

# HURRICANE HARVEY FLOOD RELIEF



Dear Touro Family,

This packet includes information and communication from JFNA (The Jewish Federations of North America - [www.jewishfederations.org](http://www.jewishfederations.org)), our local Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans, and national endeavors to aid in the relief efforts post-Harvey. Please feel free to take this with you and make your choices with us or alongside us to stay energetic during this long journey. There is no list that could be exhaustive; and, this one sure isn't.

And, yet...

*Olam chesed yibaneh* - We will build this world from love. Together.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Alexis Berk

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Touro Synagogue is committed to helping Houston and other impacted areas to rebuild in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. As we live this mission, we are initially focusing in two areas:

- Supporting Jewish organizations that are working with communities in impacted areas
- Supporting organizations working with communities of color and other marginalized groups

We recognize that rebuilding of homes and lives will take a very long time. Many of us have close ties to Houston, and we want to provide the same level of support as Houston did for us during our time of need. Therefore, we are seeking Touro members who would like to help our efforts--short and long term.

If you are interested in shaping Touro's response to Hurricane Harvey, please email Michael Cohen, [mcohen@tulane.edu](mailto:mcohen@tulane.edu). We are seeking team members who will shape a response that reflects the values of the Touro community.

# **A Letter From Jerry Silverman**

## ***President and CEO of the Jewish Federations of North America***

Dear Colleagues,

As the scope of the impact of Hurricane Harvey on the Houston area and other area becomes clearer we are dramatically escalating our emergency response. You will be receiving regular updates from us about the various facets of the response but we want to focus you on three immediate things we need your help with:

**Funding** – the funding needs of this situation are going to be enormous and long-term. It will be days or even into next week before anyone can even begin to assess because the rain and flooding have not stopped. But we know already this is on the magnitude of Katrina and Sandy impacts. We will have immediate cash needs to address by the end of the week; please forward funds from initial fundraising or emergency grants immediately. And please use these next days to focus people in your communities on responding generously, and to calibrate your emergency grant processes accordingly. We have already reached out to the Jewish Funders Network and several major Jewish foundations for support.

**Boots on the Ground** – we plan to put a team of senior professionals on the ground by the end of the week to help support the community's immediate emergency efforts. This will involve tracking down where community members have ended up; distributing emergency cash grants and Home Depot vouchers; and helping local agencies get back up and running. We are close to finalizing who this will be for the first week but we will likely need to sustain this over several weeks. If you have senior professionals who are ready and available for week-long deployments starting next week or beyond please let your local Federation know ASAP -<https://jewishnola.com/harvey>

**Coordination** – a disaster of this magnitude requires the highest possible degree of coordination so that time and efforts aren't wasted or duplicated. We need to be able to support and enable the local community leadership to drive the efforts. It won't be helpful for people to just show up unplanned. We urge you in the strongest possible way to avoid our tendency to fragment efforts and customize responses. Houston's leadership is overwhelmed in the moment and can't possibly respond to individual offers of assistance. Our impact will be greatest if we can coordinate a system-wide response and this is what Houston wants and needs from us all.

Sincerely,  
Jerry Silverman  
President and CEO, JFNA

# **A Letter From Arnie Fielkow**

## **CEO, Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans**

We are receiving daily updates from JFNA and will be passing those along to you. There are many areas in which we can lend our help, but I thought one of the best ideas discussed was the “buddy” system. New Orleans is probably the best community in the country to guide those affected on what lies ahead, including such things as insurance, contractors, emotional support and much more, and we look forward to the creation of a volunteer database which can ultimately be useful to those in Texas and western Louisiana.

Again, thank you for your passion and generosity! Our Federation staff and leadership look forward to partnering with you!

Sincerely,  
Arnie Fielkow

### **ARENAS IN WHICH FEDERATION WILL BE ADDRESSING HOUSTON'S COMMUNITY RECOVERY/REBUILDING:**

**Financial** - Federation will be collecting funds. Schooling - We will be looking to absorb any families in need of schooling.

**Housing** - Happy to house any who need shelter? Visit the Jewish Federation of San Antonio website at [www.jfsatx.org](http://www.jfsatx.org) and follow the “Community Inventory Survey” link on their homepage.

**Jewish holidays** - All synagogues ready to welcome families to celebrate with us.

**Community Volunteers** - Visit [www.jewishnola.com/harvey](http://www.jewishnola.com/harvey) to register for all kinds of volunteer opportunities.

