Disaster Response Resources for Social Workers

The hurricane season is in full force and we should always be prepared to help our clients find the resources they need to be ready for any impacts the storms might have in North Carolina. NASW-NC would like to provide social workers with resources and materials to help you and your clients deal with disasters and effectively prepare for hurricanes and weather events. As social workers, it is our duty to help our clients and surrounding communities to be ready for emergencies by providing them with resources to prepare and access resources afterward.

Mental Health Resources

- Manage flood-related distress by building resilience: https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/flood-distress
- Strengthening Your Emotional Well-Being Ahead of the Flood: https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/flood-preparation
- Managing traumatic stress- After the hurricanes: www.apa.org/helpcenter/hurricane-stress
- Managing traumatic stress- Dealing with the hurricanes from afar: www.apa.org/helpcenter/hurricane-afar.aspx
- Recovering emotionally from disaster: www.apa.org/helpcenter/recovering-disasters.aspx
- Tornadoes, hurricanes and children: http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/tornadoes-kids.aspx
- Coping After Disaster, Trauma: https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/coping-after-disaster-trauma
- Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery: https://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness

LME/MCO Crisis Lines:

- **Eastpointe LME Crisis Line: 800-913-6109**
  - Serves the following counties: Bladen, Columbus, Duplin, Edgecombe, Greene, Lenoir, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Wayne & Wilson
- **Trillium LME Crisis Line: 877-685-2415**
  - Serves the following counties: Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Martin, Nash, New Hanover, Northampton, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Pender, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, and Washington
- **Alliance Behavioral Healthcare Crisis Line: 800-510-9132**
  - Serves the following counties: Cumberland, Johnston, Wake & Durham
- **Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions Crisis Line: 800-939-5911**

- **Counties Served**: Alamance, Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Orange, Rockingham, Person, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Union, Vance and Warren
- **Sandhills Crisis Line: 800-256-2452**
  - Serves the following counties: Anson, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, Richmond

Help Lines:

- ***Disaster Distress Helpline*** is a resource available 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week that provides immediate services to anyone who may need crisis counseling after experiencing a natural or man-made disaster or tragedy. Sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the helpline immediately connects callers to trained and caring professionals from the closest crisis-counseling center in the nationwide network of centers. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories. The helpline staff will provide confidential counseling, referrals, and other needed support services. Stress, anxiety, and other depression-like symptoms are common reactions after a disaster. **Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.**
- ***Crisis Text Line*** offers free 24/7 crisis support via text message. **Text NAMI to 741-741** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
- ***NAMI HelpLine*** is a free service that provides information, referrals and support to people living with a mental health condition, family members and caregivers, mental health providers and the public. The NAMI HelpLine can be reached Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.–6 p.m., ET. **The number is 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)**.
- ***Veterans Crisis Line*** connects Service members and Veterans in crisis, as well as their family members and friends, with qualified VA responders through a confidential toll-free hotline. **Call 1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1** to talk to someone or **send a text message to 838255** to connect with a VA responder.

Legal Aid Resources

For support when applying for FEMA appeals, FEMA reconsiderations, homeowners insurance claims, landlord tenant issues, contractor scams/fraud, replacing government benefits and documents, etc OR if you need assistance with finding repair resources, replacing lost personal items, finding new housing, utility assistance, and many other things, contact Legal Aid of North Carolina:

- 1-866-219-5262
  - Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm; or
  - Monday and Thursday from 5:30pm to 8:30pm

Federal Programs and Resources

Apply for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) AID (*Must be in a federally declared disaster area. Can apply from 7am to 11pm, seven days a week!)*

Have this information ready when you apply:

- Social Security Number
- Insurance information including the types of coverage
- Description of the damage and losses
- Financial information including total annual household income
- Telephone Number
- Mailing Address
- Address of property where damage occurred
- Bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit of funds (optional)

WEB: www.DisasterAssistance.gov
PHONE: 800-621-3362
TTY: 800-462-7585

Create a disaster preparedness plan through FEMA:

- Find resources including an emergency supply list as well as tips on how to make a plan for you and your family to stay in contact during an emergency at www.ready.gov/make-a-plan
- Find specific tips for people with disabilities to be prepared for emergencies at www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs

Disaster Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (D-SNAP)

This program can quickly offer short-term food assistance benefits to families suffering in the wake of a disaster!

