

Virgin Island Hurricane Survivors Have More Time to Register with FEMA

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ST. CROIX, Virgin Islands – Survivors of hurricanes Irma and Maria in the U.S. Virgin Islands have until **December 18** to register for assistance with FEMA.

FEMA has granted the territorial government's request to extend the deadlines and make the deadline the same for both disasters.

"We understand that the ongoing communications challenges and power outages have made it difficult for some Virgin Islanders to register with FEMA, and we want to ensure everyone has an opportunity," said FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer William Vogel.

Survivors having connectivity issues may visit any Disaster Recovery Center from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily to meet with an applicant specialist and get help registering.

St. Croix recovery centers are at:

- Frederiksted at the Rotary Club West, 40 KA-KD Estate LaGrange
- Christiansted at the Old Post Office Building at Church and Company streets
- Christiansted at Fire Captain Rencelliar I. Gibbs Fire Station at Parcel #1, Estate Cotton Valley, East End.

St. Thomas recovery centers are at:

- Charlotte Amalie at the New Hotel Company Omar Brown Fire Station, Conference Room #108, 100A Ross Taarenberg.
- Estate Bordeaux at the Bordeaux Farmers Market, 109 East Bordeaux

Survivors who have connectivity may register online at DisasterAssistance.gov or by phone at 800-621-3362. Individuals who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY should call 800-462-7585 directly. Those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS) may call 800-621-3362.



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The toll-free telephone numbers operate from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. (local time) seven days a week. Operators are standing by to assist survivors in multiple languages.

Survivors may be eligible for grants to repair and rebuild their homes and/or replace essential personal property. FEMA grants do not have to be repaid, but they cannot duplicate benefits from other sources, such as insurance coverage. FEMA assistance is nontaxable and will not affect eligibility for Social Security, Medicaid or other federal benefits.

The extension also gives survivors more time to apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the federal government's primary source of money for long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or damaged personal property. Survivors may visit a Disaster Recovery Center, call SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or visit www.sba.gov/disaster for more information about disaster loans. Survivors may also send an email with questions to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call 800-877-8339. Applicants may apply online using SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

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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 800-621-3362 (voice, 711/VRS - Video Relay Service) (TTY: 800-462-7585). Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).

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.

Following major disasters, the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the primary source of Federal funds for long-term recovery assistance. This assistance is in the form of low-interest loans and is available to non-farm



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businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, as well as homeowners and renters with property damaged by the disaster.

For official information on the recovery effort following the hurricanes, please visit www.informusvi.com or www.usviupdate.com. Follow us on social media at twitter.com/femaregion2 and www.facebook.com/FEMAUSVirginIslands.

To donate or volunteer, contact the voluntary or charitable organization of your choice through the National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disasters (NVOAD) at www.nvoad.org. For those who wish to help, cash donations offer voluntary agencies the most flexibility in obtaining the most-needed resources and pumps money into the local economy to help businesses recover. The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands also has the “Fund for the Virgin Islands” at www.USVIrecovery.org.

