

# Always Braced for a Storm, These Louisiana Firms Knew How to Cope Amid COVID-19

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Managing Member **Rudy Aguilar** (Baton Rouge) is quoted in “Always Braced for a Storm, These Louisiana Firms Knew How to Cope Amid COVID-19” from August 26, 2020 in *The American Lawyer*. The article gives a sense of how firms are applying lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and other previous disasters to thrive during the Coronavirus.

*“Even though it’s been 15 years, at least for me, it’s like it was yesterday,” said Rudy Aguilar, managing member of [McGlinchey Stafford](#).*

*Aguilar said his firm learned that communication, particularly internal communication, is vital in a crisis. He was also McGlinchey Stafford’s managing member in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina hit.*

*“During Katrina, our people wanted to know we were operational, that we would survive ... that there was work, that we could pay our bills,” Aguilar said. “During COVID we [remembered] that lesson [and used] town hall meetings” to stay in touch.*

*McGlinchey Stafford also made sure to communicate with clients, landlords, suppliers, vendors and banks in March, to assure them the firm was up and running. Switching to remote work was seamless because of the existing disaster plan, he said. And the firm made sure its employee assistance program was ready to spring into action, particularly for those who had not experienced something like Hurricane Katrina.*

*“Interestingly enough, because our Louisiana partners and staff and lawyers had been through it, we [in Louisiana] were able to help our people systemwide,” Aguilar said.*

*Aguilar said Katrina was a tough experience for lawyers and staff in New Orleans. Recovering from that storm was a long and painful process, so the COVID-19 crisis is not worse for them, he said.*

*“But for everybody outside of New Orleans, COVID is much worse in my view, because at least with the hurricane, it was an event. It ended, and we know how to recover and we start working on recovery. With COVID, it is never-ending, and there’s no indication of when we are going to get over it,” he said.*

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Rudy Aguilar