

HURRICANE LAURA (DR-4559-LA)

ESF 15 - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DAILY FACT SHEET 36

MONDAY, OCT. 5, 2020

NAVIGATING THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

[HURRICANE LAURA WEBSITE](#)

NEWS DESK: 225-389-2408

Key Messages:

- **FEMA financial assistance is our primary means of helping survivors.** You can use your FEMA rental assistance to rent an apartment, or whatever you think can meet your temporary housing needs while you and your family recover. **Direct Housing is a last resort offered to only the most difficult cases.**
- Survivors of Hurricane Laura **have until Oct. 27 to register for FEMA assistance** by visiting [disasterassistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disasterassistance) or by calling the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)**. Survivors can also register through the **FEMA Mobile App**. To download text either **ANDROID** or **APPLE** to **43362**.

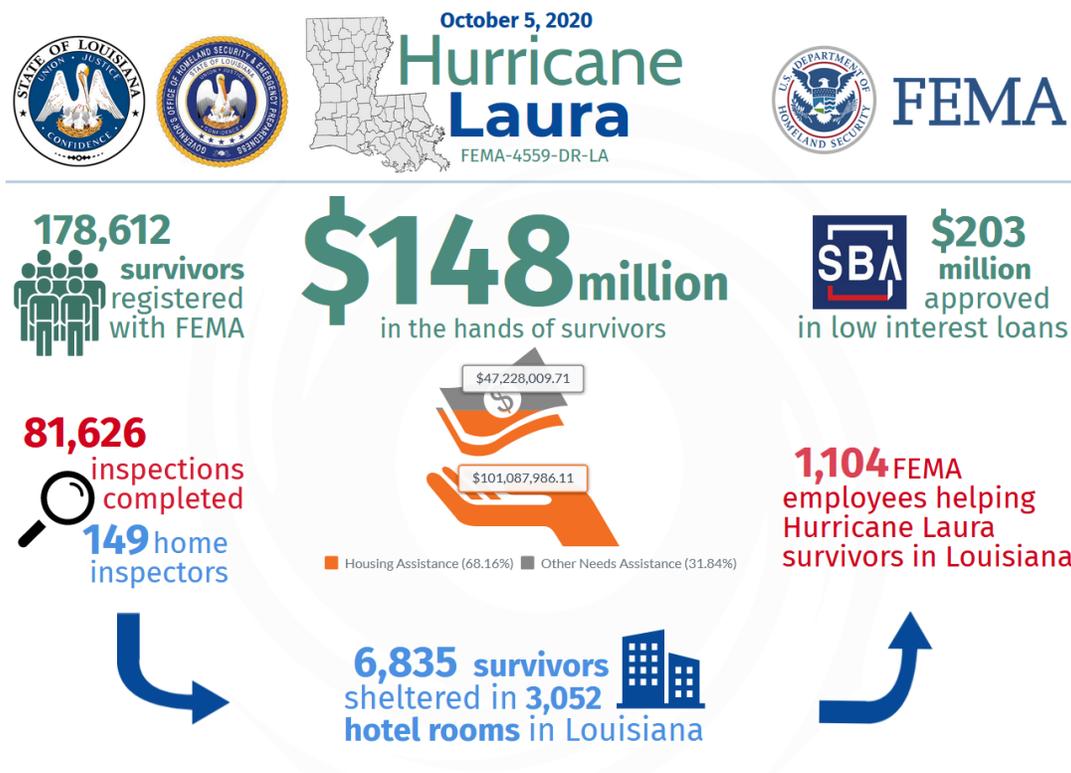
Once survivors have registered with FEMA for assistance, no further application is required for Direct Housing. **Survivors do not need to register twice.** FEMA will initiate contact with survivors to determine eligibility for housing assistance.

- **Survivors** who registered with FEMA for disaster assistance will **receive a determination letter explaining the eligibility decision** and the reason for that decision. For those who are eligible, the letter states the dollar amount of the grant and how the funds should be used. **When ineligible**, the letter explains why and how the applicant can appeal that decision.
- **You have more time to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. The Louisiana Workforce Commission extended the application period for DUA to Oct. 30.** This is for eligible survivors of Hurricane Laura who either **lost their job or their employment was interrupted** due to the storm should register at: <http://www.laworks.net/>
- **Watch out for imposters** posing as an official disaster aid worker or as home repair contractors. After a natural disaster, it is common for **some people to try to take advantage of survivors**. If you are suspicious of a potential fraud or are a victim of fraud, **report it to the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721**. Complaints may also be made by contacting local law enforcement.

Go to [FEMA Hurricane Laura](#) to watch a series of videos produced by External Affairs about federal disaster assistance for Hurricane Laura.

FEMA Helping Survivors:

To date, FEMA has put nearly **\$148 million** in the hands of survivors, almost **\$101 million** for housing assistance and **\$47 million** for other needs assistance. So far, FEMA has registered **178,612 households**.



