

## KATRINA EVACUEES' RIGHTS IN MINNESOTA WELCOME TO MINNESOTA!

### Some of your legal rights are:

**Disaster Relief:** You have the right to apply for disaster relief from FEMA. You will need a FEMA identification number; call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), online at [www.fema.org](http://www.fema.org).

To apply for the FEMA Individuals and Households Program, which covers rental housing, security deposits, and furniture for eligible hurricane survivors:

- If you live in Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington counties, contact the Metropolitan Council Housing and Redevelopment Authority at 651-602-1688.
- In all other Minnesota counties, contact the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency at 651-296-9832 or 1-800-657-3701.
- If you lived in HUD subsidized housing or were homeless prior to the disaster, call HUD's Katrina Disaster Housing Assistance Program at 1-866-373-9509 or the HUD hotline at 1-888-297-8685.

The FEMA Individuals Programs can be up to \$26,200 per individual or household for such things as temporary housing or repairs. These funds are also available for medical, funeral and transportation expenses. If you were in a hotel paid for by the American Red Cross prior to October 23, you should continue to be covered by FEMA.

If you owned a home which was damaged by Hurricane Katrina or Rita and you had insurance, you will need to work through your insurance claim first.

You may be referred to the federal Small Business Administration for a low interest loan if your home needs substantial repairs. Renters may borrow up to \$40,000 to replace disaster-damaged personal property, like your furniture or car. Call SBA at 1-800-359-2227.

**Unemployment:** If you were working before the hurricane, you may qualify for Unemployment Compensation benefits or for Disaster Unemployment Assistance from FEMA. Apply for Unemployment Compensation from the state where you lived. Alabama 1-866-234-5382; Florida 1-800-204-2418; Louisiana 1-800-818-7811, 1-866-783-5567 or [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net); Mississippi 1-888-844-3577. For help, phone 1-877-504-5050 in Minnesota or 1-866-487-2365 for the U.S. Department of Labor. For DUA benefits, apply online at [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net) or call 1-800-430-8076 by November 30, 2005.

**Food Stamps:** You have the right to use your food stamp EBT card from Alabama, Louisiana or Mississippi here. You have the right to a replacement card.

To apply for expedited or regular food stamps in Hennepin County, go to the Century Plaza Bldg., 330 S. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Minneapolis, 612-348-3207; in Ramsey County, go to 160 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, 651-266-4444. In other counties, go to the county welfare office.

Call the statewide Katrina Legal Hotline at 1-800-292-4150 if you have other legal problems or questions. Legal Aid lawyers and the Minnesota Bar Association's volunteer lawyers, who work on a variety of legal problems, can be accessed through this Hotline.

**Medicaid/Medicare:** You have the right to apply for Medicaid here. To apply for Medical Assistance in Hennepin County, go to Century Plaza Bldg., 330 S. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Minneapolis, 612-348-3207; in Ramsey County, go to 160 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, 651-266-4444. In other counties, go to the county welfare office. There should be no residency requirement.

If you are working and are not covered by employer health insurance, ask if you are eligible for MinnesotaCare, the state's health plan for working people.

**Social Security/SSI:** If you got money from Social Security/SSI before the hurricane, you can keep getting those benefits here. If you lost your card or your monthly check, you can have it replaced. To get help, go to the Social Security Administration in Minneapolis, 1811 Chicago Ave. S., 612-870-2004; or in St. Paul, go to 190 Fifth St. E., 651-290-0054.

**TANF/MFIP:** If you were not on assistance before the hurricane, you may be able to get cash assistance here. You must complete an application here. Minnesota's welfare programs for families are MFIP, the Minnesota Family Investment Program, or the Diversionary Work Program. If you are a low-income family with a child, apply in Hennepin County at Century Plaza Bldg., 330 S. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Minneapolis, 612-348-3207; in Ramsey County, apply at 160 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, 651-266-4444. In other counties, go to the county welfare office.

**School:** Your children have the right to go to a public school of your choice; to get special education services; to get free transportation; to enroll without a permanent address; and to enroll without getting immunization records or records from prior schools. To register your child in Minneapolis Schools, go to 910 W. Broadway, phone 612-668-1840; in St. Paul, 2102 University Ave., 651-632-3701. For other schools districts, call the school board office.

**Housing:** Persons who are displaced by Katrina and are financially eligible may have preferences for public housing. In Minneapolis, for a preference before **Nov. 26.**, apply in person at 1001 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis. In St. Paul, apply for a preference before **Dec. 31.** at (651)298-5112.

**Family/Domestic Violence:** If you have a family law or domestic violence issue, call Legal Aid for advice. If you are in immediate danger, call the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women's 24-Hour Crisis Line, 651-646-0994 and/or 911.

**Disabilities:** The Minnesota Disability Law Center can assist you if your disability has led to denial or services for Katrina evacuees. Call 1-800-292-4150.

**Non-Discrimination:** Federal and state laws protect you from discrimination in receiving publicly-funded services and benefits and some private services. If you believe that you or others have been discriminated against in receiving disaster assistance, phone the Legal Aid/Bar Association Hotline at 1-800-292-4150.

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See [www.projusticemn.org](http://www.projusticemn.org) for more information.

November 17, 2005