

Christie Administration Announces Launch Of Home Repair And Advocacy Program For Residents Affected By Superstorm Sandy

Program Will Assist Eligible Seniors And Individuals With Disabilities Impacted By Sandy

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration announced the launch of a new program to help seniors and individuals with disabilities whose primary homes were damaged by Superstorm Sandy. The Home Repair and Advocacy program, funded by an \$8.2 million federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), is administered by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) through Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). Eligible households could receive up to \$5,000.

“We know that many primary homeowners impacted by Superstorm Sandy are still struggling to recover, particularly as it relates to completing repairs and negotiating with insurance companies,” said DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez. “The recovery process can be even more problematic for seniors and people with disabilities who have fixed incomes and may not have the ability to fulfill or comply with onerous insurance claim requirements.”

The Home Repair and Advocacy program may include: replacement of interior wall boards, mold remediation, restoration of heating and cooling systems, fixing electrical, patching roofs, cutting and removal of trees, debris disposal, and refurbishing of major home appliances.

There also will be home repair coordinators in every county that will review, organize and approve the work with vendors, as necessary.

“What makes this program unique is that we have included an advocacy component to help people who qualify, every step of the way,” explained DHS Deputy Commissioner Lowell Arye. “We will give them the personalized advice and support they need to make their homes livable.”

The program is designed to assist households in the nine most impacted counties, but because many people were displaced by the storm, individuals statewide can apply. Funding was distributed to the 21 AAAs based on a formula that includes the county population of individuals age 60 and older, and the number of housing units with major to severe damage.

Individuals in need of assistance should call 1-877-222-3737 or apply at their local [AAA](#). The program is expected to begin repair work in the coming weeks and continue until funding is exhausted.

SSBG funding is crucial to preserving the social services safety net in the areas most impacted by Superstorm Sandy. In the months and years to come, these services will be essential to rebuilding and restoring residents' very basic needs in storm recovery.

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