from, the storm’s long-term effects. The FTC warns consumers to be cautious of charity scams, and to do research to ensure that your donation will go to a reputable organization that will use the donation as promised. For [survivors](#), the FTC provides a few points to consider in a personal disaster recovery plan.

The **Department of Agriculture (USDA)** is providing assistance through their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and waiving some regulations to make food more accessible, especially to school children and seniors. In addition, the USDA approved the state of Texas to designate schools not directly impacted by the Hurricane to serve as disaster organizations and shelters so that USDA foods can be used for congregate feeding, providing

critical food assistance to those in need. USDA foods include a variety of canned, fresh, frozen, and dry products which include fruits, vegetables, meats, and whole grains.

**The U.S. Department of Education** has activated its emergency response contact center in response to the devastating impacts of Hurricane Harvey. The Department's K-12 and Higher Education stakeholders who are seeking informational resources should contact the Department toll free at 1-844-348-4082 or by email at [HarveyRelief@ed.gov](mailto:HarveyRelief@ed.gov).

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** is advising people that food, medicine, and medical devices should be thrown out if they have come in contact with flood water or stored improperly during a power outage. The FDA is also identifying regulated facilities affected by the storm to assess any risk.

The **Department of Energy's (DOE)** Secretary of Energy has authorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to negotiate and execute two emergency exchange agreements with the Phillips 66 Lake Charles Refinery. This decision will authorize a total of **400,000** barrels of sweet crude oil and **600,000** barrels of sour crude oil to be drawn down from SPR's West Hackberry site and delivered via pipeline to the Phillips 66 refinery. DOE continues to provide situation reports at <https://www.energy.gov/oe/downloads/hurricane-harvey-situation-reports-august-2017> and has added a page to report gas price gouging: <https://www.energy.gov/hurricane-harvey-report-gas-price-gouging>.

The **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** issued a warning about possible fake charity scams emerging due to Hurricane Harvey and encourages taxpayers to seek out recognized charitable groups for their donations. Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for additional information about tax relief in disaster situations.

The **National Guard Bureau (NGB)** is working aggressively to assist and coordinate maximum support for the affected states. The National Guard is also aggressively assisting with response efforts, including evacuation and search/rescue efforts. Video of 106th Rescue Wing, NYANG is available at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/546792/106th-rescue-wing-new-york-air-national-guards-hurricane-harvey-rescue-b-roll>.

The **U.S. Social Security Administration** is coordinating with the **U.S. Postal Service (USPS)** for **46** alternative pick up points in the impacted areas around Houston where individuals can pick up benefit checks. A [press release](#) identifies the pick-up points by zip code of where individuals can go. For beneficiaries with Direct Express cards, Comerica will be waiving fees for all cardholders impacted by Harvey, even if they have been evacuated to another area out of danger.

The **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** has emailed the options available to USCIS customers affected by natural disasters and other extreme situations. This information is available on the USCIS Special Situations web page at <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations> and details how natural events can affect USCIS applications, petitions, or immigration status. The USCIS recommends that volunteers print this web page and include in any information packets they are handing out to those affected

by Hurricane Harvey. For information about USCIS office closures, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or call their National Customer Service Center line at 1-800-375-5283 for further information or assistance with rescheduling appointments.

The **U.S. Department of Interior** has more than **100** employees deployed to support the state of Texas through eight FEMA mission assignments. **United States Geological Survey (USGS)** employees from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma have been deployed in **17** crews to repair the large number of damaged gages and take high water measurements. The USGS is facilitating the International Charter activation, including cataloging of multiple space-based imagery products.

In addition, DOI agencies, including the **National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service,** and **USGS** are supporting FEMA Search and Rescue Task Forces by locating and providing dozens of shallow water boats – **90** boats in total – and are prepared to fill additional resource needs as identified. **Ten** Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) pilots from these agencies, the **Bureau of Land Management,** and the **Office of Aviation Services** are guiding drones to locate people in need of help and survey damage.

The **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement** Hurricane Response Team continues to monitor Gulf of Mexico oil and gas activities and issue daily public updates on the oil and gas production that has been shut-in as a result of the storm. The agency is beginning to inspect platforms being brought back on-line to ensure safety requirements.

The **U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)** has approved a [special solicitation](#) of Federal employees at the workplace to support the victims of Hurricane Harvey. This special solicitation, which ends September 29, 2017, will allow Federal employees and military personnel to assist the disaster relief efforts with cash or check donations outside the normal Combined Federal Campaign. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.opm.gov/news/releases/2017/08/opm-approves-special-solicitation-to-support-harvey-victims/>.

The **U.S. Postal Service (USPS)** provided additional information on how customers displaced by Hurricane Harvey can retrieve Treasury checks they receive, via U.S. Mail. This includes checks from the Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration (VA) checks, and checks from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Railroad Retirement Board.

[USA.gov](#) and [GobiernoUSA.gov](#) continues to support federal agency messaging efforts on our home pages and we're compiling federal agency updates and messaging on rapidly growing Hurricane Harvey pages found at <https://www.usa.gov/hurricane-harvey> and <https://gobierno.usa.gov/huracan-harvey>. They continue to use social media to promote life safety messages, and are beginning to push recovery information, information on how to help survivors, and applying for FEMA disaster relief jobs.

*Information about the National Business Emergency Operations Center, as well as resources for businesses, are on the NBEOC web page at: <https://www.fema.gov/nbeoc>*