

DISASTER HOUSING RECOVERY COALITION (DHRC) FAQ

Led by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC) is composed of over 900 national, state, and local organizations. The DHRC works to ensure that federal disaster recovery efforts reach those most impacted and most marginalized by disasters, including households with the lowest incomes and those experiencing homelessness. The DHRC provides policy and advocacy support to partner organizations actively responding to disasters by responding to the needs of affected populations, monitoring federal actions after disasters, and gathering disaster recovery best practices. These partnerships allow for the identification of systemic problems and opportunities for reform in disaster response that inform the DHRC's advocacy goals and numerous reports on disaster-related topics. Through meetings and campaigns, members have built relationships, fostered innovative policy solutions, and deepened their understanding of equitable disaster recovery.

WHAT IS DISASTER RECOVERY?

The DHRC has seven principles of disaster recovery, created by coalition members:

1. Everyone in need receives safe, temporary housing where they can reconnect with family and community.
2. Securing help from the government is accessible, understandable, and timely.
3. Displaced people have access to the resources they need for as long as they need to safely and quickly recover housing, personal property and transportation; disaster rebuilding jobs and contracts are locally sourced, whenever possible.
4. Everyone is fairly assisted to fully and promptly recover through transparent and accountable programs and strict compliance with civil rights laws, with survivors having a say in the way assistance is provided.
5. All homeowners are able to quickly rebuild in safe, quality neighborhoods of their choice.
6. Renters and anyone experiencing homelessness before the disaster quickly get quality, affordable, accessible rental property in safe, quality neighborhoods of their choice.
7. All neighborhoods are free from environmental hazards, have equal quality and accessible public infrastructure, and are safe and resilient.

WHAT ARE THE ADVOCACY GOALS FOR THE DHRC?

Legislative Priorities

- Enact the "[Reforming Disaster Recovery Act](#)" to help ensure that long-term recovery funding can reach the lowest-income and most marginalized disaster survivors when they need it most.
- Enact the "[Federal Disaster Housing Stability Act](#)" to help ensure that we protect the rights of tenants and prevent evictions in the aftermath of disasters.
- Enact the "[Disaster Survivor Simplification Act](#)" to help ensure that the disaster assistance process is simple and accessible to disaster survivors.

Administrative Priorities

- Remove unjust and inequitable barriers to FEMA disaster assistance that prevent those most in need from receiving assistance after disasters.

- Activate the [Disaster Housing Assistance Program \(DHAP\)](#) to ensure that those most in need of assistance can access appropriate housing after disasters.
- Promote better disaster recovery practices within FEMA and HUD that respect the need for all disaster survivors to have affordable, accessible, homes in communities of their choice.

HOW CAN I JOIN AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DHRC?

Interested organizations can sign up to join the DHRC [here](#). Those that sign up will receive bi-weekly disaster updates on disaster recovery issues around the country. Members are listed in the publicly available DHRC [membership list](#).

The DHRC operates via a series of Working Groups that allow DHRC members and partners to discuss various disaster recovery efforts and learn how they can help shape and advance DHRC advocacy goals.

Disaster Recovery Working Group - The weekly Disaster Recovery Working Group calls feature updates from members on disaster recovery efforts from around the country, coordinate group efforts, share best practices, and stay up to date on the latest federal changes to the disaster recovery response framework. Register for the Disaster Recovery Working Group [here](#).

Puerto Rico Working Group - The Puerto Rico Working Group was formed after Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico in 2017. The group focuses exclusively on identifying disaster housing recovery issues in Puerto Rico and presenting solutions to ensure an equitable and fast recovery.

Hawaii Fires Working Group - The DHRC Hawaii Fires Working Group was created following the catastrophic wildfires on the island of Maui in 2023. That group focuses on assisting community-driven efforts to recover.

If you are interested in joining the Puerto Rico or Hawaii Working Groups, please email NLIHC Senior Policy Analyst Noah Patton (npatton@nlihc.org).

SUCCESS STORIES

Together, DHRC members successfully advocated to:

- Ensure the Trump Administration [released recovery funding](#) to Puerto Rico after the administration delayed these resources.
- Reform long-standing FEMA policies [requiring title documentation](#) for homeowners to apply for assistance. Title requirements prevented thousands of disaster survivors from receiving assistance, especially homeowners of color and those impacted by Hurricane Maria in 2017.
- Create the [Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing \(RUSH\)](#) program at HUD to provide displaced disaster survivors with the longer-term direct rental assistance and supportive services they need to get back on their feet.
- Enact the "[Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022](#)" to create a hazard assessment rating system for census tracts across the country.
- Expand and sustain the use of fully FEMA-reimbursed hotel rooms and similar facilities for use as [non-congregate sheltering](#) for those experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Support the release of a [landmark report](#) detailing the federal response to Hurricanes Harvey and Maria, "Civil Rights and Protections during the Federal Response to Hurricanes Harvey and Maria."