- Eligible households can receive one month's benefits equivalent to what they would normally receive based on household size.
- Households **not normally eligible for SNAP may qualify for D-SNAP** as a result of their disaster related expenses, such as loss of income, damage to property, relocation expenses, and in some cases, loss of food due to power outages.
- D-SNAP is issued within 72 hours.
- For more information on the program, refer to the website https://www.disasterassistance.gov/get-assistance/forms-of-assistance/5769 for additional details on eligibility and benefits.

Call 1-866-719-0141 for information on D-SNAP benefit details!

Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Program

The **Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Program** offers special tax law provisions to help people and businesses recover financially from a disaster, especially when the federal

government declares their locations to be a major disaster area. Both individuals and businesses in a federally declared disaster area can get a faster refund by claiming losses related to the disaster on their tax return for the previous year. This is usually done by filing an amended return.
If your address is in a federally declared disaster area, you can deduct casualty losses in one of two ways:

- On your return in the year the disaster happened, or
- File an amended return to deduct the loss in the year prior to the disaster

You must use Form 4684 to report a gain or deductible loss

Application: If you're a taxpayer with an IRS address of record in a federally declared disaster area where FEMA has authorized Individual Assistance, your tax account will be automatically coded for the filing and payment relief. If you're an affected taxpayer but your area wasn't declared, you must call the IRS at 1-866-562-5227 to self-identify for the disaster relief.

For more information, visit: https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/4418#Eligibility_Checker

Disaster Unemployment Assistance Program (DUA)

The **Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)** program provides unemployment benefits to individuals who have become unemployed as a direct result of a presidentially declared major disaster. For these benefits to become available, the affected state will have to publish information about DUA availability to the public.

In order to qualify your employment or self-employment must have been lost or interrupted as a direct result of a major disaster, including if the individual:

- No longer has a job or a place to work
- Is unable to reach their place of work
- Cannot work due to damage to the place of work
- Were about to begin a new job, but the job no longer exists due to the disaster
- Becomes the head of the household and is seeking work because former head of household died as a result of the disaster
- Cannot work because of a disaster-incurred injury

- You must ***not*** be eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits.
- You must be available to work unless you have an injury caused by the disaster or have a plan to return to self-employment.

Application: Individuals who would like to apply for the assistance will first need to file for regular unemployment insurance. If they are denied those benefits, or have exhausted those benefits, a DUA claim may then be filed.

For more information call 1-877-872-5627 or follow this link: https://des.nc.gov/des
People who are hearing impaired may call this toll-free TTY number: 1-877-889-5627

Helping Children Cope with Disaster: Trauma Resources for Children

Resources for how to prepare children for natural and man-made disasters, how to help them through the disaster, and how to help them recover.

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- SAMHSA: National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative Resources
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Helping Children Cope with a Disaster or Traumatic Event
- Red Cross: Helping Children Cope with Disaster
- Administration for Children & Families: Early Childhood Disaster-Related Resources for Children and Families

Resources for Older Americans and People with Disabilities

Resources for those who experience increased vulnerability during periods of time without food, water, shelter, and adequate rest.

- North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities: Emergency Preparedness
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Disaster Planning Tips for Older Adults and their Families (more resources listed at the bottom of this link)
- Red Cross: Disaster Safety for People with Disabilities
- Administration for Community Living: Emergency Preparedness
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Special Populations: Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Resources
- Disability Rights North Carolina has a Disaster Recovery Project has a team of two people who provide advocacy, information and referrals, technical assistance and resources to people with disabilities and their families who have been impacted by a disaster.

