



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

August 31, 2017

Dear County Judge:

In response to the widespread devastation left by Hurricane Harvey, I requested and received a Major Disaster Declaration from President Trump. The Presidential Disaster Declaration authorizes your community to receive valuable assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to aid you in the recovery and rebuilding process. As governor, I want to ensure you have all the support and information you need to access this assistance.

The major disaster declaration for Hurricane Harvey makes available Individual Assistance, Public Assistance (Categories A and B) and Hazard Mitigation, Transitional Shelter Assistance and Critical Needs Assistance for those eligible in your counties.

**Individual Assistance (IA)** provides survivors with access to a full range of authorized programs and services to maximize recovery, through partnered coordination of local and state governments, as well as other federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. IA includes programs such as housing assistance, disaster case management, crisis counseling, disaster unemployment and more.

**Transitional Shelter Assistance (TSA)** provides disaster survivors who are unable to return to their primary residence with short-term accommodations through direct payments to lodging providers. TSA is the bridge between sheltering and longer-term housing solutions. TSA is intended to reduce the number of disaster survivors in shelters and does not count toward an applicant's maximum amount of assistance. This is a short-term program that typically lasts 30 days from the original declaration date, which was August 25, 2017.

**Critical Needs Assistance (CNA)** provides assistance to individuals and households who are displaced from their primary dwelling for at least seven days. CNA is a fixed amount of \$500 in assistance to be used for life-saving and/or life-sustaining items such as: water, food, first aid, prescription medication, infant formula, diapers, fuel and personal hygiene items.

Individuals in your community can register for Individual Assistance, Transitional Shelter Assistance, and Critical Needs Assistance at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov).

Local governments are also eligible for certain assistance from FEMA.

**Public Assistance (PA)** provides funds to local governments and certain nonprofit organizations to assist in response and recovery from major disasters or emergencies declared by the president. The program provides emergency assistance to save lives and protect property and assists with permanently restoring community infrastructure affected by a federally declared incident. The current declaration makes Categories A (Debris Removal) and B (Emergency Protective Measures) available.

**Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)** provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

Attached with this letter are several fact sheets that further outline these FEMA grant programs and provide information on where to start in the disaster grant assistance process.

In the coming days, my office will be reaching out to plan a visit to your community and, along with FEMA, help you through the assistance request process. Additionally, FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams have been deployed to the communities affected by Hurricane Harvey. These teams will be available to assist you and your residents obtain the assistance that was made available by the Presidential Disaster Declaration. If you have any questions, please contact your county's district coordinator with the Texas Division of Emergency Management. A map with a list of district coordinators can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your partnership and the heroism exhibited by your entire team. Together, we must look toward the long-term recovery with focus and resolve to rebuild a Texas that is better than ever. The resilient spirit of Texas is alive and well, and it is on profound display. This will fuel each step of this long rebuilding process.

May God bless Texas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Abbott  
Governor