

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



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- 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 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 with any questions on RPA submissions.

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