

Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) Snapshot

Report #228

January 26, 2024

***Purpose/Overview:** The VAL Snapshot is published weekly and intended to provide partners with situational awareness to assist in determining if, where, and how they may deploy resources. Email FEMA-VAL@fema.dhs.gov to subscribe.*

Next VOISE Partner Call: February 21

Topic: TBD

Date: Wed., Feb 21, 2024

Time: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT

Location: ZOOM

Passcode: **FEMAVAL**

[Click here to register!](#)

These calls are held the second Wednesday of each month but may occur more frequently during disaster operations.

Future VOISE Partner Call and information is available on the Voluntary Organization Information Sharing and Engagement (VOISE) Dashboard, along with helpful tools, reports, and communication from FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons around the country.

<https://fema.connectsolutions.com/voise/>

Reforming Individual Assistance: Recap

On January 25, FEMA Individual Assistance executives held their first engagement with nearly 2,700 external partners during the VAL's Voluntary Organization Information Sharing and Engagement (VOISE) Partner Call, where they discussed the reforms to FEMA federal assistance policies aimed at cutting red tape, providing funds faster and giving people more flexibility.

To benefit survivors, FEMA will:

- **Establish new benefits that provide flexible funding directly to survivors when they need it most.**

This includes the implementation of Serious Needs Assistance, which will provide immediate cash needs, and Displacement Assistance, designed to more quickly assist survivors who cannot return home after a disaster.

- **Cut red tape and expand eligibility to reach more people and help them recover faster, while building back stronger.**

This includes removing loan application requirements, helping underinsured survivors, changing habitability criteria, and making accessibility improvements.

- **Simplify the application process to meet survivors' individual needs and meet people where they are.**

This includes removing barriers for late applicants, streamlining temporary housing assistance applications and simplifying the appeals process.

The changes will go into effect for disasters declared on or after March 22, 2024.

- ✓ [Click here for a full description of reforms.](#)
- ✓ [Click here to download the Individual Assistance Reform Fact Sheet.](#)
- ✓ [Comment period is open on the Federal Registry.](#)



Image of the VOISE Partner Call January 25, 2024, discussing the new IA changes.



FEMA Reforms Disaster Assistance to Help Survivors

Purpose/Overview: FEMA is updating regulation based on direct feedback from survivors. The goal is to speed recovery and increase the likelihood of disaster survivors to more fully recover. These changes are paired with initiatives to improve the employee and survivor experiences. Together, these efforts will reform individual assistance.



Establish New Benefits

- **Standardizing Serious Needs Assistance**
FEMA is standardizing assistance for serious needs by making a \$750 payment available in all disasters receiving Individual Assistance, for eligible households to access essential items like, food, water, baby formula and other emergency supplies.
- **Create Displacement Assistance**
This new form of assistance is designed for survivors that cannot return to their home following a disaster and provides them financial assistance they can use flexibly to pay for their immediate housing needs. It will provide eligible survivors with up-front funds to assist with immediate housing options of their choice until they are able to secure a rental option to focus on their long-term recovery.



Cut Red Tape and Expand Eligibility

- **Simplify Other Needs Assistance**
FEMA will no longer require survivors to apply for a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loan before being considered for certain types of assistance. Survivors now have the option to apply for a low-interest SBA loan at the same time they apply for FEMA assistance.
- **Help Underinsured Survivors**
Survivors who receive an insurance payment for damage to their home may be eligible to receive assistance from FEMA, even if their insurance payment is more than congressionally established maximums for Housing Assistance or Other Needs Assistance (\$42,500 for Fiscal Year 2024).
- **Expand Habitability Criteria**
Survivors who need to fix a disaster-damaged area of their home may qualify for FEMA support, so the home is in a safe and sanitary condition, to include home repair regardless of pre-existing conditions of the disaster-damaged area. For example, if an already leaky roof was further damaged by a disaster, it may be eligible for repairs required to bring it back to a working condition.
- **Make Accessibility Improvements**
Survivors with disabilities may now use FEMA funding to make certain accessibility improvements to homes damaged by a declared disaster.
- **Simplifying Assistance for Entrepreneurs**
FEMA may provide self-employed survivors with some initial financial support to replace disaster-damaged tools and equipment, or other items required for a specific trade or profession.



