

Private Nonprofits, including Houses of Worship, Eligible for Disaster Assistance

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Private nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship and other faith-based organizations, may be eligible to apply for federal assistance to help recover from damage in the California counties affected by the severe January winter storms and flooding.

Funding from FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program can be used to pay for emergency protective measures, debris removal and restoring disaster-damaged facilities.

Private nonprofits that provide **critical services**, such as hospitals and other medical treatment facilities and utilities can apply directly to FEMA. Other examples of critical services include water, sewer and electrical systems; private schools that provide elementary or secondary education or institutions of higher education.

Private nonprofits that provide **non-critical, essential social services**, such as senior citizen and community centers must apply for a low-interest disaster loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration first. Other examples of non-critical, essential services include educational enrichment activities, custodial and day care services, disability residential services, assisted living and low-income housing, homeless shelters and rehabilitation services and performing and community arts centers.

By offering public amenities such as community, cultural, senior and social services, **Houses of Worship owned and operated by a nonprofit are considered non-critical essential services** and can also apply for FEMA PA grants.

Private nonprofits that provide non-critical services, which includes most Houses of Worship, should be aware that they **must first apply for a low-interest disaster loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration**. If they are eligible



for a loan and decline, they will not be entitled to FEMA grants. FEMA cannot duplicate benefits from other agencies or organizations. If they are denied a loan or it does not cover the cost of all repairs, FEMA may provide funding to cover what SBA does not.

SBA's can provide as much as \$2 million in loans for damaged real estate and the replacement of property. The interest rate is 2.375 percent with terms up to 30 years. The deadline to apply for property damage is **March 27, 2023**. The deadline to apply for economic injury is **Oct. 26, 2023**.

All applicants – even if they must wait for an SBA loan approval -- are encouraged to make a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) as soon as possible by contacting their local emergency management office. The deadline to file an RPA is **March 24, 2023**.

