

## **Hurricane Harvey Relief Efforts**

*Information Compiled by JHU SOURCE*

We understand that the desire to help in times of disaster is strong. After Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy, it was found that the best intentions could actually hurt recovery and rebuilding work. Infrastructure to support volunteers, especially those not trained in this type of work, takes time. The strongest impact was **fundraising for trusted organizations** and their relief efforts.

Although the need is great, and desire to help strong in times of disaster, it is important to **avoid donating material goods or self-deploying** to volunteer. The first priority is to make sure communities are safe and public officials and disaster relief organizations have had an opportunity to assess the damage and identify what the specific needs are. Once that happens, it is the generous spirit of residents, nonprofits organizations, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, private sector partners, and governmental agencies and partners working in a coordinated effort that will most effectively and efficiently help with recovery efforts from Hurricane Harvey. Please continue to monitor [this website for updated information](#).

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) coordinates locally to ensure all needs are identified from state, regional, and federal emergency partners, including [FEMA](#) and [American Red Cross](#), and [OneStar](#) and [Volunteer Louisiana](#), the Governor-appointed state service commissions responsible for implementing national service programs across Texas and Louisiana.

**We shouldn't presume what is needed.** The reality is that after natural disasters, lots of volunteers show up and lots of donations are made that end up in the way. Do not go on your own to volunteer or set up donations without working through an organization to know exactly what is needed.

Support will be **needed over the next months and years**. The FEMA director has noted that this recovery will take a long time. Volunteers will have the ability to travel to some of the affected areas in the coming months and years when organizations are ready for volunteers. We owe it to those affected to be there when coverage has moved off of the news cycle.

### **Where to Donate:**

Please remember to research organizations that are requesting donations in order to learn more about their recovery efforts.

- [The Houston Food Bank](#)
- [United Way Relief Fund](#) of Greater Houston
- [Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston](#)
- [Greater Houston Community Foundation](#)
- [Maryland Food Bank's Virtual Food Drive to support Hurricane Relief](#)
- [Americares](#)

### **Volunteer Service:**

- Please be patient and **do not self-deploy**, as unexpectedly showing up to any of the communities that have been impacted by Hurricane Harvey will create an additional burden for first responders.
- If you wish to volunteer in response to Hurricane Harvey, please visit the [Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster website](#) for a list of more than three dozen faith-based, community, nonprofit and non-governmental organizations that include volunteer engagement as a key component of their operations.
- Sketch City, a local Houston non-profit group of techies who aim to make the world a better place, has created [an interactive map with updates on volunteer and service needs](#).
- The **American Red Cross** is requesting volunteers who are skilled in shelter operations. To learn about opportunities with the American Red Cross [visit their blog](#).