

# Public Assistance for Private Nonprofit Houses of Worship



## What Is It?

The Public Assistance (PA) program provides supplemental assistance to states, tribes, and local government entities, as well as certain private nonprofit (PNP) organizations. The *Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide* provides comprehensive information regarding PA and how to apply for it.

## Background

Under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), FEMA now enables Houses of Worship (HOWs) owned and operated by PNPs to be eligible applicants for financial assistance if their facilities suffered damage from an emergency or a major disaster declared after August 23, 2017. ***This assistance is limited to the costs that a loan from the Small Business Administration (SBA) will not cover.***

## Eligibility

PNP HOW applicants need to meet the general PA eligibility requirements as well as the generally applicable Private Nonprofit requirements (found in the *Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide*). HOWs must satisfy the requirement to apply for assistance from the SBA for Permanent Work, and also comply with federal grant award requirements of 2 *CFR part 200*.

## Eligible Services

PNP HOWs are generally eligible for all types of services (Categories A-G), as long as they can submit appropriate supporting documentation. At minimum, a HOW must meet three criteria: **(1)** sustain damage resulting from the incident, **(2)** be located within the designated area, with the exception of sheltering and evacuation activities, and **(3)** be the legal responsibility of an eligible applicant. Additionally, HOWs are considered to provide non-critical services, so they are **required** to apply for a loan from the SBA.

## Application Process

PNP HOWs seeking Permanent Work must first apply for a disaster loan from the SBA. If the application is declined or the SBA loan will not fully cover the damages, FEMA may provide funding for eligible Permanent Work. Those seeking assistance for eligible Emergency Work may apply directly to FEMA without applying for an SBA loan. They must first submit a Request for Public Assistance (RPA) to FEMA through the recipient. The application process itself is generally the same as for other eligible applicants. ***For more information on how to apply, eligible applicants should contact the State Public Assistance Office:***

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