DISASTER SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE (DSA)

Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) crews go into communities within days, sometimes hours, of a disaster. They often walk-through affected areas or set up in small groups in a neighborhood facility.

They are the eyes and ears – and sometimes the voice – of FEMA when they visit impacted communities. They are equipped to help residents apply for assistance, even in the toughest conditions. Often, where DSA teams are, a mobile unit with a Wi-Fi connection is not far behind.

DSA crews primarily focus on addressing the needs of underrepresented populations that may be hard to reach by traditional channels. Their mission is to assess, and report critical and emerging disaster needs to FEMA leadership for decision-making purposes. Their duties include:

- Providing on-site guidance to survivors about the application process, and an overview of FEMA disaster assistance.

- Reviewing survivors’ applications, providing basic information about application status and other eligible assistance, and collecting new information or documents for case files.

- Engaging disaster survivors and local officials in identifying immediate unmet needs for a quick resolution via FEMA and/or its partners including voluntary agencies.

- Supporting community outreach and partnerships with the local, state, tribal or territorial emergency managers, disability partners, private sector, voluntary agencies and faith- and community-based organizations to foster a culture of strengthened alliances to support the delivery of inclusive, equitable services to survivors.