



**IAMAW**

**Is Here**

**To Help!**

**Resources for**

**Disaster Relief**

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# EMERGENCY RESOURCES

## City of Houston Office of Emergency Management

Phone: **3-1-1** or **713-837-0311**

Website: [houstonemergency.org](http://houstonemergency.org)

Updates on city services, weather, power outages and links to shelters and other resources

## The United Way Helpline

Phone: **2-1-1**

Website: [referral.unitedwayhouston.org](http://referral.unitedwayhouston.org)

Comprehensive resource that can connect you to a wide range of aid organizations, including ones offering shelter, food, medical support, legal advice and other services

## FEMA Mobile App

Download: [fema.gov/mobile-app](http://fema.gov/mobile-app)

Smartphone app that allows you to locate open shelters, get weather and traffic alerts & find disaster recovery advice

### **TIP:**

You don't have to be sleeping at a shelter to get help there. Shelters near you may be the best place to get everything from food, water and clothing to medical attention, cleaning supplies and information.

## **Shelter**

### Emergency Shelters

You can request a list of open shelters by texting SHELTER and your zip code to FEMA at **43362**.

Or calling the American Red Cross:

**1-800-RED-CROSS**

If you have internet access, updated shelter listings and maps can be found at the following websites:

[redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

[houstonemergency.org](http://houstonemergency.org)

[abc13.com](http://abc13.com)

[fox26houston.com](http://fox26houston.com)

## FEMA hotel program

Once you're registered with FEMA (see pg. 4 of this guide), they may be able to provide you with a hotel room. For a list of the hotels see:

[FEMAevachotels.com](http://FEMAevachotels.com)

## **Food**

### Houston Food Bank

Helpline: **832-369-9390**

Website: [houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org)

Help by phone or online to find a food bank near you. Food Bank staff can also help you with longer-term solutions, including applying for SNAP and other assistance programs

### Feeding Texas

Phone: **512-527-3613**

Website: [feedingtexas.org](http://feedingtexas.org)

Connections to local food banks provided by phone or online.

## **Prescriptions & Medical Advice**

### Open Pharmacies

The National Council of Prescription Drug Programs offers an online map of pharmacies that are open in your area at [heathcareready.org/rxopen](http://heathcareready.org/rxopen)

### Free Consultations

**Texas Children's Health Nurse Helpline:**  
**1-800-686-3831**

**TelaDoc: 1-855-220-4585** or  
[teladoc.com/harvey](http://teladoc.com/harvey)

**RoweDocs: 1-800-921-0136** or  
[rowedocs.com](http://rowedocs.com)

**Disaster Distress line: 1-800-985-5990**  
or text TalkWithUs to 66746

### Access to Insulin

Eli Lilly: **1-800-Lilly-RX**

T1 Team Texas: **281-928-5124**

## **Connecting with Loved Ones**

### American Red Cross

Missing Persons Assistance: **713-526-8300**

Safe & Well site: [safeandwell.communityos.org](http://safeandwell.communityos.org)

Centralized resource where you can find family & friends or register yourself as safe

# Post-Disaster Checklist

If your home is damaged or you just can't get to it, what are the things you need to make sure you've got?

## Identification

- Driver's License
- Green Card
- Passport
- Work ID

## Communication

- Access to a phone and a number where you can be regularly reached
- Contact information for your family, friends and other support networks
- A charger for your cellphone
- An address where you know can get your mail for the next few months

## Medicine

- Prescription medications & devices
- Over-the-counter medications, supplements & devices
- Prescription Card
- Insurance Card
- Contact information for your doctors
- Contact information for your pharmacy

## Money

- Access to your bank account
- Credit or debit card
- SNAP, Unemployment or other benefit card
- A list of your regular bills and when they come due
- Contact information for your landlord and other creditors

## Records

- Ownership or leasing records for your home or car
- Proof of address or residency
- Recent pay stubs or other proof of your employment
- Social security cards, birth certificates and other vital documentation
- Copies of insurance policies and claim information

Don't have everything?

