



FEMA APPLYING FOR FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN USVI

Cultural institutions and arts organizations that have been impacted by Hurricanes Irma and/or Maria may be eligible for Federal disaster assistance via:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA)
- Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans

If your organization or institution is affiliated with a government entity, such as a university or a district, you should communicate with that government entity regarding your damage and any expenditures (overtime of personnel, purchases, etc.) to protect your facilities. The information below doesn't necessarily apply to your institution or organization because your expenditures will be included as part of your government entity – but only if that government entity is aware of your damage.

In a Nutshell: File, File, File

1. **File a claim with your insurance company immediately.** Follow all the deadlines set by the insurance company, and submit all documents and information requested within the deadlines set by the insurance company. FEMA will want to see a settlement or denial letter from your insurance company to ensure that benefits are not duplicated, so be sure to file an insurance claim promptly. If you still have unmet needs or damages that the insurance company does not cover, then FEMA may be able to provide you with assistance.
2. **File for a Small Business Administration disaster loan** as well. Complete and submit the application as soon as possible. Returning the application does not obligate you to accept an SBA loan, but **it is a necessary step to being considered for other forms of federal disaster assistance**, including FEMA Public Assistance. Please be aware that there is a filing deadline of **Monday, January 8, 2018**.
3. **File for FEMA Public Assistance.** Don't hesitate to file a claim with VITEMA for FEMA Public Assistance; FEMA will determine your eligibility status for your organization or institution. The filing deadline is **Friday, December 29, 2017**. If you miss the deadline, you will not have access to Public Assistance funds.

FEMA Public Assistance

If you are a private nonprofit organization, you need to apply for a Small Business Administration disaster loan through the SBA and for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) through VITEMA.

Only certain private nonprofit (PNP) organizations are eligible under FEMA's Public Assistance grant program. To be an eligible applicant, the PNP must show that it has:

- A current ruling letter from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service granting tax exemption under sections 501(c), (d), or (e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or
- Documentation from the State substantiating it is a non-revenue producing, nonprofit entity organized or doing business under State law.

Additionally, for a facility to be eligible, the PNP must own or operate the facility and provide a service that is:

- Critical in nature (e.g., education, utility, emergency, or medical); or
- A non-critical facility that provides an essential government service AND is open to the public.

For more information on eligibility of PNPs, refer to the *Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide* at <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-policy-and-guidance>.

To be considered an eligible applicant, the following forms and documents must accompany your application:

- Request for Public Assistance (RPA)
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/10145>
- PNP Facility Questionnaire (PNP)
https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1608-20490-8817/90_121_05_2010.pdf
- A copy of your IRS Tax Exemption Certificate
- Your organization’s charter or by-laws
- If your organization is a school or educational facility, please attach information on accreditation or certification.

Applicants should send the above documents to the following territorial government contacts:

On St. Croix:
Malinda K. Vigilant-Messer
Deputy Public Assistance Officer
340-712-0335
malinda.vigilant@vitema.vi.gov

On St. Thomas or St. John:
Renata Christian-West
Territorial Public Assistance Officer
340-774-2244
renata.christian@vitema.vi.gov

Questions? Please contact the VITEMA contacts above.

Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program

Non-Critical PNPs – most arts organizations and cultural institutions – must first apply to the Small Business Administration for disaster assistance. If denied by SBA or if your costs exceed what SBA covers, then FEMA may be able to provide assistance.

Several types of loan programs are available to private nonprofits. They include:

Types of Loans	Borrowers	Purpose	Maximum Amount
Business Loans “Physical”	Businesses and private nonprofits	Repair or replace real estate, equipment, furniture, etc.	\$2 million
Economic Injury Loans	Small businesses & private nonprofits	Economic injury disaster loans or working capital loans	\$2 million
Mitigation	Businesses, private nonprofits and homeowners.	Mitigate / prevent future loss to real property	20% of verified physical damage. Homeowners limited to \$200,000.

- Businesses and private nonprofit organizations of any size may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets.
- Applicants may be eligible for a loan amount increase up to 20 percent of their physical damages, as verified by the SBA for mitigation purposes.
- Economic Injury Loans are also available for businesses that did not receive physical damage but were economically impacted due to the disaster.
- Interest rates are as low as 2.5 percent for nonprofit organizations. Loan amounts and terms are set by the SBA and are based on each applicant’s financial condition.
- To apply online for SBA Disaster Assistance for Hurricane Irma, go to <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/hurricane-irma>.
- To apply online for SBA Disaster Assistance for Hurricane Maria, go to <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/hurricane-maria>.
- More information is available at <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance>. You can also email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov or call 800-659-2955. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call 800-877-8339.

Additional Disaster Assistance Programs for Cultural Institutions and Arts Organizations

- The **National Heritage Responders**, a cadre of trained conservators and collections care professionals, can provide free phone advice to cultural institutions following a disaster. They are also available to conduct on-site assessments and provide guidance on salvage. Call the 24-hour hotline at 202-661-8068. For additional information, visit <http://www.conservations.org/emergencies/national-heritage-responders>.
- The **National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)** invites institutions impacted by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, or Maria to apply for fast-track emergency grants to preserve and protect humanities collections at libraries, museums, colleges, universities, historical societies, and

other cultural organizations. The deadline to apply is Sunday, December 31, 2017. For more information and a link to the grant application, visit <https://www.neh.gov/news/press-release/2017-09-07>.

- The **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** is supporting the recovery of the arts and cultural communities devastated by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria in the regions designated a major disaster area by FEMA in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The NEA is coordinating support through its state arts agency partners to direct funds to those arts and cultural entities in need of support. For more information, visit https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/EmergencyFunding_12.5.17.pdf.
- The **Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries** invites applications to rebuild libraries at hurricane-affected schools. For more information and a link to the application, visit <http://www.laurabushfoundation.com/how-to-apply/index.html>.
- The **Society of American Archivists** is awarding grants up to \$5,000 for the direct recovery of damaged or at-risk archival materials; such services as freeze drying, storage, transportation of materials, and rental facilities; supplies, including acid-free boxes and folders, storage cartons, cleaning materials, plastic milk crates, and protective gear; and to defray the costs for volunteers or other laborers who assist with the recovery. For more information and a link to the application, visit <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/saa-foundation-board-of-directors/national-disaster-recovery-fund-for-archives>.
- The **Collections Assessment for Preservation (CAP)** program, administered by the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation and funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, provides small and mid-size museums with partial funding toward a general conservation assessment. The assessment examines the institution's collections, buildings, and building systems, as well as its policies and procedures relating to collections care. Participants who complete the program receive an assessment report with prioritized recommendations to improve collections care. CAP is often a first step for small institutions that wish to improve the condition of their collections. For more information and a link to the application, visit <http://www.conservation-us.org/grants/cap>.

If your museum (of any size) suffered damage as a result of a recently declared federal disaster, you may be eligible for an **Emergency CAP assessment**. Limited funds are available. For more information, visit <http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/CAP/emergency-cap-release.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.



FEMA and the Smithsonian Institution co-sponsor the Heritage Emergency National Task Force, a partnership of 42 national service organizations and federal agencies created to protect cultural heritage from the damaging effects of natural disasters and other emergencies.