

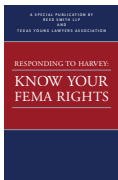


**TYLA in Action**

Helpful guides for flood and storm victims.



*The Do's and Don'ts of Hiring a Contractor or Other Professional After a Natural Disaster* provides information such as asking friends and family members for referrals (Do) and never paying in full up front (Don't).



*Responding to Harvey: Know Your FEMA Rights* includes information such as whether a person should apply for FEMA aid and the significance of a FEMA approval letter.



*Enrolling Your Child in Another School After a Natural Disaster* features information on obtaining school and immunization records.



*Lost Documents/ID* provides information on how to get a replacement social security card and birth certificate.



*Employment During Natural Disasters* includes information on the Texas Workforce Commission disaster unemployment assistance, non-exempt employees, and exempt employees.

# Responding to Harvey

Twenty-seven trillion. That's one estimate of how many gallons of water were dumped on Texas during Hurricane Harvey's nearly weeklong attack on the Gulf Coast. At least 58 counties experienced devastation as a result of the storm. In the aftermath, the resounding words I heard were "we can get through this," "we can rebuild," and "what can we do to help?"

Over the past several weeks, I have had the opportunity to witness servant leadership firsthand. People used sandbags to keep water out of their homes and then stood in line at shelters to serve those who had lost everything. Individuals who didn't live close enough to volunteer in person sent money, food, water, and toiletries to coastal cities. Lawyers put their skills to use and helped those who had suffered loss.

The State Bar of Texas took immediate steps to work with local legal service centers and local affiliates to provide supplies, disaster relief support, and legal services. I don't have the space to name the number of organizations that have rallied to support disaster victims and provide legal assistance to those who have suffered loss. The response has been tremendous.

The Texas Young Lawyers Association has the privilege of being the "public service arm" of the State Bar. In most years, this means the TYLA Board of Directors and committee members spend time developing new projects to address legal issues and spend time sharing existing TYLA and bar projects across Texas. But when disaster strikes, plans change.

On August 28, I called the Serving the Underserved Committee to action, and it got to work. Committee members considered areas of the law that might impact flood and storm victims and within a matter of days, drafted the following guides:

- *Do's and Don'ts of Hiring a Contractor or Other Professional After a Natural Disaster* (in English and Spanish);
- *Responding to Harvey: Know Your FEMA Rights* (in English and Spanish);
- *Enrolling Your Child in Another School After a Natural Disaster*;
- *Lost Documents/ID*;
- *Employment During Natural Disasters*.

Hard copies of these guides will be distributed in shelters across Texas and at legal clinics. They also will be available in PDF form on the TYLA and State Bar of Texas websites. A special thanks goes out to the attorneys of Reed Smith, who assisted in drafting and translating guides, and the University of Houston Law Center for its help in deferring the cost of printing.

The need for legal assistance will not end in the next few days, or even weeks. I hope that each of you will volunteer at a clinic or provide distance assistance by signing up as a volunteer lawyer. For information on how to help, go to [texasbar.com/attorneyresources](http://texasbar.com/attorneyresources).

My thoughts and prayers go out to all who have been affected by Hurricane Harvey. Please know TYLA is here to help.

A copy of the new Disaster Relief Guide series and other TYLA materials can be found at [tyla.org](http://tyla.org). As always, if you have questions about these or any other TYLA project, please don't hesitate to give me a call or email me at [baili.rhodes@westwebblaw.com](mailto:baili.rhodes@westwebblaw.com).

**BAILI B. RHODES**

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