

# FACT SHEET: Houses of Worship in North Carolina May be Eligible to Apply for FEMA Public Assistance

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*The Stafford Act has been revised to make houses of worship, like other community, volunteer and private, nonprofit organizations, eligible to apply for potential funding to help with certain disaster-related costs under FEMA's Public Assistance grant program.*

## ***What is the Public Assistance grant program?***

- Public Assistance (PA) reimburses state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit (PNP) organizations for 75 percent of eligible disaster-related expenses.
- PA grants help pay for efforts to protect people and property, clean up neighborhoods and repair roads and bridges.
- For the Hurricane Florence disaster declaration in North Carolina, the Public Assistance program is funded by FEMA and administered by North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM).

## ***Eligibility requirements for houses of worship***

- To be an eligible applicant, a house of worship must:
  - 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 through the North Carolina Secretary of State.
  - Be owned or operated by a private nonprofit (PNP) organization.
  - Have facilities that sustained damage caused by Hurricane Florence in North Carolina.
  - Have either not received funding or received insufficient funding after applying for a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loan.

## **SBA disaster loans are a critical part of the application process**



**FEMA**

Page 1 of 2

- For PNPs, including houses of worship, FEMA may only provide Public Assistance funding for eligible Permanent Work costs that an SBA disaster loan will not cover.
  - Under the Stafford Act, PNP facilities including houses of worship, must apply to the SBA for a low-interest disaster loan for permanent repair work.
  - FEMA will provide financial assistance only if the house of worship is denied an SBA loan – or if the loan authorized is insufficient to cover repair costs.

### **Applicant briefings provide information about the application process**

- A representative of the house of worship must attend an applicant briefing hosted by NCEM. For additional details, including how to participate, contact your local emergency manager.
- If a house of worship decides to apply for disaster assistance from FEMA after participating in an applicant briefing, it must submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA).

### **Request for Public Assistance Application**

- A form must be completed and submitted in the FEMA Grants Portal to be considered for disaster recovery assistance funding. \* First, send an email to [public.assistance@ncdps.gov](mailto:public.assistance@ncdps.gov) which includes the applicant's first and last name, email address, phone number and organization name.
- Then, look for an email invitation from the North Carolina Department of Public Safety to submit an RPA. \* Contact NCEM Public Assistance at [public.assistance@ncdps.gov](mailto:public.assistance@ncdps.gov) with any questions on RPA submissions.

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