

Free Legal Services, Crisis Counseling Available to Tornado Survivors

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FRANKFORT, Ky. – If you are facing new legal issues or experiencing feelings of hopelessness or stress as a result of the Dec. 10-11 tornadoes, you can now get free legal advice and free crisis counseling.

FEMA has made the free help available to residents of the 16 counties most affected by the tornadoes: **Barren, Caldwell, Christian, Fulton, Graves, Hart, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Taylor and Warren.**

Free Legal Services. Low-income, elderly and other vulnerable residents who were affected by the disaster and are unable to afford their own lawyer may call **877-782-4219**. The helpline is open **9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Friday**. Voicemail messages can be left 24 hours a day, every day.

When leaving a message, include the county where you are located and describe your tornado-related legal problem. Callers may receive assistance from staff at Kentucky Legal Aid or a volunteer attorney. Examples of available assistance include help with securing FEMA and other benefits; insurance claims; home repair contracts and contractors; consumer protection matters; replacement of wills and other important legal documents that were destroyed; and mortgage-foreclosure and landlord/tenant problems.

The service is a partnership between FEMA, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Kentucky Bar Association and other Kentucky legal groups.

Immediate Crisis Counseling. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and FEMA have activated a [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) in Kentucky; telephone or text **800-985-5990**. This free crisis support service is available all day every day for disaster survivors experiencing emotional distress or mental health problems caused or aggravated by the tornadoes or their aftermath.



The helpline staff may provide confidential counseling and other needed support services or immediately connect callers to trained professionals from the nearest participating crisis counseling center.

Spanish-speakers can press “2” for bilingual support. Callers can connect with counselors in more than 100 other languages via third-party interpretation services by indicating their preferred language to the responding counselor. A videophone option for American Sign Language users is also available by calling **800-985-5990** from a videophone-enabled device or via an “ASL Now” link at samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline.

The deadline to apply for federal disaster assistance is **Friday, Feb. 11**. For an accessible video on how to apply for FEMA assistance, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZGpWI2RCNw.

For more information on Kentucky’s recovery from the tornadoes, visit fema.gov/disaster/4630. Follow FEMA on Twitter at [FEMA Region 4 \(@femaregion4\)](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion4) / [Twitter](https://twitter.com) and at facebook.com/fema.