Resources for Veterans

- If you're a Veteran, you can find help and support through the VA and other resources listed here.
    - Learn about local resources, patient care services, assistance with guide and service dogs, home loans, education and training, vocational rehabilitation and employment, and more.
- Learn about disaster relief grants offered through Disabled American Veterans for the purpose of providing financial aid, food, clothing, and temporary shelter by going to this website.
- The American Red Cross offers referrals to community resources and assists veterans with preparing claims for veterans' benefits. For more information, click the link or contact your local Red Cross office.

North Carolina Disaster Response Network

- The Disaster Response Network was formed in 1995 through the North Carolina Psychological Foundation (NCPF) to involve psychologists, psychiatrists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, certified psychiatric nurses, and licensed marriage and family therapists in disaster response throughout North Carolina. Later, licensed clinical addiction specialists joined the network.
- ***Find out more about the NC Disaster Response Network by following the link below:*** NC Disaster Response Network Fact Sheet

NASW-NC is a founding member of this Network which seeks to provide behavioral health services and other forms of access to care after natural disasters.
Join the NASW-NC Disaster Response PAN to stay updated on resources!

NC Emergency Management Agencies and State Resources

To learn more about the Emergency Management Agency in your area, you may click the link below and then select your specific county.
http://www.ncdps.gov/Emergency-Management/EM-Community/Directories

Other important state resources available:

- Dial 911 if evacuation is needed and you are trapped in your home or in floodwaters.
- Dial 511 for road closure information from the NC Department of Transportation.

Insurance information:

- Contact **www.NCHurriClaims.com** if you suffer storm damage or call the Department of Insurance at 855-408-1212. Find more information on the website linked above and in the NC Hurriclaims Toolkit.
- North Carolina Department of Insurance: Disaster and Recovery Resources
- FEMA National Flood Insurance Program

How You Can Help in the Event of a North Carolina Disaster

Recommendations for supportive organizations:

- Donate to or volunteer at the Central Eastern Food Bank of North Carolina.
- Volunteer with the Salvation Army, which provides food, shelter, and care to hurricane survivors and relief workers.

- Donate to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund or to United Way of North Carolina who each worked to administer funds to hurricane victims when Hurricane Matthew devastated parts of eastern North Carolina last October.
- Volunteer with the American Red Cross to manage a shelter, deliver food, and answer phone calls with your North Carolina, or consider giving blood at a nearby Red Cross blood drive.

Tips from NC Emergency Management on How to Help Survivors

Do:
Donate money through a trusted organization: See www.nvoad.org for a list
- Register and volunteer through a reputable charity
- Be prepared yourself: Have an emergency plan and kit. Stay informed.

Don't:
- Don't send stuff (unless you are asked): This shifts focus from helping people to sorting and storing items.
- Don't just show up to help: Unexpected volunteers can create burdens for emergency officials.

Smart Phone and Tablet Apps

Download these in the App Store or Google Play!

ReadyNC - provides information for disaster response in North Carolina. It includes locations of open shelters, flood levels in many locations, power outages, and other important information.

SAMHSA Behavioral Health Disaster Response App - for mental health professionals serving in disaster response. This app provides access to evidence-based mental health and substance abuse information, tools for clinicians and resources for use in the field. It also includes information specific to areas impacted by disaster.

PFA Mobile - a guide to providing Psychological First Aid in disaster response. Psychological First Aid is the strongest evidenced-supported approach to mental health intervention in the acute phases of disaster.

FEMA App – provides weather alerts from the National Weather Service. This app allows users to get safety reminders, customize an emergency checklist, and locate open shelters and ways to communicate with FEMA in person (or on the phone).

American Red Cross – provides a variety of preparedness apps, including first aid, tornados, earthquakes, wildfires, hurricanes, volunteer, and shelter finder. The apps include customizable warning indicators if you live in an area that is prone to natural disasters.

This document was created by the
National Association of Social Workers North Carolina.

If you are not a member of NASW, please join your professional association so that we may continue to support you and the entire social work profession.

www.socialworkers.org/join

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