

STORM HELP

Photo by Associated Press

As New Yorkers struggle in the wake of Sandy to find shelter, food, and other basic needs, legal issues related to the storm are already emerging across the five boroughs and Long Island. NYLAG has mobilized a **legal aid disaster relief program** to help victims of the storm deal with a range of legal issues, including:

FEMA CLAIMS

- Filing for FEMA and other disaster program benefits
- Appealing denied claims
- Documenting damage to homes and small businesses

CONSUMER MATTERS

- Bankruptcies and credit problems
- Contractor and other disaster-related fraud
- Financial and debt counseling

ACCESSING & CONTINUING PUBLIC BENEFITS

- Food stamps
- Medicare/Medicaid
- Social Security Disability
- Public Assistance

FAMILY LAW MATTERS

- Domestic violence
- Custody and divorce

HOUSING

- Insurance claims
- Eligibility for housing vouchers
- Landlord/tenant disputes
- Wrongful evictions
- Mortgage issues for affected homes

IMMIGRATION

- Immigrant eligibility for various public benefits
- Emergency immigration legal issues

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

- Accessing emergency unemployment benefits

OTHER

- Replacing lost documentation/identification
- Wills and advance directives
- Special education services for displaced disabled children

Our legal staff of more than 100 professionals, assisted by over 800 volunteers, are setting up **legal access points** throughout the areas most affected by the storm. These include community-based organizations, courts, hospitals and other agencies with which we have existing intake sites and long-standing partnerships. Please visit nylag.org/StormHelp for updates on locations.

We expect legal needs post-Sandy to track closely those of other major natural disasters, in particular Hurricane Katrina. NYLAG has sought the assistance of legal agencies that served victims of Katrina in order to apply best practices and lessons learned in the wake of that disaster to better serve individuals affected by Sandy. Immediately after the storm, our staff engaged in rigorous trainings on FEMA benefits and other related legal needs to ensure we're prepared to handle these matters for clients.



In addition, NYLAG's Mobile Legal Help Center is traveling to hard-hit neighborhoods across the city, in particular Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Long Island, where the devastation has been most profound, the legal aid infrastructure is compromised by storm damage, and those in need are isolated and unable to travel.

For information on where to access our services, email StormHelp@nylag.org.

We hope that you will join with us to secure the legal rights of the victims of this terrible natural disaster in the difficult days ahead. To volunteer to provide pro bono legal assistance, email volunteer@nylag.org.

Individuals seeking assistance with legal issues can call our hotline at 212-584-3365 or email us at StormHelp@nylag.org.