**Relief items** - Items are being collected at Metairie JCC.

- Gift Cards (min. of \$25) to Target, CVS, Walgreen's, HEB, Bed Bath & Beyond, Home Depot, Lowe's, and Wal-mart
- Cleaning supplies (cleaning spray, sponges, mops, spray bottles, buckets)
- Shovels
- Non-perishable food items (pop-top cans, individually packaged snacks)
- Bottled water
- Advil/Tylenol/Aleve/Aspirin
- Diapers and wipes
- Tampons/pads
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Heavy duty trash bags
- Bleach
- Work gloves
- Safety goggles
- Teddy bears/toys for children
- Blankets
- Android/iPhone chargers

# **A Letter From Leslie Fischman**

## ***Executive Director, New Orleans Jewish Community Center***

Dear Members,

Through the years, the New Orleans JCC and the Evelyn Rubenstein JCC (ERJCC) of Houston have been partners in various programs ranging from the JCC Maccabi Games and Arts Fest to summer travel programs and sports events for our older campers and teens. Here in New Orleans we know all too well what the Houston JCC's families are going through. The flood waters were particularly high in the neighborhoods surrounding the Houston JCC and much of the JCC flooded, as well.

**Houston was here for us....now we must be there for them.** Like our JCC, the Houston JCC serves a diverse population with varied needs. When asked how we can best help, their executive director suggested we donate in the form of gift cards that will be distributed by the Houston JCC to families in need. You may drop physical gift cards at either JCC, or can purchase them online and send them to [erjccgiftcards@gmail.com](mailto:erjccgiftcards@gmail.com). Please make sure your purchase is:

- An e-gift card
- Delivery type is through email
- Many retailers require that you create an account, which only takes a couple of minutes; please do so!
- Gift cards from the following retailers were requested: Target, Walmart, Lowe's, Home Depot, Randalls, H-E-B, Bed Bath & Beyond, Visa, Mastercard

You may also contribute through the ERJCC Hurricane Relief Fund ([www.jcchouston.org/forms/411/hurricane-relief-fund](http://www.jcchouston.org/forms/411/hurricane-relief-fund)), which will be used to buy and distribute specific e-gift cards and to purchase goods for the community. Additionally, you can donate to the Jewish Federations of North America Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund (<https://goo.gl/rJrZrR>), which will go to both the Jewish and general community.

When we act together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fischman  
Executive Director  
New Orleans Jewish Community Center

# USEFUL ORGANIZATIONS

## GENERAL RELIEF:

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner established a Harvey relief fund at **The Greater Houston Community Foundation ([www.ghcf.org/hurricane-relief](http://www.ghcf.org/hurricane-relief))**. The organization connects donors with a network of nonprofits and innovative solutions in the social sector.

**GlobalGiving ([www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org))**, which calls itself the largest global crowdfunding community, has a goal of raising \$2 million for its Harvey relief fund. Funds will be used first for immediate needs of food, water and shelter and then transition to long-term recovery efforts.

**United Way of Greater Houston ([www.unitedwayhouston.org](http://www.unitedwayhouston.org))** has launched a relief fund for storm-related needs and recovery. The organization says it already maintains a disaster relief fund but anticipates the needs of Harvey will far exceed those existing resources.

**The Center for Disaster Philanthropy ([www.disasterphilanthropy.org](http://www.disasterphilanthropy.org))** has also launched a Hurricane Harvey relief fund. The organization says its strategy emphasizes “investing well rather than investing quickly, addressing the greatest needs and gaps in funding that may be yet to emerge.”

**GoFundMe ([www.gofundme.com/hurricaneharvey](http://www.gofundme.com/hurricaneharvey))**, the social fundraising site, has created a landing page that gathers the campaigns on its platform related to Harvey.

**The Salvation Army ([www.helpsalvationarmy.org](http://www.helpsalvationarmy.org))** says it is providing food and water to first responders and preparing for massive feeding efforts for residents.

**Send Relief and Southern Baptist Disaster Relief ([www.namb.net](http://www.namb.net))** says its teams began responding before Harvey made landfall and continues on-the-ground relief work.

**Samaritan's Purse ([www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org))** is accepting donations as well as volunteers for Harvey disaster relief for the coming months.

## BLOOD:

As well as the **American Red Cross ([www.redcross.org/give-blood](http://www.redcross.org/give-blood))**, local organizations accepting blood donations are **Carter BloodCare ([www.carterbloodcare.org/donate-blood](http://www.carterbloodcare.org/donate-blood))** and the **South Texas Blood & Tissue Center ([www.donatingforlife.org](http://www.donatingforlife.org))**.

