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## At Christie Administration Request, FEMA Now Providing Security Deposit Assistance for Residents Displaced by Superstorm Sandy

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

**Trenton, NJ** – At the Christie Administration's request to help transition Sandy-displaced residents from hotels and motels and into more permanent housing solutions as quickly as possible, the administration today announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is permitting households receiving FEMA rental assistance to use this funding to pay for security deposits. This will give displaced New Jerseyans, who are residing in a hotel or motel because they do not have money for a security deposit, the opportunity to move into a rental unit.

"I want to thank FEMA for revising its policy to allow more flexibility in how their rental assistance is used for New Jerseyans displaced by Superstorm Sandy," said Governor Chris Christie. "This change is enormously important because it assists low- to moderate-income families, who were hit hard by Sandy and cannot afford security deposits on their own, to move out of hotels and motels and into more stable housing units such as apartments and condominiums."

Households receiving FEMA rental assistance can utilize up to one month of their rental allotment for a security deposit and not have to give it back to FEMA at the end of the lease. In general, FEMA provides an initial grant of two months of rent money to households that have been displaced due to Hurricane Sandy, but all households that receive FEMA rental assistance may ask for additional funding if they need it. They will need to show their lease and all receipts for rent and security deposits. FEMA rent money cannot be used to pay for telephone or television service or utilities.

If households have already paid a security deposit with their own money, FEMA is unable to provide reimbursement. However, if further rental assistance is needed, people can show the security deposit receipt to FEMA to support their request for additional rent money. Security deposits paid with FEMA money can cover damage by people or pets, provided they are clearly identified on the lease.

"We recognize how vital it is to help displaced residents return their lives to normal as quickly as possible. Having a stable place in which to live is a key part of that process," said DCA Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III. "We don't want security deposits to be the hurdle preventing families from rebuilding their lives and we are pleased that FEMA agrees."

The State of New Jersey and FEMA have resources that can help locate available housing. The number of available housing units changes constantly as units are occupied and new listings are added. More than 2,000 rentals are listed on the New Jersey Housing Resource Center at [www.njhrc.gov](http://www.njhrc.gov) where people can select Temporary Housing Due to Hurricane Sandy from the menu of options. Households can also search by individual communities to find convenient housing. People can also find a place to rent at [www.fema.gov/housingportal](http://www.fema.gov/housingportal).

FEMA rental assistance amounts are based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Market Rent rate.

Superstorm Sandy survivors that previously told FEMA they did not need housing should stay in touch with FEMA as housing circumstances change. For questions about FEMA housing assistance, visit a disaster recovery center or call the FEMA helpline at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585) or 711/VRS.

New Jersey residents affected by Hurricane Sandy can still register for disaster assistance through FEMA until January 30, 2013." Residents with storm losses in all counties can register online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or via phone or smart tablet [here](#).

Survivors also can register by phone or 711/VRS by calling **800-621-3362, TTY800-462-7585**. The toll-free telephone numbers operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice.

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Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000