

What Tornado Survivors Can Do After the Application Deadline Has Passed

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While the March 16, 2023, disaster assistance registration deadline has passed, there is still help available for survivors of Alabama's Jan. 12 severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes. Survivors are part of the whole community effort. The steps they take on their road to recovery and the decisions they make are very important.

Survivors may do the following:

Stay in Touch with FEMA — If you registered for disaster assistance following the Jan. 12 storms, stay in touch with FEMA. The easiest way to update your application, check your status or provide missing information is to create an account at DisasterAssistance.gov, or you may use the [FEMA app](#) for smartphones, or call FEMA's toll-free helpline at 800-621-3362. The helpline is open, and help is available from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Central Time, Monday to Friday, in most languages. If you use a relay service, such as video relay (VRS), captioned telephone or other service, give FEMA your number for that service.

- If you don't have internet access or need services not found on the website, you may call FEMA's helpline to:
 - Add or change household members and number of occupants
 - Update contact preferences (mail, email, text, etc.)
 - Update payment preference (electronic fund transfer/direct deposit, U.S. Treasury check)
 - Notify FEMA of a change in your current address and/or post-disaster income
 - Correct or verify home and property damage
- Callers should refer to their nine-digit registration number, which can be found on all communications from FEMA.



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Appeal FEMA's Disaster Assistance Determination Letter — If you are found to be ineligible for disaster assistance following the Jan.12 storms, or you feel the award amount is insufficient, you have the right to an appeal. Carefully read your determination letter to understand why the decision was made and how you can receive the assistance you need. For more information, you may contact the FEMA helpline at 800-621-3362.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Information — For information on repairing and rebuilding safer and stronger, survivors may email FEMA-R4-HMHELP@FEMA.DHS.GOV or call mitigation outreach specialists at 833-336-2487 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday.

Contact the Small Business Administration (SBA) — If you applied for an SBA loan after the disaster declaration and want to follow up or have any questions about your loan, visit the SBA's secure website at disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/ela/s/. Disaster loan information and application forms can also be obtained by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955.

Help is available:

Call 2-1-1 for Unmet Needs — 2-1-1 connects you to a trained operator 24/7 that has access to a comprehensive database with a multitude of services in your community. By its design, the 2-1-1 system is ideally suited for serving as the initial contact point for any variety of programs. 2-1-1 is designed to assist families from all walks of life, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income households by facilitating access to public services.

You also may text your zip code to 898-211 and message one of the live 2-1-1 specialists for help.

Alabama Governor's Emergency Relief Fund (GERF) — The [Alabama Governor's Emergency Relief Fund](#) (GERF) is a "fund of last resort" for unmet needs of families and individuals working to recover from disasters in Alabama. There is a specific process for application through local Long Term Recovery Committees (LTRCs). LTRCs are set up in counties/regions to locate recovery



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resources, assess and confirm needs, and grant funding for rebuild and recover. LTRCs request funding from a variety of sources, including Community Foundations and GERF. For more information visit www.servealabama.gov/gerf.

Alabama Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster — The Long-Term Recovery Committees (or Groups) are made up of representatives from faith-based, nonprofit, government, business and other organizations working within a community to assist individuals and families as they recover from a disaster. For information call 334-269-4505 or email info@alvoad.org. Currently, there are active LTRGs in Autauga, Coosa & Tallapoosa, Greene, Hale and Selma & Dallas counties.

Disaster Distress Support — Survivors can call and speak to a trained professional who can help them cope with

anxiety or stress and guide them to available resources. This multilingual, confidential crisis support service is

available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call or text [800-985-5990](tel:800-985-5990) to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

Contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) — HUD offers programs to assist both homeowners and renters. Visit HUD online or call the Federal Housing Authority Resource Center at 800- 225-5342.

Contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development — USDA helps improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. USDA Rural Development offers programs to qualified applicants to repair and rebuild your home after the Jan. 12 storms. For information on how to apply for assistance under the Section 504 Home Repair Program, visit your local USDA Rural Development office; or go online to www.rd.usda.gov/al. You also may call the Rural Housing Service state office Single Family Housing Programs at 334-279-3440.

Tax Filing Extension — The Internal Revenue Service has announced that survivors of the Jan. 12 severe storms will

receive automatic extensions on their tax filing deadlines. You have until Oct. 16, 2023, to file your returns. For information call 800-829-1040 or visit the IRS



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website at <https://www.irs.gov/>.



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