

FEMA Assistance for Houses of Worship

Release Date: Oct 17, 2024

FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program may provide assistance to faith-based organizations that provide essential social services to the public that were affected by Tropical Storm Helene from Sept. 25 – Oct. 3.

Houses of worship, whether they provide critical or essential social services, may submit a FEMA Assistance through Grants Portal, an online recovery management tool, within 30 days of the date of a presidential disaster declaration. Any questions about the process can be answered by your local and/or state emergency manager.

Houses of Worship that provide a noncritical social service, such as community and senior citizen centers of nonprofits must go through the loan application process with the U.S. Small Business Administration Assistance program before FEMA can determine eligibility for the agency's Public Assistance program, which reimburses expenses for emergency protective measures, debris removal and repair or rebuilding of disaster- damaged property. However, some activities regarding emergency protective measures that were performed in preparation or response to the storm may be eligible without or while pending an SBA decision.

SBA's low-interest disaster loans provide up to \$2 million for damaged real estate and the repair or replacement of property, such as furniture, fixtures and other eligible inventory. For information about disaster assistance visit [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster) or call 800-659-2955.

FEMA encourages protecting these damaged facilities from future events by taking hazard mitigation during the recovery process.

Eligibility:

- The house of worship must be owned or operated by a private nonprofit organization.
- It must have sustained damage caused by Tropical Storm Helene from Sept. 25 to October 3 in **Bedford, Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Craig, Dickenson, Giles,**



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe Counties and the independent cities of Bristol, Covington, Danville, Galax, Norton, and Radford.

- The facility must be open to the public.
- The application must include state and/or U.S. Internal Revenue Service documentation of tax-exempt status, pre-disaster charter and other documentation.

Requests for Public Assistance

Requests for Public Assistance (RPAs) are now being accepted from state, territorial, tribal and local Bedford, Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Craig, Dickenson, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe Counties and the independent cities of Bristol, Covington, Danville, Galax, Norton, and Radford. The deadline for Applicants in these counties to submit an RPA via Grants Portal is November 2, 2024. Submit an RPA at grantee.fema.gov.

What You Will Need to Provide

- Evidence of federal or state tax-exempt status or other documents indicating nonprofit status, such as bylaws or articles of incorporation.
- Pre-disaster evidence of incorporation/charter/bylaws.
- A Data Universal Number Systems number established with the government.
- Supporting documentation establishing lease or ownership of the building, proof of use, and pictures.
- If eligibility is granted, the following will need to be submitted: A list of sites damaged; "before and after" pictures; and information about any historic structures.