Simplify the Application Process

- **Streamline Temporary Housing Assistance Applications**
FEMA is reducing documentation requirements for applicants seeking continued temporary housing assistance. Individual caseworkers will engage closely with survivors to offer support and increase transparency.
- **Remove Barriers for Late Applicants**
Survivors requesting approval for a late application no longer have to provide documentation supporting the reason for their late application.
- **Simplify the Process for Appeals**
Survivors who do not agree with the type or amount of FEMA assistance offered will experience a simplified process to appeal. A signed, written appeal letter will no longer be required to accompany supporting documentation.

Coming Soon!
Changes go into effect for disasters declared on or after March 22, 2024



Severe Weather Declaration Activity

Purpose/Overview: This page details information for ongoing declarations that occurred as a result of natural and man-made disasters. This information is intended to enable our partners to better serve and assist survivors. This data was captured **1/26/2024 at 8:00 am** and reflects the most current data in FEMA's systems.

Declaration Requests in Process							
State/Tribe/Territory-Incident Description			Type	IA	PA	HM	Requested
OH – Train Derailment			DR	X	X	X	07/03/2023
Inupiat Community of the Artic Slope (ICAS) – Severed Undersea Fiber Optic Line – APPEAL			EM		X		08/23/2023
WA- Wildfires			DR	X	X	X	10/04/2023
MI – Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding			DR	X	X	X	10/18/2023
KY – Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Straight-Line Winds, and Flooding (Appeal)			DR	X		X	10/23/0223
WV – Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides			DR	X		X	10/25/2023
NY – Severe Storms and Flooding			DR		X	X	11/29/2023
MA – Severe Storms and Flooding			DR	X	X	X	12/11/2023
AK – Severe Storms, Flooding, and Landslides			DR	X	X	X	01/08/2024
ME – Severe Storm and Flooding			DR	X	X	X	01/16/2024
PA – Severe Storms and Flooding – APPEAL			DR		X	X	01/20/2024
AK – Permafrost Degradation			DR		X	X	01/25/2024
Declared Non-Congregate Sheltering			Non-Declared Non-Congregate Sheltering				
Incident	DR-4724-HI	DR-4734-FL	Incident	FLOOD-CA	BLIZZARD-OR	FLOOD-TX	
Population	5,286 (ARC)	249 (ARC)	Population	43 (ARC)	15 (ARC)	18 (ARC)	

