

STEP Program Deadline Extended to Feb. 1



Wednesday, January 16, 2019 - 2:30pm

Homeowners who suffered minor damage from Hurricane Florence have until **February 1** to sign a Right of Entry form to participate in the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) program. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified homeowners as potential candidates and notified them with texts, phone-calls, postcards and emails.

“Hurricane Florence swamped homes, businesses, schools, farms and entire communities, and North Carolina is working hard to recover,” Gov. Cooper said. “Getting people back in safe, livable homes is key and the STEP program can help families do that. “If you've been notified that the STEP program may be a good fit for your family, don't wait-- apply now.”

The STEP program provides rapid, partial repairs to homes to make them livable and allows survivors to leave temporary housing and return home. The STEP program does not return a home to its pre-storm condition, but it does make it possible for families to return home while long-term repairs take place.

The eligible homeowners who have agreed to participate in the program must sign a [Right of Entry form](#) allowing the inspector and builder to enter their home. The eligible homeowners in the following counties that have the opportunity to participate in the STEP program are: **Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender and Robeson.**

Among the kinds of repairs made through the STEP program:

- Exterior repairs include secure and watertight doors, windows and roof, and safe entrances.
- The home's electrical and plumbing systems will be made safe and operational.
- Interior repairs include a functional kitchen – including a base cabinet under the sink, a surface to prepare food, basic refrigeration and cooking surfaces, a working sink – and a functional, private bathroom.

The cost of the STEP program is being shared by the State of North Carolina and FEMA. There is no cost to homeowners to participate in the voluntary STEP program.

For survivors who choose to participate in the STEP program, completion of STEP repairs will end their eligibility for a FEMA travel trailer or mobile home and for Transitional Sheltering Assistance to stay in a hotel.

There are several options for eligible homeowners to ensure that their Right of Entry form is signed. Eligible homeowners can visit www.ncdps.gov/florencestep and follow the steps to create an account and electronically sign the Right of Entry Form. Eligible homeowners can contact the call center at **833-257-1100**, sign their Right of Entry form at any state [Disaster Recovery Center](#).