

HURRICANE LAURA (DR-4559-LA)

ESF 15 - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DAILY FACT SHEET 31

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30, 2020

NAVIGATING THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

[HURRICANE LAURA WEBSITE](#)

NEWS DESK: 225-389-2408

Key Messages:

- **Oct. 27 is the deadline to register for FEMA help. That's less than 30 Days away** for renters and homeowners in designated parishes. **Direct temporary housing assistance** is for eligible survivors needing a safe, sanitary and functional place to live while they're repairing their homes. The eligible parishes include Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis and Vernon parishes. Assistance may include a temporary housing unit, a direct lease for a ready-for-occupancy existing property, or a multi-family lease of rental property.
- Survivors of Hurricane Laura who may have **lost their job or their employment was interrupted** due to the storm have more time to register for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). The **Louisiana Workforce Commission is extending (DUA) application period to Oct. 30**. To register visit: <http://www.laworks.net/>

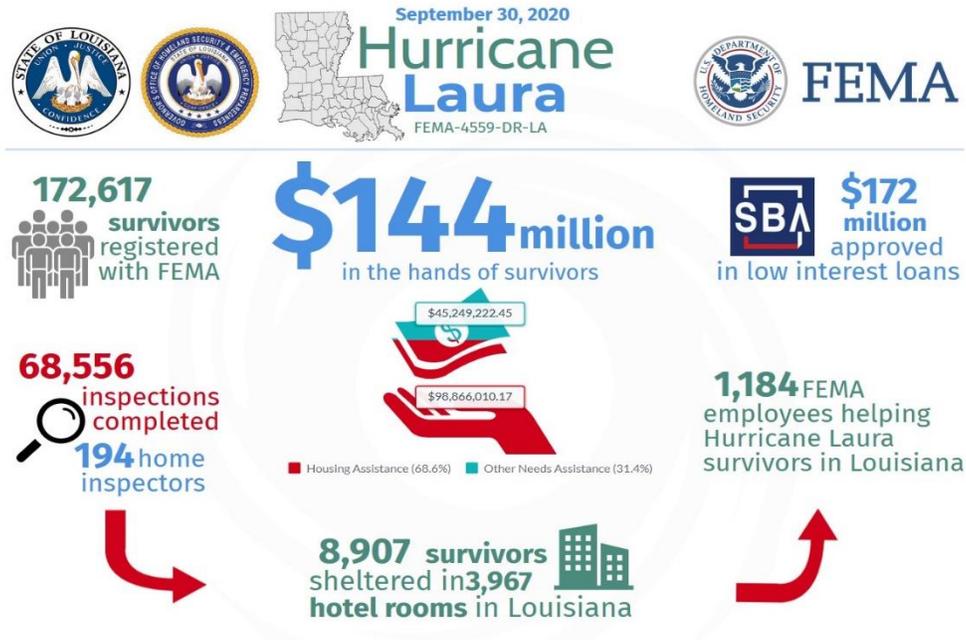
Once survivors have registered with FEMA for assistance, no further application is required for Direct Housing. **Survivors do not need to register twice**. FEMA will initiate contact with survivors to determine eligibility for housing assistance.

- 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)
- **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. **Many of these issues can be easily resolved** by visiting [disasterassistance.gov](https://www.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**.

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 more than **\$144 million** in the hands of survivors, almost **\$99 million** for housing assistance and **\$46 million** for other needs assistance. FEMA has registered **172,617 households**. Visit disasterloanassistance.sba.gov or call **800-659-2955** for more information.



- 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**.
- Due to COVID-19, FEMA Media Relations Specialists, including Renae Gaskins, are conducting all media interviews virtually.