## SHELTER:

Coalition for the **Homeless of Houston/Harris County ([www.homelesshouston.org/take-action/donate](http://www.homelesshouston.org/take-action/donate))** coordinates the city's response to homelessness, serving as “a backbone organization” to groups that offer direct service. It has been providing updated information on shelters with available beds.

**Airbnb ([www.airbnb.com/disaster/hurricaneharveyevacuees](http://www.airbnb.com/disaster/hurricaneharveyevacuees))** has set up an urgent accommodations site, where people can open their homes to evacuees from the storm or find shelter themselves. Service fees are waived for those who check in by Sept. 1.

## **FOOD:**

A number of food banks will be aiding the affected region. Consider donating money instead of food, as it allows a food bank to use your donation most efficiently.

**Feeding Texas**([donatenow.networkforgood.org/feeding-texas](http://donatenow.networkforgood.org/feeding-texas)) is a statewide nonprofit that works alongside state and federal relief efforts. The organization says it steps in during major disasters to “coordinate with the state and other providers so that relief reaches families quickly and the ‘second disaster’ of an unorganized response is avoided.”

**Here is its list of food banks in Texas likely to be affected by Harvey:**

### **Houston Food Bank**

[www.houstonfoodbank.org](http://www.houstonfoodbank.org)

### **Galveston Food Bank**

[www.galvestoncountyfoodbank.org](http://www.galvestoncountyfoodbank.org)

### **Food Bank of the Golden Crescent (Victoria)**

[www.victoriafoodbank.org](http://www.victoriafoodbank.org)

### **Corpus Christi Food Bank**

[www.foodbankcc.com](http://www.foodbankcc.com)

### **Southeast Texas Food Bank (Beaumont)**

[www.setxfoodbank.org](http://www.setxfoodbank.org)

### **Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley (Pharr)**

[www.foodbankrgv.com](http://www.foodbankrgv.com)

### **Brazos Valley Food Bank (Bryan)**

[www.bvfb.org](http://www.bvfb.org)

### **Central Texas Food Bank (Austin)**

[www.centraltexasfoodbank.org](http://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org)

### **San Antonio Food Bank**

[www.safoodbank.org](http://www.safoodbank.org)

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:**

**Portlight Strategies** (<http://www.portlight.org>) facilitates projects involving people with disabilities, including post-disaster relief work. The organization says its hotline for Inclusive Disaster Strategies has received urgent requests from people in need.

## **KIDS:**

**Save the Children ([www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org))** is providing relief supplies and services to help children and families in shelters and other victims of Hurricane Harvey.

**The Texas Diaper Bank ([texasdiaperbank.networkforgood.com](http://texasdiaperbank.networkforgood.com)),** based in San Antonio, works to meet the basic needs of vulnerable babies, children with disabilities, and seniors. It focuses on providing partner agencies with diapers and goods.

**KIPPHouston Public Schools ([kipphouston.org/blog/family-emergency-fund](http://kipphouston.org/blog/family-emergency-fund))** has set up a Family Emergency Fund to provide direct support to their staff and families in need. 100% of funds will go directly to KIPP families and staff who need it most.

## **ANIMALS:**

**The SPCA of Texas ([www.sPCA.org/hurricane-harvey](http://www.sPCA.org/hurricane-harvey))** is organizing evacuations of pets in Texas (including 123 cats from a shelter in Corpus Christi) and offers resources on pet-friendly housing for evacuees.

**Austin Pets Alive! ([www.austinpetsalive.org](http://www.austinpetsalive.org))** says it has transported more than 235 animals to its shelter. The organization seeks donations, as well as people who can adopt animals. It says it has received so many donated supplies that it's running out of storage space, so financial donations are what it needs most.

## **LEGAL AID:**

**Texas Legal Aid ([www.teajf.org](http://www.teajf.org))** - To provide direct assistance to a legal related situation, consider assisting Texas Legal Aid, a pro bono group that helps victims put their lives back together. After a disaster, Legal Aid helps put lives back together by providing:

- Assistance with securing FEMA and other benefits available to disaster survivors
- Assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims
- Help with home repair contracts and contractors
- Replacing wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster
- Assisting in consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures
- Assisting with mortgage/foreclosure and landlord/tenant problems

The Texas Access to Justice Foundation will use all donations to fund Disaster Legal Aid to survivors of Hurricane Harvey. Please donate to the Hurricane Harvey Legal Aid Fund to assist all Texans in need of these essential services.