



FEMA

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News Release

FEMA Assistance Available for Houses of Worship in Georgia

ATLANTA – FEMA’s Public Assistance program may provide assistance to faith-based organizations in Georgia that were affected by Hurricane Helene and provide essential social services to the public.

Houses of worship, if they provide critical or essential social services, may submit a FEMA request for Public Assistance through [Grants Portal](#), an online recovery management tool. Any questions about the process can be answered by your local and/or state emergency manager.

Houses of worship that provide a noncritical social service, such as community and senior centers operated by nonprofit organizations, must go through the loan application process with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance program before FEMA can determine eligibility for the agency’s Public Assistance program. The Public Assistance program reimburses expenses for emergency protective measures, debris removal, and repair or rebuilding of disaster-damaged property. However, some activities regarding emergency protective measures that were performed in preparation or response to the storm may be eligible without, or while pending, an SBA decision.

SBA’s low-interest disaster loans provide up to \$2 million for damaged real estate and the repair or replacement of property such as furniture, fixtures and other eligible inventory. For information about disaster assistance from SBA, visit [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster) or call 800-659-2955.

Eligibility:

- The house of worship must be the owner of the affected property or operated by a private nonprofit organization.
- It must have sustained damage caused by Hurricane Helene and located in a county designated for [Public Assistance](#).
- The facility must be open to the public.
- The application must include state and/or U.S. Internal Revenue Service documentation of tax-exempt status, pre-disaster charter and other documentation.

Learn more at fema.gov/helene/georgia

Requests for Public Assistance

Requests for Public Assistance are accepted from state, territorial and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship, up to 30 days after the date of declaration for the county where the facility is located.

Additional information about eligibility and deadlines can be found on [Georgia's Public Assistance Grant Program website](#).

What You Will Need to Provide

Evidence of federal or state tax-exempt status or other documents indicating nonprofit status, such as bylaws or articles of incorporation.

- Pre-disaster evidence of incorporation/charter/bylaws.
- A Data Universal Number Systems number established with the government.
- Supporting documentation establishing lease or ownership of the building, proof of use, and proof of insurance.
- If eligibility is granted, the following will need to be submitted: A list of sites damaged, before-and-after pictures and information about any historic structures.

For the latest information about Georgia's recovery, visit fema.gov/helene/georgia and fema.gov/disaster/4821. Follow FEMA on X at x.com/femaregion4 or follow FEMA on social media at: [FEMA Blog](#) on fema.gov, [@FEMA](#) or [@FEMAEspanol](#) on X, [FEMA](#) or [FEMA Espanol](#) on Facebook, [@FEMA](#) on Instagram, and via [FEMA YouTube channel](#). Also, follow Administrator Deanne Criswell on Twitter [@FEMA_Deanne](#).

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after disasters.