

Private Nonprofit Houses of Worship in Louisiana May Be Eligible for FEMA Help to Cover Hurricane Laura Damage

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BATON ROUGE, La.— Qualifying private nonprofit houses of worship in Louisiana may be eligible for FEMA grants to cover Hurricane Laura-related expenses.

Grants through FEMA's Public Assistance program may cover costs to repair or replace facilities damaged during the hurricane. The program is funded by FEMA and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

FEMA defines religious facilities as a church, synagogue, mosque, temple or other house of worship without regard to the religious character of the facility. No religious facility or house of worship may be excluded from this definition because leadership or membership in the organization is limited to persons who share a religious faith or practice.

Help with repairs and replacement costs may be available to houses of worship in the following parishes: Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis and Vernon.

To be an eligible applicant, a house of worship must:



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

- Be owned or operated by a private nonprofit organization.
- Have damage caused by Hurricane Laura from Aug. 22 to 27.
- Have either not received funding or received insufficient funding after applying for a U.S. Small Business Administration disaster loan to repair or replace a facility.
- Provide a current ruling letter from the IRS granting tax exemption under Section 501 (c) (d) or (e) of the IRS Code of 1954, or provide documentation from the state substantiating it is a nonprofit.

Houses of worship may contact their parish emergency manager for details on how to apply for FEMA assistance. They may also get more information or submit their request for Public Assistance (RPA) online by visiting the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) Public Assistance site at louisianapa.com.

The SBA may lend private nonprofits up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to help with the cost of improvements to protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring.

Apply online at www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance. For questions about SBA disaster loans, call 800-659-2955 or email FOCWAssistance@sba.gov.

To apply by mail, completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

For the latest information on Hurricane Laura, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4559 or follow the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at twitter.com/FEMARegion6.

