
HURRICANE HARVEY RESPONSE UPDATE

Dear Fellow Attorneys,

I know that Hurricane Harvey and its related flooding have damaged many of your homes and law offices. Please know that my thoughts are with you during this difficult time, and the State Bar of Texas is here to serve you in any way possible.

The State Bar is providing a number of resources to lawyers and members of the public affected by Hurricane Harvey.

Disaster Hotline—The State Bar’s toll-free disaster hotline **(800) 504-7030**—answered in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese—connects low-income disaster survivors to legal assistance through local legal aid or pro bono programs. Based on where the caller lives, the hotline routes the caller to a legal aid agency in his or her area where attorneys can help with a variety of legal concerns from lost documents to insurance questions, renters’ concerns, applying for federal disaster assistance, and other matters.

Disaster Resources—The State Bar has collected a number of valuable explanatory documents, assistance links, and how-to videos for the public at texasbar.com/disasters. A page of disaster relief resources designed specifically for attorneys is available at texasbar.com/attorneyresources featuring free CLE opportunities, volunteer guides, and other materials.

Attorneys Affected—Hurricane Harvey and its related flooding affected a number of attorneys and law firms. To that effort the State Bar created an assessment survey at texasbar.com/attorneyrelief where attorneys with needs can report how their colleagues can assist them with things like temporary housing or office space. State Bar staff is working to match those in need with other lawyers who are eager to help. If you need help with stress, anxiety, or other emotional effects of the disaster, call the Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program at **1-800-343-8527** or go to tlaphelps.org for more information.

Volunteer Attorneys—The State Bar also is coordinating the attorney volunteer effort. Nearly 2,400 attorneys—many from out of state—as well as paralegals and law students have volunteered to assist the public with this disaster. The State Bar’s Legal Access Division has collected the volunteers’ information through an online form at texasbar.com/attorneyvolunteer and is connecting those volunteers with needs reported by the various legal aid agencies.

MCLE Extension—State Bar of Texas members affected by Hurricane Harvey may request an extension of time for compliance with MCLE requirements. MCLE Rules and Regulations allow extensions of up to 90 days in cases of “good cause,” such as extraordinary hardship or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the member. If you need an extension, you can either:

- Email your request to mcle@texasbar.com;
- Fax it to (512) 427-4423; or
- Mail it to MCLE Dept. P.O. Box 13007, Austin, Texas, 78711-3007.

Your request should include your name and bar number and should briefly outline the extent of your hardship or extenuating circumstances. To view your current MCLE status online, log in to your My Bar Page and then click on the link to “View/Report MCLE Hours.” Please contact the State Bar MCLE Department at **(800) 204-2222, ext. 1806**, if you have questions about extension requests or MCLE compliance requirements.

Court Orders—Several emergency orders have been issued related to Hurricane Harvey, including an order authorizing modification and suspension of court procedures in affected proceedings and an order extending the deadline for payment of State Bar dues for Texas attorneys whose principal offices are in counties declared disaster areas. Orders related to Hurricane Harvey can be found in this issue starting on page 600 or find links to all of the emergency court orders at texasbar.com/attorneyresources.

Court Closures—For a list of court closures and delays, go to texasbar.com/attorneyresources.

Monetary Donations—The State Bar is encouraging donations to the Harvey relief effort at texasbar.com/harveyfund.

I hope you find these resources useful. If there is anything else the State Bar can do to help, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Tom Vick
President, State Bar of Texas
statebarpresident@texasbar.com