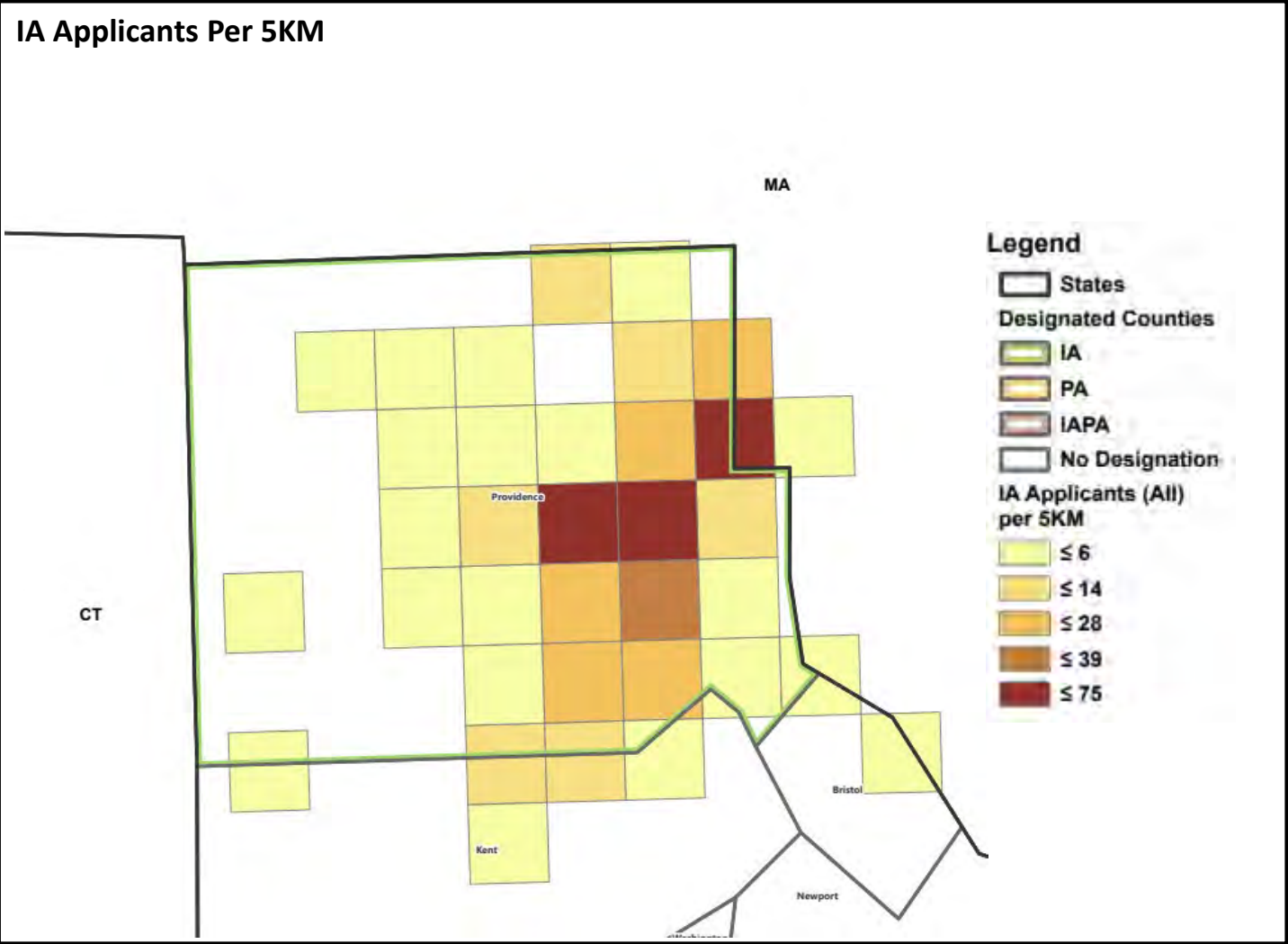
Registration Information: DR-4753-RI



Severe Storms, Flooding, and Tornadoes
(Declared:1/07/2024– Last Filing Date: 3/07/2024)

Purpose/Overview: This data is intended to provide aggregate survivor data to be used for planning purposes. Only those disasters with an open registration period are shown in this style. If you are unable to read this information, or would like amplifying information, please email FEMA-VAL@fema.dhs.gov. This data was captured 1/26/2024 12:00 PM

IA Applicants Per 5KM



Disaster Stats For DR – 4753

Top 5 Counties with FEMA Applicants					
702		44		3	
Providence		Kent		Bristol	
Registrations					
Total		Valid		Invalid	
756		627		129	
SBA Applications (Homeowners Only)					
Referred	Approved		Denied		Pending
598	-		103		495
IHP Financial Breakdown					
Referred					
IHP	HA		ONA		
590	573		311		
Approved					
IHP	HA		ONA		
\$1,135,572	\$1,075,685		\$59,887		
Applicant Reported Damages					
Owners					
Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
587	48%	45%	5%	-	2%
Renters					
Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
139	28%	29%	30%	8%	5%