- Hurricane Laura survivors can apply by visiting disasterassistance.gov or by calling the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)**. You can also register through the **FEMA Mobile App**. To download text either **ANDROID** or **APPLE** to **43362**.
- Help spread the word: **if anyone receives a letter saying they are ineligible for FEMA assistance, they should not be discouraged**. They just may need to provide additional information. In fact, missing documentation and not enough damage to essential living spaces are among the most common reasons survivors can initially be found ineligible.
 - **Examples of missing documentation** include an insurance settlement letter, proof of residence, proof of ownership of the property or proof that the damaged property was your primary residence at the time of the disaster. The goal of FEMA housing assistance is to ensure people live in safe, sanitary and functional housing.

- ✓ Hurricane Laura survivors with **home repair questions** should contact FEMA mitigation outreach at **866-579-0820** or at fema-mitoutreach-4559@fema.dhs.gov Monday-Saturday, 8am to 6pm CDT. To view mitigation resources visit <https://fema.connectsolutions.com/lauramit/>.

- **A reminder that we are all in this together** and FEMA will continue to help families as they move forward in their recovery from Hurricane Laura. Recently a FEMA caseworker called an applicant to discuss their temporary housing solution needs. The applicant happened to be in the hospital at that very moment with his wife who was **giving birth to their first baby**. The applicant was so nervous he insisted our caseworker stay on the line with him to help him through the process. The caseworker complied and **baby was born while they were on the phone together**.
- **FEMA assistance is not insurance**. Your home may have suffered storm damage, but if it did not affect essential living space, you may not be determined eligible for assistance. FEMA considers the kitchen, living room, bathroom and occupied bedrooms as essential living spaces.
 - If anyone thinks an error was made regarding their case, they **have the right to appeal**. The appeal must be in writing and include new information or documentation. Start the process and get assistance with their appeal letter by calling FEMA at **800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585)**.



Direct Temporary Housing Assistance

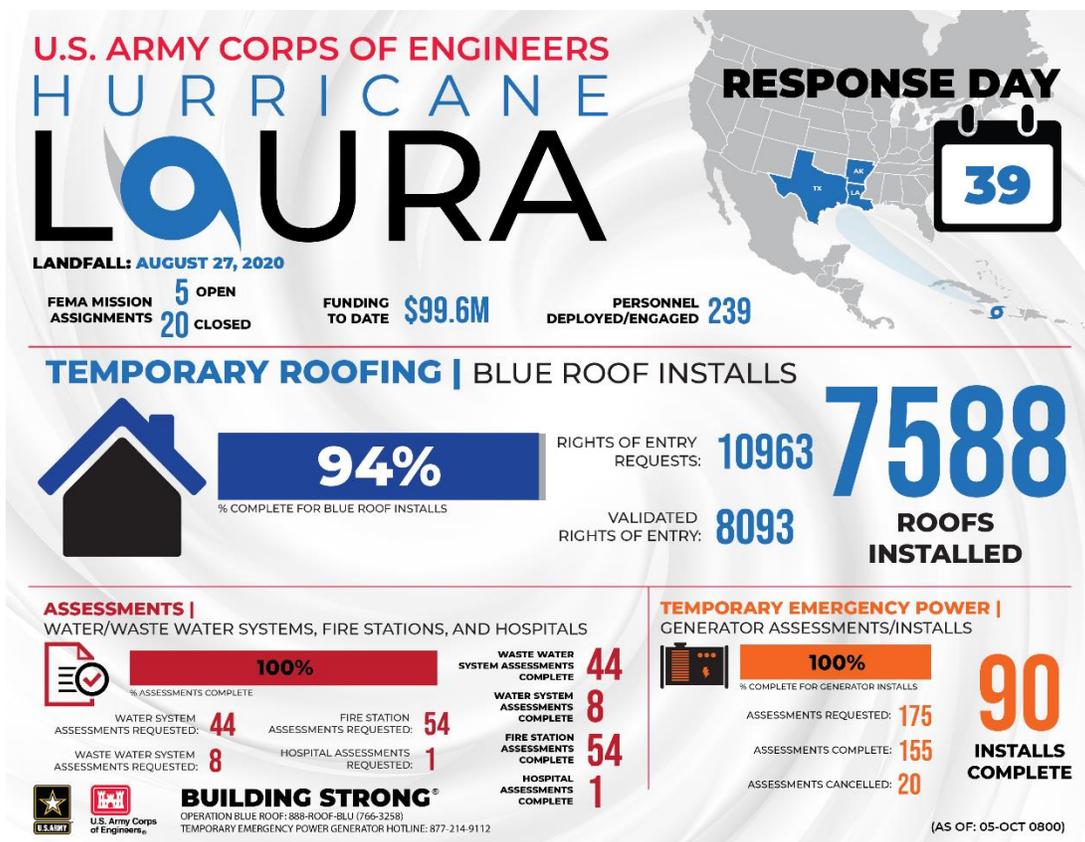
To watch a short video on FEMA's Direct Temporary Housing Assistance visit:
[youtube.com/watch?v=X0qj5F7QBtA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0qj5F7QBtA)