FEMA's Renae Gaskins recently did a virtual interview with WAFB-TV in Baton Rouge from her home in Goose Creek, SC. To watch the interview visit:

wafb.com/video/2020/09/20/fema-distaster-assistance-interview-with-nikki-gaskin/

- **FEMA External Civil Rights Advisors** are deployed to disasters to ensure nondiscrimination of FEMA recipients on the basis of **race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, English proficiency, and economic status**. Those who have civil rights questions, need to file or check on the status of a civil rights complaint contact the Civil Rights Resource Line at **833-285-7448**. You can also get more information at: fema.gov/about/offices/equal-rights/civil-rights. Additionally, you can also call **833-285-7488** or go to <https://intranet.fema.net/org/oa/ooer/Pages/RA.aspx> for information about reasonable accommodations.
 - 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.
 - **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)**.

- ✓ Do you have questions on how to repair your home after Hurricane Laura? Is retrofitting right for you? Are there simple things you can do to reduce damage to your home? Find out! Call **866-579-0820** and speak to a **Community Education Specialist**. They are available Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CDT or email us at FEMA-MitOutreach-4559@fema.dhs.gov

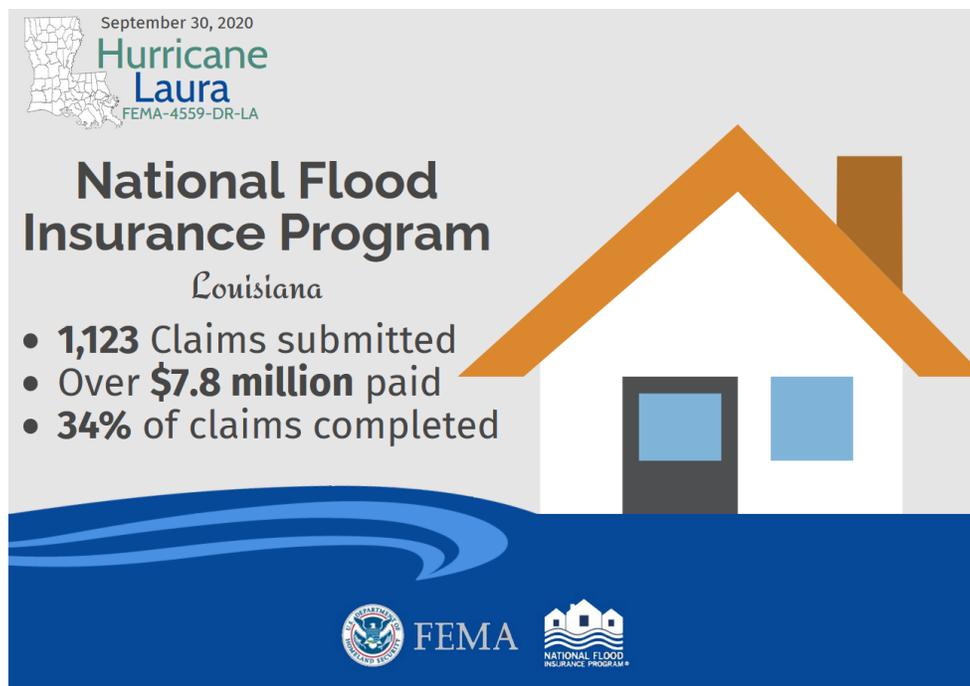


***FEMA Employees** assisting Hurricane Laura survivors at the LaSalle Parish MRIC, located at the Jena, Louisiana Ball Field.*

- 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)

NFIP Helping Survivors:

- **As of Sept. 29**, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has paid nearly **\$8 million** to Hurricane Laura survivors. Policy holders should follow these steps to move their claims forward:



