

# The Disaster Philanthropy Playbook Tip Sheet

*Actions funders can take to help their communities prepare,  
respond and recover from major disasters.*

## Preparedness

### 1. Develop and Adopt a Preparedness Plan for your organization:

- An internal business continuity plan for your organization, and
- An external plan which includes how and when your organization will respond and at what level (includes funding, product donations, in-kind support and resources);

### 2. Support the development of Preparedness Plans for your Grantee Community

- Help your grantees to become better prepared—to protect their organizations and to respond to your community's needs in the event of a disaster

### 3. Establish a Collaborative Disaster Recovery Fund

- Work in cooperation with philanthropic colleagues
- Decide on parameters of the fund: giving targets; donors; criteria for disbursements;
- Consider a mechanism for the general public to contribute to this fund

### 4. Establish and Convene a Preparedness Task Force

- Individuals include:
  - Nonprofits (social services, healthcare, environment, education, housing, advocacy, etc.—engage a highly diverse group)
  - Local and state emergency management personnel
  - Representatives from your Governor's Office and Cabinet Departments
  - Members of your local/regional media
- Responsibilities include:
  - Development of a coordinated response
  - Development of a coordinated communications plan
  - Building and strengthening alliances between organizations and agencies that do not have a history of working together

### 5. Establish a Pre-Disaster Memorandum of Understanding with Grantees

- This MOU outlines the actions your grantees will take in the event of a disaster and the amount and disbursement schedule of special funding your grantee can expect to receive from your organization.

## Immediate Response

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### 1. Support an immediate independent assessment of the damage and critical needs

- Early reports can inform early response priorities and long-term strategies

### 2. Advocate for maximum federal support

- Lead and support advocacy efforts on a federal, state and local level to ensure your region receives from Congress the maximum and appropriate amount of federal recovery dollars
- Advocate for a fair, equitable and transparent process for distribution of those funds

### 3. Participate in the immediate and long-term planning conversations

- This helps inform flexible, patient and timely grantmaking

### 4. Activate communication channels—hold weekly conference calls and create a listserv

- Engage with and hear from your colleagues, emergency response personnel, government officials and nonprofits working “on the ground”
- News and needs change quickly; ongoing communication is essential

### 5. Support the deployment of case managers and pro-bono legal assistance

- Every individual, organization, and small business that has been affected will need advice on filing FEMA and insurance claims, along with other applications for recovery and rebuilding support.

## Long-Term Recovery

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### 1. Support the dedicated disaster recovery funds for years following the disaster

- Advocate for local, national and international giving to support these long-term recovery funds

### 2. Identify and support a philanthropic liaison to work cooperatively with your state’s recovery leaders

### 3. Support high-level coordinated leadership for region-wide project prioritization and resource allocation

### 4. Avoid duplication of efforts and act in a timely fashion (which doesn’t always mean immediately)

- Provide flexible grants with open lines of communication with your grantees; this helps to ensure the greatest needs are being met

### 5. Keep the media spotlight on the long-term recovery efforts and needs

- Ongoing news and human interest stories about your community’s recovery is critical for maintaining attention and support

## Remember

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The Center for Disaster Philanthropy is here to assist you. Reach out to CDP’s staff before or after a disaster has struck your region. They are ready to provide thought-leadership, advice on establishing disaster funds, and connections to colleagues around the nation who can support and inform your efforts.

### Center for Disaster Philanthropy

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