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Governor Christie Announces Working Families Living Expenses Voucher Program Reaches \$11.3 Million Funding Milestone In Just Three Months

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Sandy Housing And Rental Assistance Program Is Helping More Than 7,000 Impacted Residents

Trenton, NJ – Continuing his commitment to assist Sandy victims in their recovery and rebuilding, Governor Christie today announced the Sandy Working Families Living Expenses Voucher Program has exceeded \$11 million funding since its inception in late October 2013. The program provides up to \$15,000 for mortgage, rent and utility payments over a period of six months to individuals and families with Sandy-related expenses and also covers costs for certain essential household items. Approximately 7,300 storm survivors have received assistance in the form of direct payments to billing agencies and vouchers for essential household items.

"It's gratifying to hear directly from families about how invaluable the Working Families Living Expenses Voucher Program has been in their recovery process," said Governor Christie. "This program is helping to resolve some pretty significant financial obligations and enabling these families to move forward with their lives."

Governor Christie also announced the expansion of the program in Ocean County.

"Ocean County, by far, has had the largest number of applicants. That's why we're opening a new service center with Ocean Inc. in Toms River, which will relieve some of the volume at the county's two current locations and enhance services to families in need," added Governor Christie.

As of February 10, 2014, Ocean County has distributed \$6.9 million in assistance to 3,703 people. Other high volume counties include Monmouth (\$2.016 million), Atlantic (\$624,782), Bergen (\$661,478) and Hudson (\$296,740).

"Today's event is also about raising awareness," said Department of Human Services (DHS) Commissioner Jennifer Velez. "Households from Cape May County to Bergen County are eligible but may not be informed about this program. That's why it's important to make sure residents know how critical this program can be to their recovery."

The Working Families Living Expenses Voucher Program, also known as "SHRAP," provides temporary relief to Sandy-affected households by offering support for costs related to: maintaining temporary housing while their primary residence is repaired/rebuilt; maintaining a primary residence for the household to return to when repairs and reconstruction are completed; and supporting housing expenses to those able to live in their Sandy-damaged home.

Specifically, the program provides assistance with current or past due rent or mortgage payments, current or past due utility payments and certain essential furniture and appliances.

Prior to providing services, all eligibility factors must be verified. The primary method of verifying identity/residency is a New Jersey Driver's License; however, other verifications may include:

- A state-issued photo ID;
- A mortgage statement;
- A lease agreement;
- A utility bill;

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- Birth certificate;
- An affidavit or statement regarding current living arrangements;
- Homeowner's Insurance documents; or
- Proof of FEMA registration (if applicable).

The social security number of the head of household is required. Individuals who submit misleading applications that constitute fraud can be excluded from the program and may be prosecuted.

For convenience, residents who were impacted by Superstorm Sandy can apply in *any* New Jersey county. The program is administered by DHS and distributed through county-designated agencies. The \$57 million program is funded by a federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG).

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