Don't worry! You're not alone.

**There's nothing on this list that can't be replaced.**

## Getting Help from FEMA

If you haven't already done it, **contact FEMA as soon as possible to register for help.** It's best to start the processes as soon as you can, even if you're still not sure exactly what help you're going to need.

You can apply for help from FEMA by calling:

**1-800-621-3362**

Or by filling out the online application at

**[DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov)**

FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) is a U.S. government agency that provides aid to disaster survivors.

### **FEMA can help you pay for:**

#### **Housing**

- Temporary housing
- Repairing or replacing your current home
- Semi-permanent or permanent housing construction

#### **Other Necessary Expenses**

- Replacing personal property
- Childcare
- Medical and dental expenses
- Funeral and burial costs
- Transportation

### **When you apply, you will need to know:**

- **Your Social Security Number** (or the Social Security Number of any child under age 18 who permanently lives with you).
- What type of **insurance coverage** you have (it's OK if you don't have any)
- Your family's **total household income** before the storm
- The address and phone number of the place **where your storm damaged happened**, and whatever you know about the damage itself
- **Current contact information**, including a phone number and current mailing address.

# RETURNING HOME

Coming back to a home that's been flooded can be heartbreaking and overwhelming. It can also be hazardous to your health. Here's some advice from other flood survivors:

- If you've been away from your home for an extended period of time, do not enter without sturdy shoes (work boots or rubber boots if you have them), gloves and a face mask that's rated at least an "N95" (it will say this on the package).
  - If you haven't recently had a tetanus shot, get one as soon as possible, especially if you plan to do any cleaning or construction yourself.
  - There's a good chance you won't have access to clean running water. Bring lots of bottled water with you. You'll need it.
  - Check your insurance and FEMA guidelines very carefully before doing anything. If you have no choice to wait, then the next step goes DOUBLE.
  - Take a LOT of picture of EVERYTHING. Before you remove anything or start cleaning or making repairs, take pictures of the damage. Take pictures of everything you take out of the house- furniture, appliances, carpets, sheetrock, anything. Be sure to take pictures of the water mark. Use a tape measure to show how high it was. Do this INSIDE & OUTSIDE.
  - If your outlets were under water do not turn on your breakers if you have power.
  - If your A/C was under water, DO NOT turn it on. If it was above the flood, turn it on as cold as possible. Get fans running if you can. This will help to dry the house out and discourage mold & mildew growth.
  - Keep receipts of anything you use for cleaning, repair or removal.
- If your home lost power, don't bother opening fridges or deep freezers. Duct tape the doors closed and as carefully as possible, get them to the curb.
  - If you are doing major repairs and are taking out walls, leave at least one wall per room so FEMA adjusters can see it. You must also leave at least one section of carpet or flooring in place. FEMA will require seeing it and taking their own pictures.

## Your Car

- If your car looks like it flooded, do not try to start it. It will need to have the engine fluids drained and replaced by a mechanic before you can start it again.
- Remember to take LOTS of pictures!
- Try to dry out the interior as quickly and thoroughly as you can.
- If your car's been towed you can search for it online using your license plate or VIN number at: [findmytowedcar.com](http://findmytowedcar.com)



## REMEMBER TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

Identify your feelings and share them with someone who will listen to you - a trusted friend or relative, or clergy. Get together with other survivors and form a peer support network. If your feelings of anxiety and depression intensify or continue over an extended period of time, contact your family doctor or call the **Disaster Distress line at 1-800-985-5990.**

## More Health & Safety Info

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control has resources available online for people dealing with mold, contaminated water, and other flood-related hazards. They can be downloaded at: [cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes](http://cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes)

## BE CAREFUL!

Many hazards follow in the wake of a disaster like this one. Here are some you can take steps to avoid:

### **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

- Use portable generators, charcoal grills and camp stove outside the house and garage and **at least 20 feet** from windows, doors and vents.