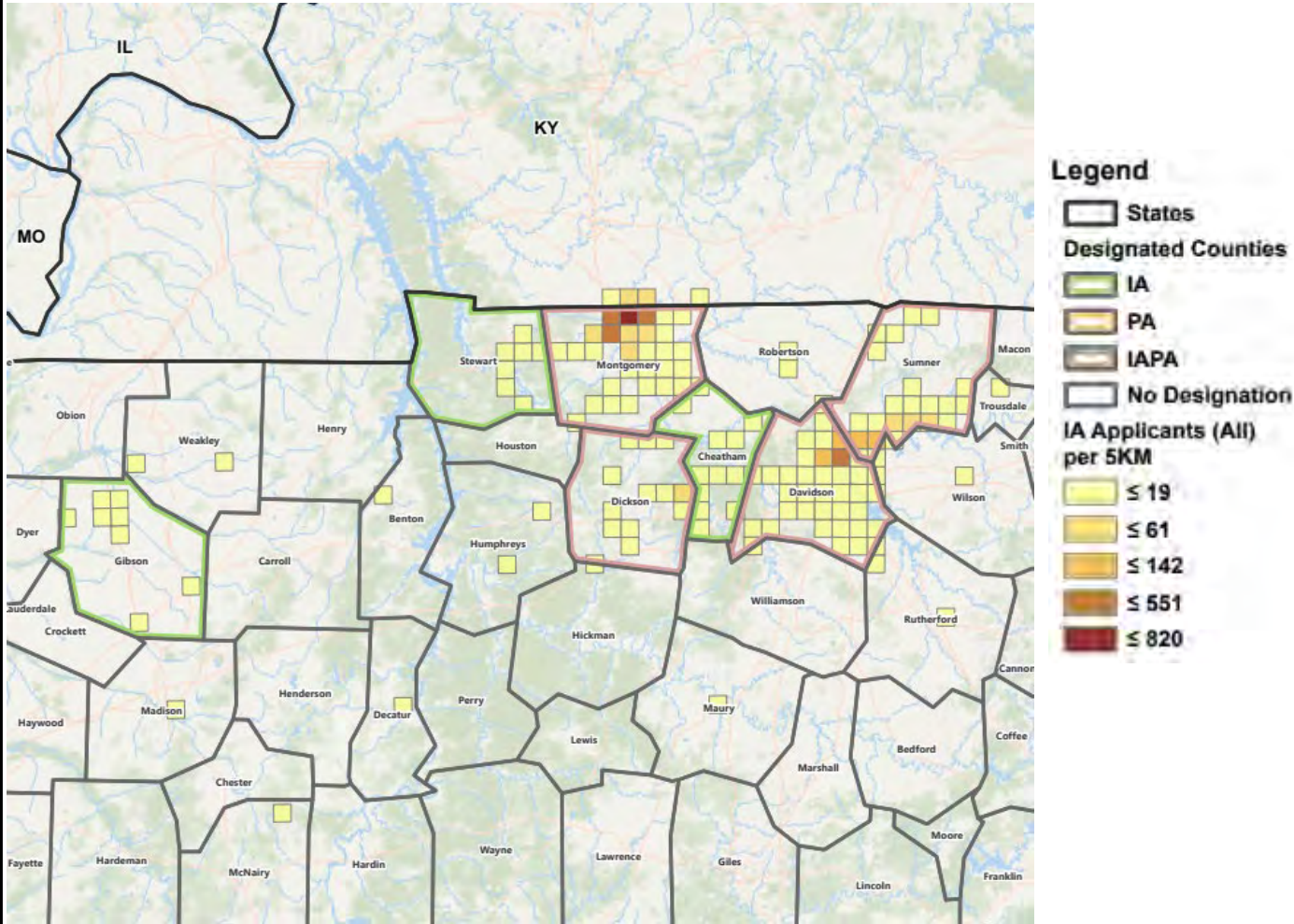
Registration Information: DR-4751-TN



Severe Storms and Tornadoes
(Declared:12/14/2023 – Last Filing Date: 2/12/2024)

Purpose/Overview: This data is intended to provide aggregate survivor data to be used for planning purposes. Only those disasters with an open registration period are shown in this style. If you are unable to read this information, or would like amplifying information, please email FEMA-VAL@fema.dhs.gov. This data was captured 1/26/2024 12:00 PM

IA Applicants Per 5KM



Disaster Stats For DR – 4751

Top 5 Counties with FEMA Applicants

2,527	779	478	69	35
Montgomery	Davidson	Sumner	Dickson	Gibson

Registrations

Total	Valid	Invalid
4,015	3,909	106

SBA Applications (Homeowners Only)