- For claims of harassment or incivility in the workplace, please contact the Office of Professional Responsibility at FEMA-Misconduct@fema.dhs.gov or by telephone: **833-TELL-OPR (833-835-5677)**.
- Flooding from Hurricane Laura was so severe that **some coffins were forced from graves**. FEMA may aid with reburial expenses if the grave was in a privately-owned, licensed cemetery or burial facility and the cemetery or burial facility is not responsible for reintering displaced remains. The damage must have occurred in a parish designated in the major disaster declaration. To see if damage is in a designated parish, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4559/designated-areas](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4559/designated-areas)
- FEMA cautions those receiving disaster assistance that **funds can only be spent for disaster-related expenses**. FEMA provides letters to survivors of Hurricane Laura that detail the approved uses for grants. These may include: repairs to make a home habitable, rental assistance for temporary housing, repair or replacement of a disaster-damaged essential vehicle, medical care for an injury caused by the disaster, replacing clothing, occupational tools and educational materials and moving and storage expenses related to the disaster.

- Survivors choosing to return to damaged homes need to be sure they're safe. Because many areas may not have reliable power, those returning should have adequate food, water, medications, bug repellent, batteries and cellphone chargers. Walk carefully around the outside of your home and property and check for loose power lines, gas leaks and structural damage. If unsure, ask a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering. Enter your home carefully and check for loose boards and slippery floors. If your home looks like it may collapse, leave immediately. For more information on what to look for when reentering your home, go to [ready.gov/returning-home](https://www.ready.gov/returning-home)

USACE Helping Survivors:

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has installed **7,588** temporary roofs. USACE will continue to install temporary roofs for Hurricane Laura survivors who signed up for this free service. Visit https://www.army.mil/article/239582/blue_roof_recipients_witness_usace_innovation to read an article by Jessica Haas about Blue Roof recipients witnessing USACE's innovations.



NFIP Helping Survivors:

- As of Oct. 1, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has paid more than **\$8 million** to Hurricane Laura survivors. Policy holders should follow these steps to move their claims forward:
 - Contact your insurance agent to report your loss. If you can't remember the name or number of the insurance company that services your FEMA flood policy, call the NFIP at **877-336-2627** to find out. Or email floodsmart@fema.dhs.gov.
 - Take videos and photos of all damaged property inside and out. Good evidence of damage can help get you **up to \$5,000** in advance payment on your claim.

- Keep all receipts and record the time spent performing the work to submit to the insurance adjuster when you file your claim.
- For a video on NFIP myths, go here: youtu.be/a9P-6kKLjkl

SBA Helping Survivors:

- Additionally, the **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** has approved more than **\$203 million** in low interest loans to help Louisiana hurricane survivors recover. Disaster loans up to **\$200,000** are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to **\$40,000** to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. Visit disasterloanassistance.sba.gov or call **800-659-2955**.

Louisiana Helping Survivors:

- The Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) is working closely with local, state, tribal and federal officials; private-sector partners; and private nonprofits (PNPs) to manage the impacts of Hurricane Laura. For more information, visit: gohsep.la.gov.
- Emergency housing remains a major focus, as impacted residents are filling up designated facilities. As of Sunday, October 5, **6,835** hurricane survivors are sheltering in Louisiana in **3,052** hotel rooms, an additional **2,653** Louisiana residents are housed in Texas hotels. If you need shelter, text **LAShelter** to **898-211** for information about where to go or call **211**.
- The State of Louisiana has launched an online hub for Hurricane Laura information at hurricanelaura.la.gov, which highlights news and links to resources. Additionally, the governor's office has also established a Laura-specific texting list to give people wanting updates on Hurricane Laura. Text **LAURA** to **67283** to receive updates.

FEMA Online:

- Follow FEMA on social media at [FEMA online](https://www.fema.gov), on Twitter [@FEMA](https://twitter.com/FEMA) or [@FEMAEspanol](https://twitter.com/FEMAEspanol), on [FEMA Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/FEMA) or [FEMA Espanol page](https://www.facebook.com/FEMAEspanol) and at [FEMA YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8). Also, follow Administrator Pete Gaynor on Twitter [@FEMA Pete](https://twitter.com/FEMA_Pete).
- To download the **FEMA Mobile App**:
 - On an Android device: Text **2637643 (ANDROID)** to **43362 (4FEMA)**
 - On an Apple Device: Text **27753 (APPLE)** to **43362 (4FEMA)**

For concerns and allegations of discrimination, please contact the Office of Equal Rights at headquarters at **202-212-3535** or FEMA-Civil-Rights-Program-OER@fema.dhs.gov.

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