



## DISASTER SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE

### What is Disaster Survivor Assistance?

Based on a desire to provide expanded services to disaster survivors, FEMA leadership transferred the Community Relations program to the Recovery Directorate, effective April 8, 2013. In an effort to reflect our commitment to the disaster survivors and the expanded role of the cadre, FEMA changed the name from Community Relations to Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA).

The DSA mission is to build and sustain an expeditionary cadre to establish a timely presence in disaster impacted areas. DSA primarily focuses on addressing the needs of disproportionately impacted populations and disaster survivors by:

- Collecting information that supports leadership and operational decision-making;
- Providing accessible, in-person case-specific information and referrals;
- Providing survivors with referrals to whole community partners, as needed; and
- Identifying disability-inclusive public information needs so strategic messaging can be developed and disseminated.



### 5 Essential Functions of DSA

- **Assess, Inform, Report (AIR):**
  - Assess, inform, and report critical and emerging disaster needs to the Operations Section and other Joint Field Office (JFO) leadership for decision-making purposes.
- **On-site Registration Intake**
  - Register survivors for disaster assistance, provide guidance through the registration process, and provide an overview of FEMA disaster assistance.
- **Case Status Updates and Inquiries**
  - On-site survivor information review, providing basic information about the status of their application, other eligible assistance, and collect new information or documents to update their cases file.
- **Survivor Needs Assessment**
  - Engage disaster survivors and local officials in identifying immediate unmet needs for a quick resolution via FEMA and/or our whole community partners.
- **Community Outreach and Partnerships**
  - Conduct community outreach and create partnerships with the local and state emergency managers, disability partners, private sector, voluntary agencies, faith-based and community-based organizations to foster a culture of strengthened alliances to support the delivery of inclusive, equitable services to survivors.



***DSA is a professional, mobile “force multiplier” that supports Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial requirements in the field. DSA can quickly deploy in advance of, or immediately following, a Presidential Disaster Declaration.***

## Helping Survivors through Mobile Technology

DSA crews use tablets and other mobile reporting tools to enhance their capabilities. These tools allow DSA to bring services directly to the survivors who need the most help.

- Hand-held tablets let DSA register survivors at home, work, shelters, hotels or wherever they may be.
- The Survivor Mobile Application Reporting Tool (SMART) uses mobile geo-tagging and photo-capable devices in the field.
- Gives FEMA leaders an instant picture of critical and emerging needs and the overall pulse of the impacted communities.
- Automates information flow, reduces errors and need for paper maps.



To learn more about FEMA, please visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

To learn more about Ready Campaign (America’s emergency preparation site), please visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

*“FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.”*