Referred	Approved	Denied	Pending
1,944	11	643	1,290

IHP Financial Breakdown

Referred

IHP	HA	ONA
3,574	3,227	2,669

Approved

IHP	HA	ONA
\$3,233,311	\$1,613,564	\$1,619,746

Applicant Reported Damages

Owners

Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
1,879	54%	25%	11%	6%	4%

Renters

Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
1,617	44%	16%	19%	14%	8%

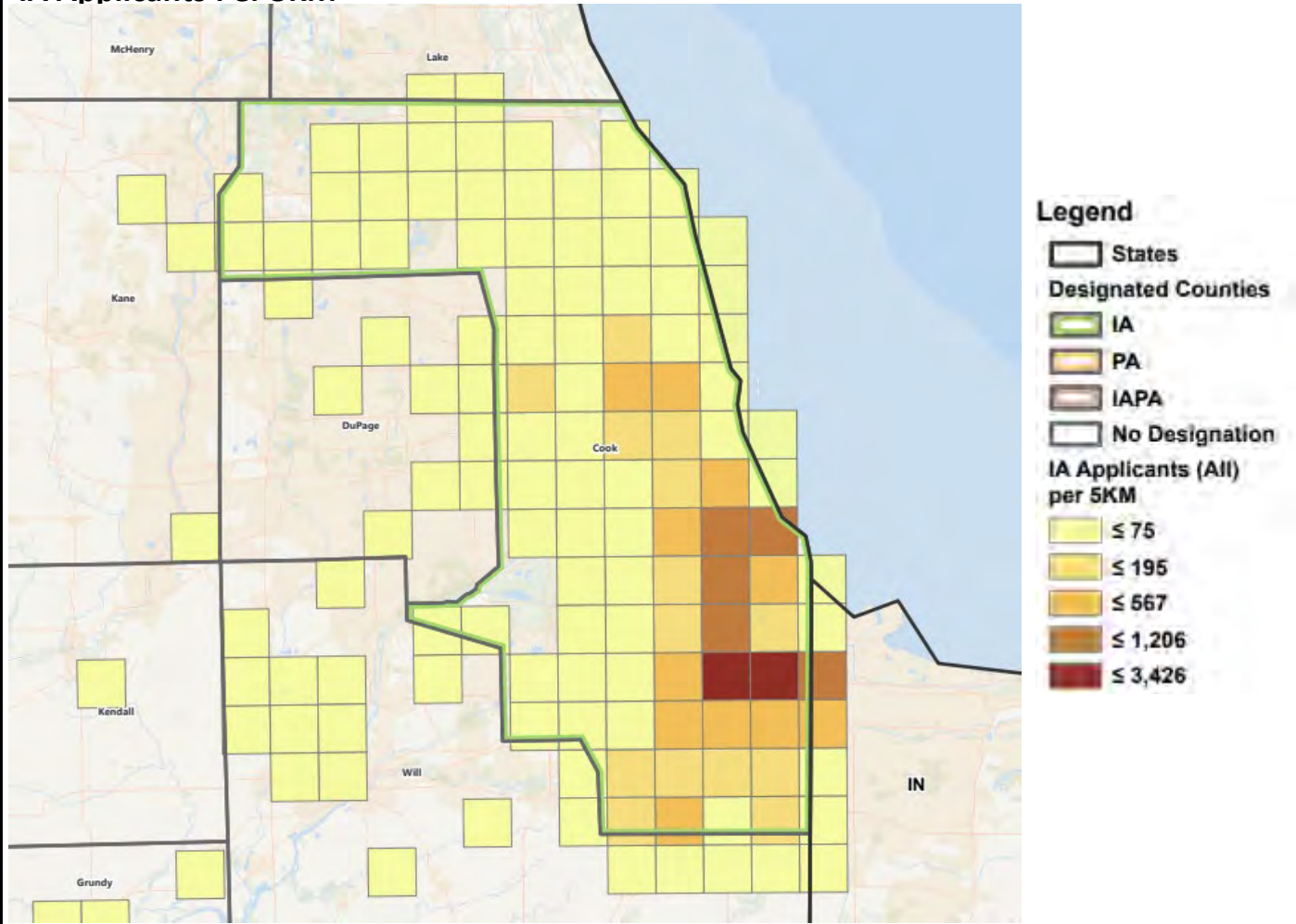
Registration Information: DR-4749-IL



Severe Storms and Flooding
(Declared: 11/20/2023 – Last Filing Date: 2/09/2024)

Purpose/Overview: This data is intended to provide aggregate survivor data to be used for planning purposes. Only those disasters with an open registration period are shown in this style. If you are unable to read this information, or would like amplifying information, please email FEMA-VAL@fema.dhs.gov. This data was captured 1/26/2024 12:00 PM

IA Applicants Per 5KM



Disaster Stats For DR - 4749

Top 5 Counties with FEMA Applicants

17,054	51	7	6	5
Cook	Will	DuPage	St. Clair	Winnebago

Registrations

Total	Valid	Invalid
20,272	19,937	335

SBA Applications (Homeowners Only)

Referred	Approved	Denied	Pending
11,963	91	4,947	6,925

IHP Financial Breakdown

Referred

IHP	HA	ONA
19,128	18,453	15,131

Approved

IHP	HA	ONA
\$38,514,386	\$33,817,089	\$4,697,296

Applicant Reported Damages

Owners

Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
11,862	46%	42%	10%	0%	2%

Renters

Total	Minor	Moderate	Major	Destroyed	Unknown
7,855	32%	34%	29%	2%	2%



Regional Operational Updates

Purpose/Overview: The VAL Snapshot is published weekly and intended to provide partners with situational awareness to assist in determining if, where, and how they may deploy resources. It will be sent out each Friday. Email FEMA-VAL@fema.dhs.gov to subscribe.

