

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

# After a Disaster: Helping Others

The compassion and generosity of the American people is never more evident than after a disaster. People want to help. Here are some general guidelines on helping others after a disaster:

Give a check or money order to a recognized disaster relief organization.

These groups are organized to process checks, purchase what is needed, and get it to the people who need it most. Cash donations allow voluntary organizations to both obtain goods and services locally and for some to issue direct financial assistance to victims so they can meet their needs. They also allow agencies to avoid the labor-intensive need to clean, sort, package, label, and store donated goods.

Donated money avoids, too, the expense of ground or air transportation that donated goods require. Find recognized disaster relief organizations at National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) - http://www.nvoad.org/Network for Good - http://www.networkforgood.org/ Volunteer!

Check with local organizations or listen to local news reports for information about where volunteers are needed. Voluntary organizations provide a wide variety of services after disasters, such as clean up, child care, housing repair, crisis counseling, sheltering, and food.

**Please note: Until volunteers are specifically requested, stay away from disaster areas. People going on their own to a disaster site can disrupt life-saving response operations.**

Bring your own food, water, and emergency supplies to a disaster area if you are needed there. This is especially important in cases where a large area has been affected and emergency items are in short supply.

Donations of Food, Clothing, or Other Items

Do not drop off food, clothing, or any other item to a government agency or disaster relief organization unless a particular item has been requested. Normally, these organizations do not have the resources to sort through the donated items.

Donate a quantity of a given item or class of items (such as nonperishable food) rather than a mix of different items. Determine where your donation is going, how it's going to get there, who is going to unload it, and how it is going to be distributed. Without sufficient planning, much needed supplies will be left unused.

**Disclaimer:** This document is intended for general information only. It does not provide the reader with specific direction, advice, or recommendations. You may wish to contact an appropriate professional for questions concerning your particular situation.

**Where To Get Emergency Assistance**

There are local, national, and government organizations that offer help during emergencies and disasters.  If your property was not insured, these organizations may be able to help with rebuilding expenses as well:

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Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Register for disaster assistance by calling: 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

http://www.fema.gov; https://disasterhelp.gov

The American Red Cross

1-800-HELP-NOW (1-800-435-7669)

http://www.redcross.org

National Hurricane Center

http://www.nhc.noaa.gov

The Salvation Army

http://www.salvationarmyusa.org

The United Way

2-1-1

http://www.211.org

A Disaster Recovery Center may be established in or near the community affected by the disaster. There you can meet with representatives of federal, state, local, and volunteer agencies.

Local churches, service organizations (such as the Kiwanis Club, Lions, or Knights of Columbus), large local employers, and local newspapers and banks may offer help.

**Long-Term Recovery**

After you have met your immediate needs and are ready to begin recovery, prepare by:

- Replacing important documents that were lost or destroyed such as your driver's license, auto registration, bank books, insurance policies, health insurance cards, credit cards, titles to deeds, stocks and bonds, wills, and other important documents.
- Saving receipts for all your expenses, or at least keeping a record of them. These will help both in filing an insurance claim and in claiming losses when you file your income tax return.
- Making lists of all property that was damaged or destroyed. These will prove useful for filing insurance claims or seeking financial assistance. Document as much of the damage as you can with photographs or video. Include as much of the following information as you can for each item:
    - Name, description, model, year, ID number
    - Where and when you bought it, and the price
    - Documentation such as a sales slip, canceled check, warranty, or correspondence with the manufacturer or retailer
    - Description of the damage and what caused it
    - Photographs that show the item before and after it was damaged

- Recalling as much as you can that's missing
- Letting utility companies know if they should stop billing to your home because you can't live in it.
- Getting in touch with creditors to request any needed extensions in payments.

Once you have met your immediate needs for food and shelter, and have begun the process of rebuilding, the emotional impact of your experience may begin to take its toll. Your Employee Assistance Program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to help you deal with the feelings you may have after surviving this major, life changing event.

Remember that wherever you are, your confidential **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** is available and accessible 24/7/365.

Contact your EAP at **1.866.468.9461** or visit **workhealthlife.com/us**.