



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Post-Sandy Update: Information on Volunteering, Donating, and Accessing Assistance

LIZ KRUEGER November 9, 2012

Thank you again to everyone who volunteered to check on and distribute emergency supplies to storm victims. Your work has made a huge difference in the lives of New Yorkers during this extremely difficult time. While power, heat, and elevator service have now been restored to the overwhelming majority of residents in Manhattan, significant needs still exist throughout much of the city.

Read on for more information on volunteering, donating, or accessing assistance for yourself and your family as we recover from the hurricane.

Volunteering:

There are many government agencies and nonprofit organizations that are seeking volunteers for various types of relief work around the City. See <http://www.nycservice.org>, <http://www.foodbanknyc.org>, <http://www.foodsystemsny.org/announcement/updated-post-hurricane-sandy-volunteer-donation-opportunities>, and <http://newyorkcares.org> for the latest details on where volunteers and donations are needed.

A number of legal services organizations, including the New York Legal Assistance Group, the Legal Aid Society, and the New York State Bar Association, are seeking attorneys to help provide pro-bono legal assistance to storm victims. Details about how to help are available at

http://www.probono.net/ny/hurricane_sandy/.

Donations:

Monetary Donations: Countless nonprofit organizations across New York City are providing essential services to New Yorkers directly impacted by the storm. The [Mayor's Fund to Advance New York](#) is soliciting contributions to support both residents' immediate aid needs – including water, food, and hygiene supplies – as well as long-term relief and restoration efforts. One hundred percent of donations are being dispersed to relief organizations and their efforts.

Blood Donations: Blood supplies were critically affected by the storm, as the same outages that affect our region also affect many donation sites. The New York Blood Center's Upper East Side location at 310 East 67th Street is open and operating, and if you can, please consider donating blood. Blood donations can be scheduled by calling 800-933-2566 or by visiting <http://www.nybloodcenter.org>.

Other Donations: New York Cares, Goodwill, the New York Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, Catholic Charities, and many religious institutions are collecting donations of flashlights, batteries, cleaning supplies, diapers, baby formula, blankets, and other critical supplies. City Harvest and the Food Bank for New York City are accepting food donations. Please contact each organization for details on their needs and drop-off locations.

The Salvation Army is collecting and distributing clothing to residents in the hardest-hit areas of the City. However, due to the extremely complex logistics of collecting and transporting clothing, clothing donations are less valuable than other types of donations.

Accessing Benefits and Services for Storm Victims:

Many of New York's federal elected officials have created detailed guides to federal services and benefits available to New Yorkers affected by Hurricane Sandy. See Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's [Guide to Disaster Assistance and Relief Funding](#), Senator Charles Schumer's [Hurricane Sandy recovery website](#), and Congressman Jerrold Nadler's [Guide to FEMA & Federal Resources Following Hurricane Sandy](#).

The Community Service Society of NY has put together a helpful spreadsheet of many of the federal, state, and city benefits available to those impacted by the storm. It is available at http://b3cdn.net/nycss/354295295686796458_3km6ivkoq.pdf.

Legal Services NYC, a nonprofit legal services provider, has attorneys and advocates who can help storm victims with FEMA applications, emergency public benefits, unemployment applications and lost wages, foreclosure prevention, and other civil legal services. **If you are in need of assistance, you can call their Citywide Sandy Recovery Hotline: (347) 592-2411. The hotline will be staffed from 10am-3pm beginning on Tuesday, November 6th.**

The **New York City Department of Education** has produced a Frequently Asked Questions document for families that were impacted by Sandy. It is available at:

http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6A5F9A74-B60B-4D59-9E3F-E40F0096CC21/o/Sandy_FAQ_Families_20121106.pdf

Disaster Assistance Centers:

The New York City Human Resources Administration has set up sites with information and referrals for those applying for emergency social and economic assistance. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is co-located at these centers and is providing application points for home owners, home renters and those that have lost their businesses through federal small business administration.

A list of the sites and hours of operation can be found here:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/misc/html/2012/dasc.html>. Additional locations throughout the City may open.

FEMA has opened a number of Disaster Recovery Center locations in the metropolitan area to help residents and business owners apply for federal benefits. You can find the one nearest you by entering your address at:

http://asd.fema.gov/inter/locator/home.htm;DRCLOC_JSESSIONID=jj7nQdGSg7rlMT8RlbrjmPI1812049345!-285916003.