Region 4 (FL, GA, TN, AL, KY, NC, SC, MS)

DR-4751-TN:

- As part of a continuing effort to help Tennesseans rebuild from the December 2023 storms and tornadoes, FEMA is offering free advice on how to rebuild stronger and safer against storms. The service is offered at the following locations:
 - Ace Hardware, 511 S. Broadway St. in Portland.
8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 27
7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Tuesday, Jan. 29-30
7 a.m. to noon, Wednesday, Jan. 31
 - White Bluff Building Supply, 4978 E Hwy 70 in White Bluff.
8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 27
7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Tuesday, Jan. 29-30
7 a.m. to noon, Wednesday, Jan. 31
- Disaster Recovery Centers in Cheatham, Dickson, Gibson and Sumner counties will close permanently in a few days:
 - Closing Monday, Jan. 29 - Cheatham County: McCullough Community Room
 - Closing Tuesday, Jan. 30 - Gibson County: First Baptist Church of Rutherford
 - Closing Wednesday, Jan. 31 - Dickson County: Bibb-White Bluff Civic Center | Sumner County: Gallatin Public Utilities
- Two centers will continue operating after these centers close: Davidson County - Nashville Public Library and Montgomery County - Clarksville-Montgomery County Public Library. Any resident of Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Gibson, Montgomery or Sumner County who had uninsured losses from the December tornadoes can visit any open center.
- VALs continue outreach in the lower impacted counties (as measured by registrations) to ensure that community leaders are aware of the potential effectiveness of the Long-Term Recovery Group model to support recovery, depending on the extent of unmet needs being identified.
- VALs are collaborating with TN Emergency Management Agency and TN VOAD to identify additional recovery resources; support LTRG development; identify and resolve individual unmet needs cases; and support donations management efforts as recovery continues.

Region 5 (IL, MN, WI, MI, IN, OH)

DR-4749-IL:

- VALs continue to conduct outreach to recruit organizations to join the long-term recovery efforts through the emerging LTRGs. Contact: Anne.Robertson@fema.dhs.gov.

Region 9 (CA, NV, HI, AZ, GU, CNMI, AS)

DR-4724-HI:

- Interest is high and registration is ongoing for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's offering of resiliency training *Building Hope, Resilience and Compassion in Times of Stress*; two sessions will be held: Tuesday, January 30, and Wednesday January 31, on Maui.
- Jehovah's Witnesses are engaging with Ho'ōla iā Mauiakama LTDRG (Long Term Disaster Recovery Group) Spiritual and Emotional Care Sub-Committee Chair
- American Red Cross Disaster Case Management, Catholic Charities Disaster Case Management, and state and FEMA VALs are collaborating on gaps and resources needed to support FEMA IA programs.
- State and FEMA VALs are coordinating with Mennonite Disaster Service on re-building priorities in connection with Ho'ōla iā Mauiakama LTDRG Construction/Rebuild Committee.

Region 6 (AR, LA, NM, TX, OK)

DR-4698-AR:

- There are two active long term recovery committees, in Pulaski and Cross Counties. Please connect with Karla Mongan, FEMA VAL, karla.Mongan@femadhs.gov for more information.
- The Direct Housing Program continues for Cross County (Wynne, AR). Cross County – Wynne Recovery meets the last Thursday of the month.
 - Unmet needs – Rebuild/repair organizations, funding and furniture.
- Pulaski County – Pulaski County LTRG meets the last Wednesday of the month.
 - Unmet needs – Rebuild/repair organizations, funding and furniture.

Operations Update: FEMA HQ Donations



FEMA HQ Donations Dashboard

UPDATED DAILY



Visit the [Donation Dashboard](#) for **availability and specific details** on these donations and partner priority needs!