### **Electrocution**

- Stay away from ALL downed wires and whatever they are touching.
- Avoid standing water that covers electrical outlets or is in contact with electrical equipment
- Use only undamaged, OUTDOOR electrical cables with portable generators
- Don't operate electrical appliances and equipment that are in water or have been under water. Have a qualified technician clear them for use first.

### **House Fire**

- Use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns instead of candles

### **Gas Explosion**

- If you smell or hear gas leaking, don't turn lights on or off, or use electrical equipment, including a phone. LEAVE IMMEDIATELY, then call 911!
- Before you use a gas appliance or gas cylinder that has been under water, have a professional check for damage or leaks

### **Building Collapse**

- Leave your home or another building right away if you hear shifting or unusual noises. Strange noises could mean it's about to fall

### **Disease**

- Keep in mind that floodwater often carries germs. If you touch it, be sure to wash your hands with soap and water. If you don't have soap or water, use alcohol-based wipes or sanitizer.
- Throw out any food and wooden cutting boards or spoons that may have touched flood water. Sanitize all other equipment, containers and countertops with a mixture of 1 tsp of bleach in 1 gallon of water.

## LEGAL SERVICES

There are a number of ways to reach qualified lawyers who will provide free legal advice on how to manage your FEMA or insurance claim, landlord/tenant issues, immigration-related concerns, and a range of other disaster-related legal questions you might have.

Volunteer lawyers are also visiting shelters to offer free assistance to people affected by the hurricane. It may be worth checking with shelters in your area to find help.

### **The Texas State Bar Hotline**

Phone: **1-800-504-7030**

You can leave a message anytime, and calls will be returned in English, Spanish or Vietnamese. The State Bar can also be reached at 1-800-204-2222 or 1-800-252-9690 (information and referrals).

### **Houston Volunteer Lawyers:**

Phone: **(713) 228-0732**

Website: [makejusticehappen.org](http://makejusticehappen.org)

### **The Houston Bar Association LegalLine:**

Phone: **713-759-1133**

Website: [hba.org/legalline](http://hba.org/legalline)

This is a regular phone bank that gives free every other Thursday from 3:00 PM- 5:00 PM. They are offering extended hours for people affected by the hurricane. Check their website for details.

The Bar Association also has a lawyer referral line at (713) 237-9429

### **Texas Legal Services Center**

Phone: **800-622-2520**

Website: [tlsc.org](http://tlsc.org)

There's an online intake form at [https://tlsc.formstack.com/forms/general\\_intake](https://tlsc.formstack.com/forms/general_intake)

### **The Lawyer Referral of Central Texas:**

Phone: **512-472-8303**

Website: [austinlrs.com](http://austinlrs.com)

# UNEMPLOYMENT

If you missed days of work without pay, lost your job or if your hours have been reduced because of the disaster, you may apply for Unemployment Insurance Benefits.

Even if you've already exhausted your state unemployment benefits or if you don't have the past earnings or length of employment to qualify for regular benefits, you may be eligible for special Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

You can apply for benefits or re-open your existing claim by contacting

**The Texas Workforce Commission**

Phone: **1-800-939-6631**

Website: [twc.state.tx.us](http://twc.state.tx.us)

The amount that you receive varies according to your previous earnings and/or the number of hours you work. In the case of reduced earnings due to working fewer hours you will be filing a partial unemployment claim. A partial claim allows you to earn up to 20% of your base rate in addition to what you earn working your reduced hours.

Whether you choose to file your claim by telephone or on the web you must be ready to present the following information:

- ✓ Your Social Security Number
- ✓ Your correct alien registration number
- ✓ A current mailing address\*
- ✓ Your employer's name, business address & phone number (including your Supervisor's name & title)
- ✓ The first and last day you worked for this employer (month, day & year)
- ✓ The number of hours you worked during current week (since Sunday)
- ✓ Your current pay rate
- ✓ Your recall date (if you expect to be recalled to your job).

You may also need

- ✓ Pension information (if you are receiving any pension or 401k).
- ✓ Military DD-214, Member 4 Copy (if you were in the military in the past 18 months).
- ✓ Form SF-8 or SF-50 (if you were a federal civilian employee).

