



GEMA



FEMA

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State/FEMA Media Contact:
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News Release

GEORGIANS BENEFIT FROM SPECIAL DISASTER SERVICES

GEMA, FEMA Partner with Other Agencies

ATLANTA – Disasters are disruptive, creating challenges that continue long after the initial cleanup.

People in South Georgia affected by the storms and flooding that struck the state between March 26 and April 13 may find they are still struggling with a loss of income, disaster-related legal snarls or the toll of continuing emotional stress.

The Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are working with other state agencies and private organizations to help people deal with such complications caused directly by the declared disaster.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

Workers in 21 counties may be eligible for Federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) to compensate for loss of income directly related to the storms and flooding of March 26 - April 13. Unlike state unemployment insurance, DUA provides benefits to self-employed business people, farmers, commission-paid employees, and others not typically covered by the state unemployment insurance program.

Georgia Labor Commissioner Michael Thurmond said affected workers should apply for benefits no later than May 28. People who think they may be eligible for benefits should call the **Georgia Department of Labor** toll-free customer service line at **877-709-8185** to be directed to the nearest career center.

Workers in the following counties may be eligible for benefits: Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Camden, Coffee, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes, Miller, Mitchell, Montgomery, Pierce, Tattnall, Tift, Ware, Wheeler and Worth.

Disaster Legal Services

People in those same counties may also qualify for free legal help for disaster-related issues such as landlord-tenant disputes, insurance claims, unemployment benefits, consumer law and housing law.

The service is provided by the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Georgia Legal Services Program and FEMA.

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Apply for legal services by calling, toll-free, **866-584-8027**.

Crisis Counseling

The symptoms of stress – sleeplessness, fatigue, anger, depression – may take weeks to bubble up.

Free crisis counseling is available to anyone suffering from anxiety, depression or stress from the flooding and storms. Individuals can call the **Georgia Crisis Access Line** at **800-715-4225** or the **Georgia Suicide and Crisis Hotline** at **800-784-2433**. Both lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

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For more information on Georgia's disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or www.gema.ga.gov or www.ready.ga.gov/ or <http://twitter.com/GeorgiaEMA>