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DISASTER TRAINING

WHO, WHAT & WHEN

The Florida legal aid community's Disaster Plan includes regular training for program administrative and legal staff. Programs are asked to identify disaster point persons from their legal and administrative staff who will commit to (1) attending yearly training sessions and (2) providing initial coordination of the program's response following a disaster.

A. Annual Trainings

Annual trainings and/or updates will be provided by June 30th of each year to legal staff and a deputy director or other administrative person from programs throughout the state who will act as disaster point persons. Trainings will be held yearly to account for staff turnover and changes in the law, and will be held by June 30th so that programs will be prepared before major hurricanes are expected.

Annual trainings will include sections from the following areas: Federal disaster assistance law and long-term rebuilding efforts, the rights of tenants following a disaster, insurance law, and consumer protection law regarding home repairs, as well as suggestions on how legal aid programs can best prepare for and handle their work should a disaster strike. Attending staff will be given an updated disaster manual for use in upgrading their program's disaster plan and as a resource following a disaster. Annual trainings will also serve as opportunities for regional collaborative meetings, a

refresher on administrative considerations for disaster preparedness, a forum for programs to rethink their program-specific disaster plans, and an opportunity to update regional understandings and agreements. Programs will be reminded of the necessity of working together to meet the needs of disaster victims, of updating hurricane brochures and staff contact lists, and of making an inventory of functioning portable equipment such as laptops, portable printers, and cell phones.

B. Post Disaster Trainings and Support

Post-disaster trainings will be provided regionally to staff of disaster-impacted legal aid programs. Trainings will be held at sites convenient to the impacted programs and will ideally serve as a one-day mini-retreat to help the program(s) move forward in a constructive and unified way to rebuild their community(ies) for the benefit of clients. Post-disaster trainings will include more in-depth presentations of federal disaster assistance law and long-term rebuilding efforts, tenants' rights following a disaster, insurance law, and consumer protection law regarding home repairs.

Post-disaster trainings will also help programs assess the impact of the catastrophe on their office(s) and the client community, muster their resources (including assistance from other legal services providers within the region), and comprise a problem-solving session that culminates in a disaster work plan. Trainers will lend their experience and expertise to the process, provide information regarding the disaster list-serv, and identify experts for further assistance in particular legal areas. Written training materials will be provided to all attendees, and electronic copies of the client flyers and brochures will be shared.