On a mobile device?
Use our QR code to access the Donations Dashboard

AVAILABLE DONATIONS FOR QUALIFIED PARTNERS

Offering **82 trailer loads** that equal approximately **14.7 million items**

Window Blinds

N95 Respirators

Safety Syringes

Hotel Furnishings

Non-medical
Face Masks

Surgical Face Masks

Cotton and General
Use Face Masks

Mattresses

TOP PRIORITY NEEDS FOR NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

- Rebuilding supplies
- Materials, PPE and equipment
- Food and toys
- Family supply kits
- Conex containers
- 53-foot semi-trailers
- Firewood
- Water, Tools, and Hygiene Products



If your organization is **interested in the available donation offers**, can **fulfill any of the identified needs** – or has **product needs for current operations**, please reach out to the Donations team at: Donations@fema.dhs.gov

Partnerships in Action: Louisiana



Bayou Community Foundation (BCF) recently celebrated the completion of the first new home built in the “Rebuild South Lafourche” Hurricane Ida Housing Recovery Program. BCF, donors, partners, volunteers and Lafourche Parish leaders welcomed Eloise Vizier to her new home in Cut Off. This is the first storm-resilient home built there for Hurricane Ida survivors through the Foundation’s [“Rebuild South Lafourche”](#) Housing Recovery Program.

The Foundation will invest over \$2 million in construction materials through June 2024 for volunteers with nonprofit building groups, [Menonite Disaster Service \(MDS\) Storm Aid](#) and C.A.R.E. from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. These nonprofits will build 15 new FORTIFIED Gold homes and repair up to 150 storm-damaged homes for residents of limited means in Larose, Cut Off, Galliano and Golden Meadow, southern Lafourche Parish, Louisiana.

Additionally, [Catholic Charities](#) is providing home appliances, [American Red Cross](#) is funding furniture and household items, and [Second Harvest](#) is providing food and cleaning supplies to Rebuild South Lafourche clients. Meanwhile, Corporate partner, [Danos](#), is contributing a critical program resource – housing for the 40 MDS Storm Aid volunteers who will be working in the area through May.



Partners in Action: Convoy of Hope – A Year in Review



2023 was a year full of opportunities to bring light into dark situations, as Convoy of Hope responded to 86 disasters.

Southeast Tornadoes: Convoy of Hope was one of the earliest responders and dispatched trucks carrying tarps, totes, cleanup supplies, water, and hygiene kits to help communities as they began recovery efforts. Convoy of Hope is working with community partners and will be distributing another load of groceries next week.

Tennessee Tornadoes: Convoy of Hope responded within hours of devastating tornadoes striking areas of Tennessee. Help was deployed and teams distributed tarps, totes, rakes, hygiene items, food, water, and sports drinks to four Tennessee communities - Clarksville, Hendersonville, Madison and Gallatin. Over 7,000 individuals were served and 142,730 lbs. of supplies was distributed.

Maui Wildfires: Recently, Convoy held a special distribution event. Families received boxes of groceries, care kits, and — just in time for Christmas — a toy for every child. The road to recovery in Maui is long, but Convoy of Hope is continuing to meet needs. Convoy of Hope also continues to support Hawaii through their long-term recovery efforts, as they provide people with furnishings such as dining room tables, bedroom sets, and mattresses. They are currently working with partners to help supply tools for continued clean up, as Maui prepares to start rebuilding.

Beyond the United States, Convoy of Hope responded to disasters in Japan, the Middle East Conflict, and the Ukraine War. [Click here](#) to read more.



Source: Disseminated by Convoy of Hope.

Tools for Partners: News You Can Use

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Transformational and Compassion Resiliency

A Toolkit for Preventing Burnout: Wednesday, February 28th, 2024, from 2:00 – 3:00pm. This virtual class invites participants to recognize the signs and symptoms of compassion fatigue and burnout and how it impacts their work and personal life. More importantly, this course offers effective self-care strategies for promoting compassion resiliency. Key content areas will include:

- Understanding the Impacts of the Work We Do: Cumulative Stress, Collective Trauma and Burnout
- Introducing the 4 Phases of Erosion
- Expanding our Personal Resiliency Portfolio
- Exploring Post Traumatic Growth
- What is Self-Care Resistance?
- Growing as A Resiliency Aware Agency

This training will be provided by The New England Disaster Chaplaincy Association and The Salvation Army - Emergency Disaster Services. [Registration Link](#) | [Training Link](#)

FEMA Updates the Climate Risk and Resilience (ClimRR) Portal

The [Climate Risk and Resilience Portal](#) (ClimRR) is an award-winning, free, national online source for sophisticated climate data down to the neighborhood level. ClimRR provides easy access to climate data to integrate future conditions into Hazard Mitigation Plans, land use plans, infrastructure design, and FEMA's [Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool](#) (RAPT).

