

SBA disaster office hiring workers in response to Harvey

Resumes:

Emailed to CSCHumanresources@sba.gov

Faxed to 716-843-4290.

A Small Business Administration office in Buffalo will hire 50 to 60 temporary employees to help people in Texas affected by the massive flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey.

The jobs will entail long hours and weekends, with starting pay of \$16 per hour, said Colleen Hiam, the center's director.

The Buffalo center, on South Elmwood Avenue, helps people and businesses in disaster-stricken areas around the country apply for SBA disaster assistance loans. The office increases its employment when major incidents strike, to respond to a surge of requests for assistance.

"We know that it's going to be a huge [disaster] declaration," Hiam said. "It is catastrophic. It has the potential to surpass even Katrina."

When Katrina struck in 2005, the center hired a number of temporary employees. However, for some workers, those positions lasted as long as three years, Hiam said.

One year ago, the center was staffing up in response to a surge of destructive weather around the country, including tornadoes in Indiana and flooding in Louisiana.

The Buffalo center expects to start receiving calls for assistance from people affected by Harvey as early as today, so the center wants to staff up as quickly as possible to be ready, she said. Harvey has caused widespread flooding in Houston, and forecasts call for rain to continue this week.

The Buffalo center works with homeowners, renters, businesses and nonprofits who are applying for SBA disaster assistance loans. Hiam said the vast majority of applicants tend to be homeowners and renters.

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The SBA requires that applicants be U.S. citizens, with experience "responding to a variety of customer inquiries by providing information to the public" and using computer programs like Microsoft Office and data-entry systems.