



## Young Lawyers Division

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR SURVIVORS OF HURRICANE IDA Partnership between New Jersey State Bar Association, ABA Young Lawyers Division and FEMA for NJ residents**

**New Brunswick**, October 13, 2021 - A free legal helpline for Hurricane Ida survivors in the state declared disaster areas located in Bergen, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Union and Warren County is now available for people facing legal issues due to the recent disaster. Residents who cannot afford to pay an attorney can contact the Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) statewide Hotline to request free legal assistance through its website, [www.lsnjlawhotline.org](http://www.lsnjlawhotline.org). The online application can be submitted any time. The Hotline can also be reached at 1-888-LSNJ-LAW (1-888-576-5529), starting at 8 a.m. on October 13, 2021. The New Jersey State Bar Association, American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have teamed up to provide services to residents who need legal help related to the disaster. Assistance will be available in connection with insurance-related claims, FEMA appeals, landlord-tenant matters and creditor-debtor matters.

If you need help, you should contact LSNJ at [www.lsnjlawhotline.org](http://www.lsnjlawhotline.org) and apply online. In your application, identify that you are seeking legal assistance related to Hurricane Ida and answer questions as part of the intake process. You can then get matched with an advocate who can provide assistance or general legal information regarding your issue. You may also call the LSNJ Statewide Hotline during the hours of 8 am to 5:30 pm.

The helpline is part of a long-standing partnership between FEMA and the ABA, and is administered by the New Jersey State Bar Association through its Mass Disaster Response Program.

#### **Background**

When the U.S. president declares a major disaster, FEMA, in cooperation with the ABA YLD, establishes a toll-free number for disaster survivors to request legal assistance. Funding for the toll-free line comes from FEMA under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 100-107). The ABA YLD partners with state bar associations and other legal organizations to recruit volunteer lawyers in affected areas to handle survivors' questions and cases. Survivors should be aware that there are some limitations on disaster legal services. For example, assistance is not available for cases that will produce a fee (i.e., those cases where attorneys are paid part of the settlement by the court). Such cases

are referred to a local lawyer referral service. To determine whether an issue qualifies for free legal assistance, individuals should contact LSNJ.

## **Partners**

**New Jersey State Bar Association** - The NJSBA, incorporated in 1899, is dedicated to the continuing education of lawyers and the public, to reforming the legal system and to aiding in the administration of justice. Visit the Association's website at [www.njsba.com](http://www.njsba.com).

**American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** – The ABA YLD, the largest national organization of young lawyers, provides leadership in serving the public and the profession, and promotes excellence and fulfillment in the practice of law. Its parent organization, the ABA is the national voice of the legal profession and the largest voluntary professional membership group in the world.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency** – FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether nature or man-made, including acts of terror. Through an agreement with the ABA, FEMA underwrites the costs of operating toll-free legal assistance lines for survivors in areas designated as federal disaster sites.

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