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National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

To: Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs
From: Sandy Markwood, CEO
RE: **n4a Disaster Response and How You Can Help**
Date: September 8, 2017

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, n4a has received a tremendous outpouring of support and concern from AAAs around the country. Our hearts go out to all of our members and their clients in areas affected by the horrible storm. We've been able to directly reach each of the AAAs and are happy to share that, while they've been hit hard, they will be up and running again as soon as they are able. But, as others who have been through disasters know, their hard work is only beginning.

In addition to making sure their offices are operational again, affected AAAs are already back to the business of serving people in their communities, many of whom need help with basic services and services directly related to recovering from the aftermath of the flooding. Calls to the Eldercare Locator have spiked in the days since Hurricane Harvey hit parts of Texas and Louisiana with dozens of requests for assistance with food, shelter and transportation.

And now our country braces for yet another major emergency in the form of Hurricane Irma, with Florida and other parts of the southeast already in disaster preparation mode.

As we've seen in the past when n4a members have been devastated by natural disasters, it has taken weeks, months and years for them to recover. But we've been here before. Just as n4a and our members have worked in the past to support agencies affected by natural disasters, we will do so again. While we do not yet have any specific requests from affected AAAs for staff support, we do have requests for gift cards or other financial assistance. We know many of you have already offered to assist in this way; we will keep you posted if there are other requests for assistance.

Meanwhile, here's how you can help:

- **Give to the n4a Disaster Relief Fund.** Since its creation more than 10 years ago, the n4a Disaster Relief Fund has helped AAAs get back on their feet after natural disasters and emergencies. 100 percent of all donations made to the n4a

Disaster Relief Fund will go straight to the AAAs for distribution to meet local needs. [Learn how to donate here.](#)

- **Be prepared.** While many AAAs are recovering from Hurricane Harvey, AAAs in Florida are bracing for Hurricane Irma, which is expected to make landfall sometime this weekend. It reminds us that it's never too soon to take a fresh look at how your AAA and your clients are prepared for unexpected natural disasters. Take a look at these resources from the [Department of Health and Human Services](#), [FEMA](#), the [Department of Transportation](#) and [www.ready.gov](#).

n4a is committed to supporting its members in all ways—and that includes disaster recovery. We are thankful that the n4a community is, too.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Rebecca Levine, n4a's Membership and Outreach Associate at rlevine@n4a.org.