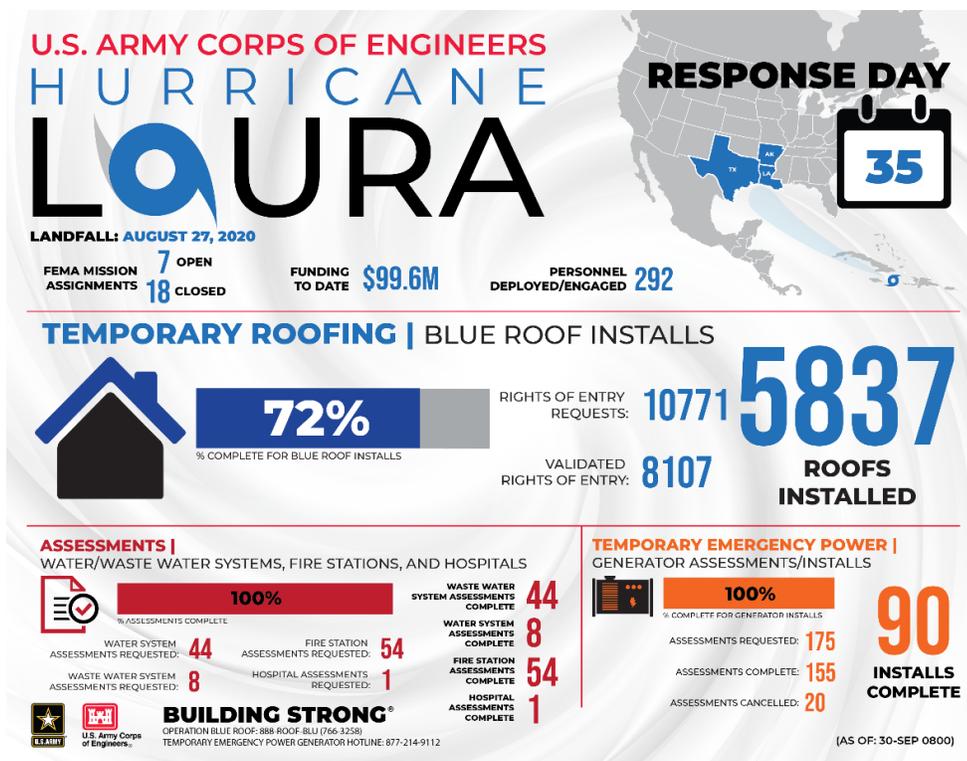
- Contact your insurance agent to report your loss. If you can't remember the name or number of the insurance company that services your FEMA flood policy, call the NFIP at **877-336-2627** to find out. Or email floodsmart@fema.dhs.gov.
- Take videos and photos of all damaged property inside and out. 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 nearly **\$172 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**.

USACE Helping Survivors:

- **Today, Sept. 30, is the final day to sign up for Operation Blue Roof.** So far, **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** has installed **5,837** temporary roofs. This is a free service offered through USACE. To get your name on the list call **888-766-3258** or visit usace.army.mil/bluroof.



- **Temporary blue roofs** are offered through USACE and they are **FREE**. There is **no cost to the homeowner** for application OR installation. If someone tells you otherwise or attempts to charge you, **THEY ARE NOT with USACE** or associated with this program. USACE contractors will have a work order which includes your name, address, and most importantly, your **16 digit right-of-entry number**. If all the criteria are not met, then they do not represent USACE. If you believe they are fraudulent and misrepresenting the government, contact local law enforcement

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 Tuesday, **8,907** hurricane survivors are sheltering in Louisiana in **3,967** hotel rooms. 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.
- **The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOT)** has removed almost **95 percent** of the debris caused by Hurricane Laura. For updates on debris removal in your area, visit LADOTD's debris clean-up tracking dashboard at 511la.org.

Safety Messages:

- Covid-19
 - **Take care of yourself first. If you feel sick, please contact your supervisor immediately**
 - Social distance when possible and wear your face covering
 - Report an emergency by calling 911 or contact your supervisor
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
 - Even though the number of power outages have dropped, there are still many people using generators as a source of energy. Remember to keep them well ventilated by **keeping them outdoors** and away from doors and windows. For more information and safety tips FEMA has a video here at: youtube.com/watch?v=n7GIOzABRHA

FEMA Online:

- **Follow FEMA** on social media at FEMA online, 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/FEMA Espanol page) and at [FEMA YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/FEMA YouTube channel). 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)**

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