

Natural Disaster Assistance Guide  
Louisiana District Council

This guide is being made available to all churches and ministers of the Louisiana Network Ministries to assist in recovery and restoration of real and tangible property following a natural disaster such as a hurricane or a tornado. This is a guide and is not intended to be a detailed instruction manual to teach you how to complete application forms from the various entities that may provide financial assistance.

Section 1: Prior to a natural disaster

- Locate all necessary records and store in a safe, available location. This includes:
  - Insurance policies
  - Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
  - Proof of ownership or legal responsibility of the damaged property
  - Corporate charter number
  - Employer Identification Number (EIN)
  - Proof of non-profit status and current standing with Louisiana Secretary of State
  - Dun & Bradstreet number
  - Full street address of the building(s) including the name of the parish
  - Names and contact information for all corporate officers
- Have an up-to-date inventory of all contents and value of every building owned by the church

Section 2: After a natural disaster

- Notify the insurance company
- Appoint a responsible person to handle all the paperwork and be the contact person for all the entities
- Take lots of pictures of the damages
- Keep an accurate, detailed record of all expenses incurred due to the natural disaster
- If there is water damage inside the building engage a licensed, bonded, reputable company to remove the water, dry the building, and inspect for mold.
- As soon as possible obtain estimates from licensed contractors for all repairs

Section 3: Valuable Resource Information

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a Public Assistance (PA) Grant program for non-profit corporations including churches. Grants may be available to help with expenses that are not covered by insurance policies.

To apply for Public Assistance go to <https://gohsep.la.gov/GRANTS/RECOVERY-GRANTS/Public-Assistance>. FEMA operates through the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)

To submit your RPA via LouisianaPA.com, simply go to the website and click the large Red banner. It will provide instructions on how to submit if you already have an account or how to register for an account if your entity does not already have one.

If you are a non-profit organization (PNP), including churches, please provide the following documentation with your RPA submission:

- Evidence of Tax-Exempt Status. A letter from the IRS or information from the La. Sec. of State showing that you are an active, in good standing, non-profit operating under State law
- Evidence of Ownership or Legal responsibility for a facility. This can be for any facility for which you are legally responsible. It does not necessarily have to be a damaged facility, just one your entity is legally responsible for. This documentation can be in the form of a Mortgage Statement, Deed, Lease, Property Tax Report, or a Property Structure Insurance Policy (full policy).
- Articles of Incorporation/bylaws of your organization. These are the documents used to govern your organization, to state its purpose, and how it operates.
- For any questions regarding this event or your RPA submission, please email [RPA.Help@la.gov](mailto:RPA.Help@la.gov). For any other questions, please contact your State Applicant Liaison (SAL). If you are unaware of whom your SAL is, you may email [PASALS@LA.GOV](mailto:PASALS@LA.GOV) to find out. Carmel Bordere is the SAL for the state of Louisiana.
- Dr. Janet Ford is the FEMA Applicant Consultant for churches in Louisiana. You may contact Dr. Ford at [dr.janet.ford@gmail.com](mailto:dr.janet.ford@gmail.com).
- The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers Disaster Relief Loans to churches following a declared state of emergency by the federal government. These are low interest, long-term loans. To submit an SBA loan application go to <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/ela/s/>. The state of Louisiana may require you to submit a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan application before a PA grant application may be processed.
- A General Council grant may be available to assist with the costs of restoration. Information and application forms are available at <https://disasterrelief.ag.org/About>
- A loan may be available through District Council Loan Fund. For information contact Den Hussey.

Woody Gunnels is the LNM Disaster Relief Assistance Administrator. You may contact Woody at [woody@laaog.org](mailto:woody@laaog.org) or 337-580-3765.