*FEMA Region IV Office*

**Atlanta, Georgia**



**North Carolina Department of**

**Crime Control & Public Safety**



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FEMA Media Contact: 770-220-5226

State Media Contact: 919-715-3747

News Release

**Disaster Aid Includes Unemployment Assistance, Free Legal Services**

**RALEIGH, N.C**. – Disaster survivors of the April storms and tornadoes may be eligible for disaster unemployment assistance and free legal help on disaster-related issues.

Individuals who became unemployed because of the storms and tornadoes may qualify for disaster unemployment assistance. This program helps people who don’t qualify for standard unemployment compensation programs, such as the self-employed, farmers and seasonal workers. Benefits begin with

the date the individual was unemployed and can extend up to 26 weeks after the Presidential declaration

date of April 19, 2011.

You may qualify for disaster unemployment assistance if one of the following applies:

* You are unemployed as a direct result of the storms and tornadoes;
* You cannot reach your place of employment because of disaster-related travel disruptions;
* You must support a household because the head of the household died in the storms and tornadoes;
* You are unable to work because of a disaster-related injury; or
* You cannot work because your place of employment was damaged or destroyed by the storms.

To apply for disaster unemployment assistance, you should call the North Carolina Employment Security Commission toll-free at **866-795-8877**. You need to provide the following information:

* Your Social Security number, or Alien Registration number if you are not a citizen;
* Any pay stubs or other proof of employment you have had within the last 18 months; and
* Your most recent federal income tax returns and/or your profit-and-loss statement if you are

self-employed.

**Legal Services**

In North Carolina, disaster survivors needing legal assistance may call the N.C. Bar Association at

**800-662-7407** and ask for disaster legal services. Leave your information and an attorney will call back within 72 hours. The hot line is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The legal assistance typically includes:

* Help with insurance claims (life, medical, property, etc.);

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* Counseling on landlord/tenant problems;
* Help with consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures; and
* Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster.

Free legal services are available to individuals unable to secure adequate legal services, whether the lack

of resources existed before or as a result of the disaster.

The N.C. Bar Association also offers a free informational pamphlet, “Rebuilding After Disaster Strikes,” which can be downloaded from [**www.ncbar.org**](http://www.ncbar.org), where it is located on the home page under Featured Items.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) underwrites the disaster legal services through

an agreement with the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association.

*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.*

*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status.  If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.*

*FEMA’s temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.*

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