**TIP:**

It is very important that you know your online ID, password and email information. Keep this information safe and secure. You will need it to reopen your claim.

**Within 3 days** of completing the online application, you must also complete the "work search" registration at [WorkinTexas.com](http://WorkinTexas.com), even if you have a return to work date and/or are applying for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. If you have a return to work date that's within 12 weeks from now, you'll probably be notified that you are exempt from the actual job search requirements.

**Within 21 days** you must fax or mail a copy of your "proof of affected employment" to the Texas Work Commission this can be a recent pay stub or earnings statement, a letter from your employer, or a notarized statement from a co-worker.

Send it to:

Texas Workforce Commission  
Attn: DUA Proof  
P.O. Box 149137  
Austin, TX 78714-9137  
Fax: 512-936-3250

If you are approved, you will receive a "Payment Voucher" form in the mail that you will need to fill out and return before you can begin collecting benefits.

# LOST DOCUMENTS

If you've lost any of your important documents, the process of replacing them can be slow and frustrating. You'll need some of these documents just to get some of the other ones. Make a list of what you have and what you need, what the requirements are to get each one and what order you'll need to get them in.

## **Texas Driver License:**

Phone: 512-424-2600

Website:

<https://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/replace.htm>

## **Social Security Card:**

Phone: 800-772-1213

Website: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

You will need a government-issued photo ID

## **Green Cards:**

Phone: 800-375-5283

Website: [//www.uscis.gov/green-card/after-green-card-granted/replace-green-card](http://www.uscis.gov/green-card/after-green-card-granted/replace-green-card)

## **Passport:**

Phone: 202-955-0430 or 1-877-487-2778

Website:

[//travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/lost-stolen.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/lost-stolen.html)

## **Proof of Address/Residency:**

Website:

[//www.txdps.state.tx.us/internetforms/Forms/DL-57.pdf](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/internetforms/Forms/DL-57.pdf)

## **Birth and death certificates:**

You will have to request birth records from the county where you were born. For records from the state of Texas, you can start here:

Phone: 888-963-7111

Website:

<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/reqproc/default.shtm>

## **Medicare Cards:**

Phone: 800-772-1213

Website:

[www.socialsecurity.gov/medicarecard/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/medicarecard/)

## **Vehicle Titles:**

Phone: 888-368-4689

Website: [//txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/get-a-copy-of-your-title](http://txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/get-a-copy-of-your-title)

## **Insurance Documents:**

Phone: Check with your own insurance agent

Website: [//insurance.lawyers.com/natural-disasters/replacing-personal-documents-lost-in-a-disaster.html](http://insurance.lawyers.com/natural-disasters/replacing-personal-documents-lost-in-a-disaster.html)

## **Real Estate and Property Records (Mortgage Documents, Deeds, etc.):**

Phone: Contact your own agent

Website: [//propertydeeds.org/lost-property-deed-replacement-procedure/](http://propertydeeds.org/lost-property-deed-replacement-procedure/)

## **Work IDs, paystubs, proof of employment & other work-related documents**

Speak to your employer about reissuing or providing copies of these documents. If you have any problems or concerns, your union is here to help!

## **Voter Resigstration:**

Online change of address (if you're still in the same county) [votetexas.gov](http://votetexas.gov)

Harris County Registrar of voters

Phone: 713-274-8200



# PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

## Refilling Lost Prescriptions

If you have lost or run out of your medication and you can't reach your doctor or get to your usual pharmacy, try to find as many of the following things as you can:

- Your empty pill bottle(s) with labels
- Your prescription card
- A phone number for your regular pharmacy
- A phone number for your insurance company's pharmacy help desk

What to expect you get to the pharmacy:

- Don't worry if your next scheduled refill isn't for a while. The pharmacy & your insurance company should be prepared to override the normal refill schedule.
- You can get an emergency supply even if you don't have a refill and the pharmacy can't reach the person who prescribed your medication. If missing your medication would have a serious impact on your health, the pharmacy is allowed to give you a 72 hour emergency supply. In a disaster, they can give you as much as 30-days' worth.<sup>†</sup>
- If your prescription is for a controlled substance, you will need your doctor to fax or e-fax a new prescription for you. If you can't reach your doctor, you will have to consult another prescriber, who may give you a temporary prescription for alternative medication that isn't a controlled substance.

