



**Department
of Justice**



**Homeland
Security**

October 4, 2018

Dear State and Local Emergency Management Agencies:

As you know in your line of work, effective disaster-relief planning and strong mitigation efforts can make all the difference in saving lives and reducing the damage disasters cause to communities.

Incorporating the needs of diverse populations, people with disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency into such planning is critical to ensuring that entire communities are prepared for, and can respond effectively to, emergencies.

With these principles in mind, the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (DHS CRCL) and the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division (DOJ) are committed to supporting the emergency-management operations of state and local governments.

We look forward to working collaboratively to support your frontline efforts to ensure nondiscrimination in the provision of emergency and disaster-relief services, benefits, and activities. DHS and DOJ are both responsible for helping state and local governments comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency) in federally assisted programs and activities; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits disability discrimination in federally assisted programs and activities; and other civil rights authorities. DHS CRCL in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Office of Equal Rights will lead this work in DHS. DHS and DOJ are available to provide technical assistance, outreach, and training to help you understand and meet your responsibilities when provided federal funding under federal civil rights laws.

As we have seen during Hurricane Florence and other disasters, it is vital that we support state and local agencies in planning for and implementing these critical responsibilities. Going forward, we will be providing helpful information and support by conducting webinars, regional meetings, and trainings regarding the federal civil rights laws related to federally assisted emergency-management programs and activities. We will send more details on these upcoming events shortly and look forward to your participation.

We value your feedback and stand ready to assist you in your efforts to ensure that your emergency-management operations comply with federal civil rights laws and your emergency and disaster-relief plans provide meaningful access to the whole community.

Please do not hesitate to contact DHS directly with any questions, suggestions, or concerns that you may have at 202-401-1471 or toll free at 1-866-644-8350, or by email at crcl@dhs.gov.

Sincerely,



Cameron P. Quinn
Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
U.S. Department of Homeland Security



John Gore
Acting Assistant Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice