

Free Legal Information Available for Those Affected by the Earthquakes

Release Date: Tháng 2 12, 2020

CAGUAS, Puerto Rico – A free legal aid hotline is now available to eligible Puerto Rico residents affected by the earthquakes that began in December.

Puerto Rico residents facing earthquake-related issues who are unable to afford their own lawyer may call the toll-free hotline, 800-981-5342. It is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Legal assistance is available to survivors who live in the municipalities of Adjuntas, Arecibo, Cabo Rojo, Ciales, Corozal, Guánica, Guayanilla, Hormigueros, Jayuya, Juana Díaz, Lajas, Lares, Las Marías, Maricao, Mayagüez, Morovis, Orocovis, Peñuelas, Ponce, Sabana Grande, San Germán, San Sebastián, Utuado, Villalba and Yauco.

When you call, be prepared to:

- Tell the lawyer you are seeking assistance related to the earthquakes.
- Talk briefly about the legal assistance you need.
- Say which municipality you live in.

Discussions are confidential. Information on legal assistance includes:

- Home-repair contracts and contractors.
- Life, medical and property insurance claims.
- Applying to FEMA and appealing FEMA decisions.

Legal assistance also includes:



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- Getting a new will and other important legal documents lost or destroyed.
- Fighting for you when it comes to consumer-protection issues like price gouging.
- Advice on avoiding contractor scams in the rebuilding process.

Additional issues:

- Receiving other available government benefits.
- Counseling on landlord-tenant issues.
- Mortgage foreclosures.

Callers should be aware that there are limits on disaster legal services. For example, help is not available for cases where lawyers are paid part of a settlement by a court. (Those cases are referred to a local lawyer referral service.)

The hotline is a partnership between Puerto Rico Legal Services (Servicios Legales De Puerto Rico), the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, [DisasterLegalAid.org](https://www.disasterlegalaid.org) and FEMA.

For more information on Puerto Rico's disaster recovery, visit the [Government of Puerto Rico](https://www.governmentofpuertorico.gov), [FEMA.gov/disaster/4473](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4473), [Twitter.com/FEMARegion2](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion2) and [Facebook.com/femapuertorico](https://www.facebook.com/femapuertorico).

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

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-FEMA (3362) or 711 for Video Relay Service. Multilingual operators are



available. (Press 2 for Spanish.) TTY call 800-462-7585.

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