If possible, go to a branch of your usual pharmacy chain. In Texas, prescriptions can't be electronically transferred between pharmacies that aren't part of the same chain. If your original pharmacy is closed, a pharmacy from a different chain may have a harder time getting your prescription transferred over.

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<sup>†</sup> Details can be found here:

[http://www.pharmacy.texas.gov/files\\_pdf/2017\\_harvey\\_notification.pdf](http://www.pharmacy.texas.gov/files_pdf/2017_harvey_notification.pdf)

## Help Paying for Prescriptions

### Working with your doctor

Explain your situation to the doctor and ask for his or her help finding the most affordable and accessible alternatives to meet your prescription needs, including access to samples, different generics, mail-order options or longer prescriptions (90 day supplies instead of 30). You can also ask at your pharmacy about ways to reduce costs.

The following programs may be able to assist you in obtaining low cost or discounted medications:

### **Partnership for Prescription Assistance**

Phone: 1-888-477-2669

Website: [pparx.org](http://pparx.org)

Helps qualifying patients without prescription drug coverage get the medicines they need through the program that is right for them. Many will get their medications free or nearly free. Website also has a list of free or low-cost clinics in your area.

### **Familywize**

Website: [familywize.org](http://familywize.org)

A community partner of United Way, Familywize offers discounts on many common prescription drugs. Website allows you to look up drug prices and request more information on the program:

### **RX Assist**

Website: [rxassist.org](http://rxassist.org)

Online database of prescription discount programs and other patient resources.

# HEALTH CARE



## Affordable Care Act

Texans who lose their employer-based health insurance are eligible to apply for reduced-cost health insurance plans offered through the federal government exchange. You can apply online at [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) as soon as you lose coverage.

## COBRA

The Federal COBRA law requires that most employers offer you and your family a temporary extension of health coverage at group rates, called "continuation coverage". Depending on the circumstances of your job departure, you, your spouse and dependent children may be eligible for coverage for a minimum of 18 months with a possible extension to 36 months in certain circumstances. You may be required to pay the full premium, including your employer's contribution.

## Medicaid

Medicaid is a state implemented medical program to help you obtain health care and related services. Those eligible for Medicaid include:

- Families receiving or who are eligible for TANF
- Individuals who are age 65 or older, blind or disabled
- Social Security Income (SSI) recipients
- Children who are born in the U.S., even if their parents are not citizens or legal residents

Pregnant women and children if they meet both an income and assets test

## Medicare

Medicare is a federally funded medical insurance program administered by the Social Security Administration. You are eligible for Medicare hospital insurance if you:

- Are 65 and receive Social Security or railroad retirement benefits
- Have received Social security disability benefits for 24 months

For more information about these requirements and other features of the Medicare program, call:

Social Security Administration  
(800) 772-1213 or visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

Remember: Your family doctor or local hospital does not want to see you ignore health problems. If you have lost your health coverage, speak to your doctor about the possibility of negotiating reduced fees and payment schedules.

# **SPECIALIZED RESOURCES**

## **CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

### **School Closings**

KHOU 11 is maintaining a list of area school closings on its website

<http://www.khou.com/closings/>

### **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) - Disaster Response**

This program will make free and reduced-price school meal programs available to children impacted by the disaster, even if school hasn't started yet. More information is available from the **Texas Department of Agriculture** at <http://www.squaremeals.org>

### **Free School Lunch for All HISD Students**

Phone: **713-556-600**

Website: [houstonisd.org](http://houstonisd.org)

Because of the disaster, free lunch will be provided for all children in the Houston Independent School District for the 2017-2018 school year. No student will be denied, but parents are still asked to fill out the application at:

<https://mealapps.houstonisd.org>.

