

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: DCA Opens Public Comment Period for Hurricane Ida Recovery Action Plan and Announces Two Public Hearings

08/17/2022

TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) today opened a 30-day period for people to provide public comment on the Hurricane Ida Recovery Action Plan, which details how the State proposes to utilize \$228,346,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to help households and communities recover from Hurricane Ida. The public comment period will run through September 16, 2022, and will include in-person public hearings in Manville and Newark, which were among the municipalities hardest hit by Hurricane Ida.

The plan was developed in consultation with residents, county and municipal officials, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders in New Jersey, as well as with input DCA received from thousands of people who completed the Hurricane Ida Registration Survey (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/reuswh/nrdit/rm8o5y___!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!O1gzQVZFIXEBAMxjYep5ZVSzv02wXnHvp28C7owVuKeZBMB5wy0wZAITpWP8ePkrcrlyO

The public comment period presents another opportunity to provide feedback on the Action Plan and the proposed use of funds. DCA will review and consider all comments received during the public comment period and incorporate responses to each comment into the Action Plan prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for review and approval. Comments could lead to changes in the way the State proposes to use the funds.

"The Hurricane Ida Action Plan being released today for public comment is part of my Administration's Ida Recovery Strategy, which builds on investments made earlier this year in residential property buyouts and home elevations to better protect families and communities from severe storms," said Governor Phil Murphy. "Considerable thought went into the Action Plan, particularly on ways to promote resiliency and ensure equitable access to recovery assistance. We encourage people to review the Action Plan and we look forward to hearing what they have to say about the plan."

"We recognize that, for some areas, recovery from the catastrophic flooding and tornadoes caused by Hurricane Ida will take years. We also understand that \$228 million is not nearly enough to address all the storm damage," said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who also serves as DCA Commissioner. "Our goal in developing the Action Plan was to address the highest-level needs in vulnerable communities with an eye to mitigation and resiliency. Unfortunately, these severe storms keep happening with more frequency and we must prepare and protect ourselves in this new reality."

The State proposes to allocate \$152 million to housing programs that help homeowners restore their storm-damaged homes; supplement rental housing costs for low-income rental families impacted by Hurricane Ida; provide zero interest forgivable loans to owners of rental properties that require rehabilitation as a result of storm damages; subsidize the development of resilient and affordable housing in lower flood risk areas; and buy out residential properties located in flood prone areas. An additional \$1 million is proposed to provide supportive services such as housing counseling and legal aid to renters and homeowners impacted by Hurricane Ida.

The State also proposes to allocate \$58 million to infrastructure programs that help impacted communities become more resilient to current and future natural hazards, protect publicly funded recovery investments in impacted communities, and fund the non-federal cost share for State and local facilities eligible under FEMA's Public Assistance program.

The State additionally proposes to allocate \$6 million to planning programs that develop a Statewide Housing Mitigation Strategy Tool to assess the housing stock in disaster-impacted and at-risk areas and that build on the existing efforts of Resilient NJ, a comprehensive climate resilience planning, guidance, and technical assistance program set up following Superstorm Sandy to support local and regional climate resilience planning.

Pursuant to HUD guidelines, at least 80 percent of the CDBG-DR funds must be spent in counties most impacted and distressed (MID) by Hurricane Ida, including Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, and Union. The remaining 20 percent of funds may be used in other Ida-impacted counties, including Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, and Warren. Under the guidelines, at least 70 percent of the total CDBG-DR funding must go toward projects that directly benefit low- and moderate-income residents or investments in infrastructure that serve a majority of these residents.

The proposed Hurricane Ida Action Plan may be obtained in English and Spanish at https://www.nj.gov/dca/ddrm/plansreports/index.shtml (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/reuswh/nrdit/7e9o5y___!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!O1gzQVZFIXEBAMxjYep5ZVSzv02wXnHvp28C7owVuKeZBMB5wy0wZAITpWP8ePkrcrlyO

The public hearings on the Action Plan will be held:

Thursday, September 8, 2022 (6:00pm – 8:00pm)
Manville High School
School Auditorium
1100 Brooks Boulevard
Manville, NJ 08835

Monday, September 12, 2022 (6:00pm – 8:00pm)
New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)
Campus Center Ballroom, Second Floor
150 Bleeker Street
Newark, NJ 07102

Aside from providing comment at the public hearings, people may also submit their comments through the DCA website (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/reuswh/nrdit/n79o5y___!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!O1gzQVZFIXEBAMxjYep5ZVSzv02wXnHvp28C7owVuKeZBMB5wy0wZAITpWP8ePkrcrlyO) (mailto:DisasterRecoveryandMitigation@dca.nj.gov) or by mail to the attention of Constituent Services, Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation, NJ Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, P.O. Box 823, Trenton, NJ 08625-0823. All comments must be received on or before 5:00 pm EST on September 16, 2022, to be considered.

DCA will submit the Action Plan to HUD no later than September 28, 2022, for review and approval.

In addition to disaster recovery and mitigation, DCA offers a wide range of programs and services, including local government management and finance, affordable housing production, rental assistance, fire safety, building safety, and community planning and development.

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