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## PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS TO ENSURE AN EQUITABLE AND JUST RECOVERY

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 adheres to seven principles of disaster recovery created by coalition members that, if met, will ensure an equitable and just recovery process following disasters:

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.

The DHRC advocates for an approach to disaster recovery that preserves the “Four Rights” of communities. The Four Rights were developed by the Texas Organizing Project in conjunction with DHRC members Texas Housers and Texas Appleseed. Although initially drafted as a framework for community development, they can easily be adapted to the mitigation and resiliency context.

### The Four Rights are:

1. The Right to Choose, which promises assistance in cases when a community member wishes to relocate to another area, providing a choice of where to live and promoting integration.
2. The Right to Stay, which guarantees against the involuntary displacement of low-income people through mitigation and resiliency efforts.
3. The Right to Equal Treatment, which demands that low-income communities be provided with the same level and types of assistance as higher-income neighborhoods.
4. The Right to Have a Say, which requires that the government permit low-income communities and households to have meaningful democratic participation in the decisions that affect their community.

These rights are embedded in international standards for relocation, such as the United Nations’ “Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.”

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