### **US Department of Education Hurricane Harvey Hotline**

Phone: **1-844-348-4082**

Email: [HarveyRelief@ed.gov](mailto:HarveyRelief@ed.gov)

Resources and information for students affected by the disaster. May be particularly useful to parents of children who have been forced to leave their school districts.

### **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)**

This program provides financial assistance to very poor families with children under 19.

Texans can apply at: [yourtexasbenefits.com](http://yourtexasbenefits.com)

### **Texas Children's Health Plan**

Phone: **1-800-990-8247**

Website: [texaschildrenshealthplan.org](http://texaschildrenshealthplan.org)

Provides low-cost health insurance for children up to age 21 and pregnant women. Includes Medicaid services and programs for low-income families who don't qualify for Medicaid.

### **Women Infants & Children (WIC)**

Phone: **1-800-942-3678**

Website: [texaswic.dshs.state.tx.us](http://texaswic.dshs.state.tx.us)

Offers supplemental foods and health care referrals for low-income pregnant women and new, as well as to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. Evacuees will be given special priority for the program and normal documentation requirements will be waived. Clinics are also available.

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Disaster Survivors with Disabilities Hotline**

Hotline: **1-800-626-4959**

Website: [portlight.org](http://portlight.org)

Refers people with disabilities to services and resources they may need, including helping to meet immediate needs for durable medical equipment and supplies.

### **Disability Rights Texas**

Phone: 1-800-252-9108

Online Intake: [disabilityrightstx.org](http://disabilityrightstx.org)

Emergency information and resources related to the hurricane and its aftermath.

## **LGBTQ**

### **The Montrose Center**

24-hr Helpline: **713-529-3211**

Website: [montrosecenter.org](http://montrosecenter.org)

Dedicated counselors available to connect members of the LGBTQ community impacted by the disaster to a full range of emergency and ongoing support resources.

## CONFRONTING FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Even in the best of times, living on a temporarily reduced income would require your utmost caution and skill in managing your money. Doing it in the aftermath of a natural disaster is almost unimaginable. There are many resources to help you, but first you must plan ahead. Here are some steps to get you started:

- ✓ **Stop unnecessary expenses.**  
For example, if your home is temporarily uninhabitable or totally destroyed, notify the utility company and other service companies, such as the phone company, so they can stop billing immediately.
- ✓ **Count up your resources.**  
Estimate the amount of income and emergency savings you have to pay bills while you recover from the disaster.
- ✓ **Set up a realistic budget plan**  
Allow for basic needs such as: food, shelter, utilities and medical care, as well as special expenses like replacing lost items, cleaning, moving, etc.
- ✓ **Prioritize your bills.** When you do not have enough money to pay all the bills, pay these first: rent or mortgage, utilities, food and transportation.
- ✓ **Call creditors and ask for more time to pay.** Before your bills become due, notify your creditors, lenders and/or landlord that you have been affected by the storm and can't meet your payments. Most creditors will be willing to work with you, especially if you notify them before a payment is due. Explain your situation truthfully and ask for a written payment plan or discuss other ways to pay off your obligations.

- ✓ **Maintain accurate files.** Before mailing your letters, make copies to keep for your files. If you must negotiate over the phone, keep detailed notes including the representative's name, title, and phone number. Follow up any phone conversations in writing.
- ✓ **Stay organized.** Keep everything in one place. Write a summary list of your financial plan for quick reference.
- ✓ **Keep your end of the bargain.** If you are unable to make agreed upon payments, contact your creditors immediately to renegotiate.
- ✓ **Avoid making unnecessary purchases on credit.**
- ✓ **Get budget counseling** if you are having difficulty. For financial counseling, debt management and consumer education, call:
  - Family Houston**  
Phone: 713-861-4849  
Website: [familyhouston.org](http://familyhouston.org)
  - Consumer Credit Counseling Services**  
Phone: 1-800-431-8157  
Website: [credit.org/cccs](http://credit.org/cccs)
  - Houston Metro. Federal Credit Union**  
Phone: 1-888-271-6035  
Website: [hmefcu.org](http://hmefcu.org)
- ✓ **To report price-gouging** or another consumer problem, contact
  - The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Hotline**  
Phone: 1-800-621-0508  
Email: [consumeremergency@oag.texas.gov](mailto:consumeremergency@oag.texas.gov)
- ✓ **If you need mediation services** to provide conflict resolution with a landlord, merchant, neighbor or family member, call:
  - The Dispute Resolution Center of Harris County**  
Phone: 713-755-8274  
Website: [drc.harriscountytexas.gov](http://drc.harriscountytexas.gov)