ClimRR data is available for changing hazards: extreme temperatures (hot and cold), cooling and heating degree days, heat index, wind, fire weather index, precipitation/no precipitation under two carbon emission scenarios. The updated portal lets users visualize and analyze future climate hazards combined with local demographic and infrastructure data. Enhanced features include:

- New Consolidated Local Reports Assessing Future Climate Hazards and Community Impacts
- New Maps, Charts & Visualizations
- Improved Educational Features to Interpret Climate Hazard Data Points
- **Register now for a ClimRR webinar:** Webinars are open to everyone; real-time captioning is available.
 - Wednesday, January 31: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm ET
 - Thursday, February 1: 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET

DHS Issues Request for Information on Environmental Justice Program

The Department of Homeland Security invites public comment and feedback on barriers, challenges, suggestions and ideas to help advance the Department's environmental justice program. DHS conducts meaningful engagement of the public in decision-making and addresses challenges facing environmental justice communities related to DHS programs and activities.

On Dec. 18, 2023, DHS issued a [Request for Information](#) (RFI), Docket ID: **DHS-2023-0048**, asking specific questions. The public comment period will be open for 60 days, closing on Feb. 16.

[Executive Order 14096, Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All](#), signed April 21, 2023, defines "environmental justice" as "the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people – regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability – in agency decision-making and other federal activities that affect human health and the environment, so that people:

- Are fully protected from the disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects and hazards – including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers.
- Have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable and resilient environment to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship and engage in cultural and subsistence practices."

[Please register here](#) to attend the DHS virtual information and listening session via Zoom to hear participants' responses to questions on the RFI: Monday, Jan. 29, 3:30-5:00 p.m. ET.

To view [translations of the RFI](#) and for more information on the DHS Environmental Justice Program, please visit <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-and-environmental-justice>. For questions, please contact dhsenvironmentaljustice@hq.dhs.gov. For free language services, including written translation or oral interpretation of this document, or to request this document in alternate formats such as Braille or large print, contact us at crcl@hq.dhs.gov.

Tools for Partners: Grant & Resource Opportunities

Recovery and Resilience Resource Library: Records Added Last Seven Days (as of January 24, 2024).

These resources are not a complete roster of all available programs. The following are for general informational purposes and provided with publicly obtainable information. Please view this only as a starting point for individual research; visit the [Recovery and Resilience Resource Library](#) for a full listing. The user should always directly consult the provider of a potential resource for current program information and to verify the applicability of a particular program. Resource Reports are not final policy interpretations nor guarantees of funding and do not constitute an endorsement by FEMA for any program or entity. 📁 The Library includes a Search capability; partners can search by keyword, or filter by eligibility, beneficiary, topic area, and/or resource type.

Resource Provider / Deadline	Program / Website	Description	Eligibility	Geographic Eligibility
Department of Housing and Urban Development - Community Planning and Development <i>Deadline: Mar 25, 2024.</i>	grants.gov/search-results-detail/351918	Enhances the capacity and ability of local governments, Indian tribes, housing development organizations, rural CDCs, and rural CHDOs to carry out community development and affordable housing activities.	Nonprofit Organizations	National, Tribal - Any/All
Environmental Protection Agency <i>Deadline: Mar 28, 2024</i>	grants.gov/search-results-detail/351834	Establish and maintain regional Centers of Excellence for new and emerging stormwater control infrastructure technologies, with the goal of improving the effectiveness, cost efficiency, and protection of public safety and water quality.	Nonprofit Organizations, Public/Private Institutions of Higher Education	National
Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management <i>Deadline: Mar 18, 2024.</i>	grants.gov/search-results-detail/351816	Funding through a cooperative agreement for the development of fire education, training and/or community action and maintenance plans for fuels.	Local Government & Authority, Nonprofit Organizations, Public/Indian Housing Authorities, Public/Private Institutions of Education K-12, Public/Private Institutions of Higher Education, State, Tribe	Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tribal - Any/All, Tribal - Federally Recognized
Environmental Protection Network (EPN) <i>Deadline not identified.</i>	Technical Assistance – Environmental Protection Network	Technical assistance to communities; NGOs; and state, local, and tribal agencies disproportionately impacted by environmental and health issues.	For-Profit Organizations, Individuals & Households, Local Government & Authority, Nonprofit Organizations, State, Territory, Tribe	National, Tribal - Any/All