

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Houses Of Worship Have Until Feb. 16 To Apply For FEMA Public Assistance

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With the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) recent change in policy to allow private nonprofit (PNP) houses of worship to be eligible for disaster assistance, the deadline for these entities to make a request for public assistance in the U.S. Virgin Islands has been extended to Feb. 16, 2018. Above, Speak the Word Ministries on St. Croix, days following Hurricane Maria.

FEMA announced the change in policy on Jan. 2, 2018. These changes are effective for disasters declared on or after Aug. 23, 2017, including hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Under the new policy, houses of worship owned or operated by PNP organizations may be eligible applicants for financial assistance if their facilities were damaged or destroyed from a disaster.

FEMA financial assistance for the repair or replacement of a house of worship facility is limited to costs that a loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will not cover. Houses of worship must first apply to the SBA for a disaster loan. FEMA will provide financial assistance if the house of worship is denied a loan or if the loan authorized is insufficient to cover repair costs.

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