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Christie Administration Announces Comprehensive Temporary Housing Assistance for Storm-Displaced Residents

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Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Additional Fort Monmouth Housing Units and Mobile Homes Will Help Address Disaster Housing Needs

Trenton, NJ – In response to a housing need unlike any New Jersey has before encountered, the Christie Administration today expanded a multi-faceted housing strategy with the support of FEMA to provide additional resources to the many households who are in need of temporary housing as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Additional housing units at the former Fort Monmouth Military Installation will immediately begin to be renovated and temporary housing units will be placed on existing concrete pads already serviced by utility hookups and facilities. Additionally, a request has been made to extend FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program and Bergen and Hudson counties will be added to the list of areas where a FEMA rapid housing repair program is offered.

"Among our top priorities is to ensure that everyone who has been displaced by Hurricane Sandy can find temporary housing that meets their needs in one available form or another, so they can begin to recover from this major disaster," said Governor Christie. "State departments and agencies, coordinated by my recovery and rebuilding team, have been working hard every day to assess and anticipate unmet housing needs and to develop a comprehensive strategy that, first and foremost, provides safe and adequate housing in the interim and, second, moves impacted households into permanent housing."

"As directed by Governor Christie, providing short and long term housing options for displaced New Jerseyans is the first critical task of the Governor's Office of Recovery and Rebuilding," said Marc Ferzan. "Working in concert with FEMA and the Department of Community Affairs, we are putting forward a plan to identify individual housing needs, provide clear options and help residents navigate the process. This is just part of an ongoing strategy to identify and respond to our state's housing needs and to reassure New Jerseyans and their families that federal, state and local government resources are collaborating to help those who need post-disaster assistance."

As of December 7, over 48,000 households have been determined eligible for financial assistance for housing exceeding \$258 million in rental assistance and repair grants, according to FEMA disaster assistance registration data. Of those, over 9,500 sustained damage significant enough to warrant a call out from FEMA to determine the need for temporary housing. More than 8,000 of those households are located in Ocean, Monmouth, and Middlesex counties, demonstrating a concentration of unmet housing needs within a relatively compact geographic area. The number of available rentals listed locally and in the FEMA Housing Portal are not sufficient to meet the anticipated need.

"A very high percentage of displaced households were staying with family and friends when they registered with FEMA. However, as some of these housing situations become unsustainable, residents who have been unable to secure available, affordable housing will need additional temporary housing alternatives," said New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III, whose department heads the New Jersey State led Disaster Housing Task Force. "We are confident our program will provide a comprehensive housing strategy to meet our citizens' needs."

In order to meet the housing needs of displaced residents, the Christie Administration, in partnership with FEMA, will:

- Renovate housing units at Fort Monmouth in addition to the 45 units currently being renovated. The Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority is simultaneously preparing to issue multiple Requests for Offer to Purchase portions of Fort housing stock that could add approximately 375 units of permanent housing for Sandy displaced residents. The New Jersey Department of Education has advised that students housed at the Fort will have busing transportation available within a reasonable radius to their home school district;

- Place manufactured housing units on existing pads in mobile home parks;

- Request an extension of FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program to accommodate those residents who are currently staying in hotels and motels seeking housing. The program will be re-evaluated to determine the need beyond the January extension date; and

- Add Hudson and Bergen counties to the list of jurisdictions where FEMA's Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program is offered. Through the program, homeowners can apply through their municipalities for eligible repair work on residences, including electrical meter repairs, shelter essential measures, and rapid temporary

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exterior repairs so that they can live in their homes while permanent repairs are made. The program is already offered in Atlantic, Cape May, Monmouth, Ocean, and Middlesex counties.

The Christie Administration believes the expanded temporary housing assistance is warranted given the large number of uninhabitable homes in the state, the high percentage of households who are residing with family and friends, and the fact that more disaster assistance registrations are being received every day related to Hurricane Sandy losses. The Administration will continue to work with FEMA to monitor housing needs in the weeks and months to come.

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