# HOUSING

## Rent/Lease

If you rent, discuss your circumstances with your landlord as soon as possible. If your home is uninhabitable, the landlord is legally allowed to terminate your lease. This means you do not owe any further rent, are entitled to have your security deposit returned, and may request a refund of any rent you pre-paid for months or parts of months that you were not able to use.

If you are forced out of your apartment, FEMA may cover the cost of the first 2 months of your temporary replacement rental. Depending on your circumstances, these payments may be extended in 3 month intervals up to 18 months.

If you are able to remain in your home but are unable to continue to pay your full rent, contact your landlord immediately to negotiate a mutually acceptable written payment plan or discuss other ways to pay off your obligation.

If you have any doubts about your rights, see the "Legal Resources" section for ways to contact lawyers who can advise you on how to proceed.

There are also resources for renters available from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, including a registry of available reduced-rent apartments.

Website: [tdhca.state.tx.us](http://tdhca.state.tx.us)

## Mortgages

Planning ahead can prevent the loss of your home. If you are concerned about your ability to keep current with your mortgage payments, contact your mortgage lender or servicer immediately and let them know you are in an affected area and need assistance.

If you have government-insured mortgage (backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac), all foreclosure and evictions in areas affected by

the Hurricane are suspended for 90 days. Government guidelines allow for 6 months, or possibly more, of suspended payment forbearance plan, including suspended credit reporting and late fee waivers. At the end of the forbearance, the loan will be modified to help get back to an affordable payment schedule.

If you are not satisfied after discussing possible relief actions with your lender, you and call a US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved counseling agency at: **1-800-569-4287**

For private mortgages, it will be up to the individual credit unions how it will be handled. You should contact your mortgage company as soon as you know you will have difficulty paying your mortgage payments. The sooner you call, the more options will be available to you.

For additional assistance in avoiding foreclosure, contact the federal government's 24-hr Homeowner's HOPE Hotline: **888-995-HOPE (4673)**  
Website: [makinghomeaffordable.gov](http://makinghomeaffordable.gov)  
Provides services in over 160 languages

## Rebuilding

### **Habitat for Humanity**

Provides the opportunity for low-income individuals to participate in the construction of their own new homes.

Houston: **713-671-9993**

Website: [houstonhabitat.org](http://houstonhabitat.org)

NW Harris County: **281-477-0460**

Website: [habitat.org/housing-help/apply](http://habitat.org/housing-help/apply)

### **Rebuilding Together Houston**

Phone: **713-659-2511**

Website: [rebuildinghouston.org](http://rebuildinghouston.org)

Helps senior, disabled and veteran homeowners in Harris County with home rebuilding efforts.

# ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

## FINANCIAL AID

### Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)

Website: [hhsc.state.tx.us](http://hhsc.state.tx.us)

Food-specific financial aid for people whose income has been significantly impacted by disaster-related loss of work and/or increased expenses (clean-up, repairs, etc.). Apply through Texas Health and Human Services Commission

### Texas Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program

Phone: 1-877-399-8939

Website: [tdcha.state.tx.us/ea/ceap.htm](http://tdcha.state.tx.us/ea/ceap.htm)

Provides relief to low income households by providing financial assistance, paying up to four of the highest bills during the year.

### Lifeline Telephone Assistance

Phone: 1-866-454-8387

Website: [lifelinesupport.org](http://lifelinesupport.org)

Helps qualified low-income individuals pay the monthly cost of basic telephone service.

