



FEMA

# FACT SHEET

## Private non-profit houses of worship in Georgia may now be eligible to apply for FEMA Public Assistance to cover Hurricane Irma Damage

*As of Jan. 2, 2018, an update to FEMA policy has made private non-profit houses of worship eligible to apply for potential funding to help with certain disaster-related costs under FEMA's Public Assistance grant program.*

### ***What is the Public Assistance grant program?***

- [Public Assistance](#) provides grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profit (PNP) organizations, so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from presidentially-declared disasters or emergencies.
- The Public Assistance program is funded by FEMA on a cost-share basis and administered by the state – Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS).
- Through the program, FEMA provides supplemental federal disaster grant assistance, typically 75 percent reimbursement of eligible costs for **Emergency Work** (debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures) and **Permanent Work** (repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged publicly-owned facilities, and the facilities of certain PNP organizations).
- For PNPs, eligible debris removal is limited to that associated with an eligible facility, including debris on the property of the eligible facility.
- For PNPs, eligible emergency protective measures are generally limited to activities associated with preventing damage to an eligible facility and its contents.
- FEMA does not provide PA funding to PNPs for the costs associated with emergency services such as sheltering, feeding, and other similarly governmental services, unless those services were performed at the request of, and certified by, a legally-responsible government entity (FEMA funds through the government entity).
- For PNPs, operating costs are generally not eligible even if the services are emergency services, unless the PNP performs an emergency service at the request of, and certified by, the legally-responsible government entity (FEMA funds through the government entity).



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### *Eligibility requirements for houses of worship*

- To be an eligible applicant, a house of worship must:
  - Be owned or operated by a PNP organization, and
  - Have damage caused by Hurricane Irma in Georgia Sept. 7 to 20, 2017, and
  - Provide a non-critical but essential service open to the general public, without regard to their religious or secular nature, and
  - Have either not received funding or received insufficient funding after applying for a Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loan, and
  - Provide a current ruling letter from the IRS granting tax exemption under Section 501 (c) (d) or (e) of the IRS Code of 1954, or
  - Provide documentation from the state substantiating it is a non-revenue producing, nonprofit entity organized or doing business under State Law 59.

### *SBA disaster loans are a critical part of your application process*

- For all PNPs that provide non-critical services, including houses of worship, FEMA may provide Public Assistance funding for eligible Permanent Work costs only if an SBA disaster loan does not cover them.
  - Like all non-critical PNP facilities under the Stafford Act, the house of worship **must** apply to the SBA for a low-interest disaster loan for permanent repair work.
  - FEMA will provide financial assistance ONLY if the PNP house of worship is denied an SBA loan – or if the loan authorized is insufficient to cover repair costs.
- PNPs with eligible facilities may apply directly to FEMA for debris removal and emergency protective measures.



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### *Learn more about application process during virtual applicant briefing*

- Attend a virtual applicant briefing hosted by the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency. Briefings are scheduled Jan. 29 to 31, 2018. For additional details, including how to participate, contact your [local emergency manager](#).
- After participating in an applicant briefing, if you decide to apply for disaster assistance from FEMA, you must submit a Request for Public Assistance.

### *Request for Public Assistance (RPA) Pre-Application*

- Your RPA Form must be completed and submitted in the FEMA Grants Portal to be considered for disaster recovery assistance funding.
- **Beginning Feb. 1, 2018**, you can initiate this process by sending an email to the following address: [PA-RPA@gema.ga.gov](mailto:PA-RPA@gema.ga.gov).
  - Provide first and last name, email address, phone number, and organization name.
  - Look for an email invitation from [PASUPPORT@PAGRANT.FEMA.GOV](mailto:PASUPPORT@PAGRANT.FEMA.GOV) (check spam).
  - Contact GEMA/HS Public Assistance at 404-635-7019 with any questions on RPA submission.
  - **The deadline to complete the RPA is March 2, 2018.**