

Advantages of Visiting a MEMA/FEMA Disaster Recovery Center

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If you suffered damages as a result of the tornadoes that hit south Mississippi in January, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency and Federal Emergency Management Agency both recommend you contact FEMA to see if you qualify for disaster assistance.

You can register online at DisasterAssistance.gov or by telephone by calling the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 or TTY 800-462-7585. But you may find that you need to speak to a representative of the state or federal government in person. If so, visit one of the two MEMA/FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers open in Forrest County.

A Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is a readily accessible facility where you may go for information about federal, state and other disaster assistance programs, and to ask questions related to your situation.

You can meet face-to-face with representatives from MEMA, FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration, volunteer groups and other agencies at the centers to get answers to your questions about disaster assistance.

Some of the services offered at a DRC may include:

- Guidance about disaster recovery and how you may qualify for assistance.
- Assistance in applying with FEMA and SBA.
- Checking on the status of the application you already have submitted.
- Help in understanding any written correspondence you've received.
 - It's very important that you read any letter you receive from FEMA carefully to understand what you may need to do next, if anything.
 - For example, you may need to submit documents in order for FEMA to process your application. Or, you may need to include an insurance settlement letter, proof of residence, proof of ownership of the damaged property, and/or proof that the damaged property was your primary



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

residence at the time of the disaster.

- Housing assistance and information about rental properties that may be available and that you may not know are available.
- Referrals to other agencies and state programs that may provide further assistance.
- Information about disaster-related funeral and other needs assistance.
- Information about low-interest disaster loans.

All disaster recovery centers offer communication assistance, including captioned phones, iPads with video remote interpreting, assistive listening devices, magnifiers and onsite American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters upon request. Both Braille and Large Print FEMA documents also are available. If you require a reasonable accommodation (ASL interpreting, etc.) while visiting a DRC, please call the FEMA helpline before you go.

MEMA/FEMA DRCs are open in Forrest County at the C. E. Roy Community Center, 300 E. 5th Street, in Hattiesburg and the Petal Civic Center, 712A South Main Street in Petal. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

For more information on Mississippi's tornado recovery, go to fema.gov/disaster/4295 or visit the MEMA site at msema.org. Follow MEMA on Facebook facebook.com/msemaorg and on Twitter [@msema.org](https://twitter.com/msemaorg).

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585(TTY/TDD).