### Student Loan Management

Phone: 1-800-4FED-AID

Website: [studentaid.gov/hurricane-harvey](http://studentaid.gov/hurricane-harvey)

The Department of Education has directed student loan servicers to provide special flexibility to borrowers affected by the disaster.

### Social Security

On the web: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

If you are 62 or older you may be eligible for Social Security benefits. If you begin collecting before age 65, your benefits will be reduced.

The amount of benefits that you receive is based on your lifetime earnings.

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI is a federal program that pays monthly benefits to people who are 65 or older, or blind, or have a disability and who don't own much or have a lot of income. SSI isn't just for adults. Monthly benefits can go to disabled and blind children, too. For information, call Social Security at the number listed above.

## HOMELESSNESS

### SEARCH Homeless Services

Phone: 713-739-7752

Website: [searchhomeless.org](http://searchhomeless.org)

Works to engage, stabilize, educate, employ and house individuals and families who are homeless.

### The Beacon

Phone: 713-220-9737

Website: [beaconhomeless.org](http://beaconhomeless.org)

Serves the Houston homeless community through daily services, civil legal aid, counseling and mentoring and access to housing.

## SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### Houston Area Women's Center

Phone: 713-528-2121

Website: [hawc.org](http://hawc.org)

Provides a safe place to stay, counseling and advocacy to survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

### The Bridge Over Troubled Waters

Phone: 713-473-2801

Website: [thebridgeovertroubledwaters.org](http://thebridgeovertroubledwaters.org)

Family crisis center serving survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

## LOST PETS

### AKC Reunite

Phone: 1-800-252-7894

Website: [akcreunite.org/storms](http://akcreunite.org/storms)

Report a lost or found pet, get information about pet-friendly shelters

### Harvey Lost & Found Pets

Facebook page for those seeking lost pets.

<https://www.facebook.com/TexasHurricaneHarveyPets/>

## PHONE RESCUE

### Tekdry

Phone: 303-495-2992

Website: [tekdry.com](http://tekdry.com)

Offering help with cellphones damaged in the flood. May be on site at some shelters.

# TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

A disaster like this affects us in lots of ways. Some are obvious, but some can be hard to recognize at first. Here's some advice to protect yourself as you move through the next few months:

- ✓ Don't spend too much time watching and reading news about the storm. Let yourself engage in relaxing activities that will help you heal and move on.
- ✓ Take your sleep seriously. Only go to bed when you are ready to sleep and avoid using your phone in bed. If you wake up and can't fall back to sleep, try writing what's on your mind in a journal or on a piece of paper.
- ✓ Take your support system seriously-keep in touch with friends and family and reach out to others who are sharing this experience with you.
- ✓ Make and keep a routine. Eat meals at regular times and set a sleep schedule that ensures you enough rest.
- ✓ Include a positive or fun activity in your schedule that you can look forward to each day or week. Schedule exercise into your daily routine as well, if possible.
- ✓ Avoid making major life decisions that you don't have to make. There's plenty of change going on around you. Give yourself time to adjust.
- ✓ Recognize the effects of stress, and seek help if needed.
- ✓ Catch problems while they are small – and remember that *"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"*

## VOLUNTEERING

When you're ready, give yourself a chance to give back. Volunteering can be a good way to feel productive and purposeful at a time when everything around you is uncertain.

You may not need to look any further than your community, faith, school, union or other networks to find opportunities to volunteer. If you want to explore other options, you could try:

### Volunteer Houston

<http://www.volunteerhou.org/drm/needs/vrc/>  
Allows you to sign up and be matched with the organization that can most use your help

### Volunteer Match

<https://www.volunteermatch.org>  
Connects you with a wide variety of volunteer opportunities with specific groups like immigrants, the elderly, kids, etc.

The huge relief agencies also have lots of volunteer opportunities:

### The American Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org/volunteer/become-a-volunteer>

### The Salvation Army

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/volunteer/>