

Christie Administration Marks Mediation Progress For Sandy-Impacted Residents And Businesses

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Trenton, NJ – Continuing the Christie Administration’s efforts to help residents rebuild and restore their homes and businesses following Superstorm Sandy, New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner Ken Kobylowski today announced the most recent results of a mediation program designed to settle non-flood Sandy-related open claims. To date, 69 percent of the 414 claims mediated have resulted in some form of settlement, with more than half of them in Ocean and Monmouth Counties.

“We are pleased that the vast majority of cases handled by our mediation program have been settled,” said Commissioner Kobylowski. “We hope to see more individuals and businesses take advantage of this free, excellent program. It is of the utmost importance that we get these cases settled so those residents who still have not begun or have been delayed in rebuilding their properties can start the process. I urge all New Jersey residents who know someone with an unresolved homeowners or commercial insurance claim to tell them about this key Sandy rebuilding program.”

Before qualifying for many federal grant programs, New Jersey homeowners and businesses need to settle their insurance claims first. To date, more than \$2.7 million in additional settlements have gone to residents under the program with payments as high as \$325,000. To date, 286 cases have settled fully or partially.

Begun in May, the mediation program allows property owners to submit homeowner’s, automobile and commercial property claims to a mediator who will review the case and assist in settlement discussions. Disputed non-flood Sandy-related claims greater than \$1,000 that do not include a reasonable suspicion of fraud and are based on policies in force at the time Sandy made landfall are eligible for mediation. Insurance carriers pay for the cost of the mediator. Policyholders who wish to bring legal representation to the mediation session may hire an attorney at their own expense. Since May, the Department has received 648 requests for mediation. There are 150 cases either in progress or being scheduled.

New Jersey residents with unresolved non-flood insurance claims related to Superstorm Sandy can have their cases mediated through the American Arbitration Association (AAA). Application forms are available online at www.adr.org, by phone at 855-366-9774 or via email at njsandymediation@adr.org.

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