

HURRICANE IRENE – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Intended for listserv members in the projected path of Hurricane Irene

August 26, 2011

As Hurricane Irene approaches, HUD wants to ensure our offices, customers and community partners are as informed and prepared as possible. Based on its current projected strength and path, Hurricane Irene could present a serious threat for several major metropolitan areas in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the country.

The [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA) website provides timely tracking information related to Hurricane Irene. In the event that Hurricane Irene makes landfall in the projected states, a Federal Disaster Declaration may be made. The [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA) website maintains the updated list of [2011 Federal Disaster Declarations](#).

The Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) will respond as quickly as possible to questions on disaster preparation, response and recovery. Additionally, technical assistance providers are available to assist CoCs impacted by Hurricane Irene.

To submit a question:

1. Go to the [Virtual Help Desk](#) on HUD HRE:
2. Program/system = Other Homeless Programs
3. Topic = Other Homeless Activities
4. Subtopic = CoC Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

To request technical assistance, click the “Request TA” tab on [HUD HRE](#)

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES:

[Ready.gov](#)

[FEMA](#)

[HUD Homelessness Resource Exchange](#) (HRE)

[Directory of Disaster Response and Recovery Resources](#)

[The National Health Care for the Homeless Council](#)

[Disaster Planning for People Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[Healing Hands: Disaster Planning Requires Time, Resources, Collaboration](#)

COMMON QUESTIONS RELATED TO COC PROGRAMS AND DISASTER RESPONSE:

Does HUD allow SHP-funded projects flexibility to make program design and budget changes to better serve homeless persons in areas impacted by a disaster?

Answer:

Changes are often necessary during the life of an SHP grant, particularly when the area served has been impacted by a disaster. Changes that are significant, such as project location, shifts in budget activities of more than 10 percent, the category or number of participants served, or the addition or deletion of SHP activities require amendments to the grant agreement. Following a disaster, a project may need to amend parts of the grant agreement so the grantee may accommodate those in need. For example, where a project location was damaged the grantee will need to find an alternative location and may need to move funds among budget activities on a temporary basis until the original project location can be repaired.

Field offices should anticipate grant amendment requests and should process these requests as quickly as possible. Keep in mind that some of these changes may only be temporary, and a new grant amendment will need to be processed once the project is ready to return to standard operations. During normal operations, field offices need approval from Headquarters before processing the request. However, during a federally declared disaster, field offices are permitted to expedite the processing of grant amendments related to disaster recovery. Please send a copy of the request and Field Office response to the assigned HUD Headquarters desk officer.

Please note significant changes approved by the field office must always fall within the scope of SHP statutory and regulatory requirements. For example, HUD will allow a budget amendment to allow costs currently allocated under supportive services to operating costs, though all costs paid with SHP funds must continue to be eligible under the program. Any requests to waive SHP regulations must be made as formal written requests and processed as a waiver.

Does HUD allow grantees to draw a greater percentage of their grant in anticipation of FEMA or other disaster funding?

Answer:

HUD may consider authorizing grantees to draw a disproportionate amount of program funds earlier in an operating year to help alleviate the immediate stress caused by the disaster. Grantees must be advised, however, that no additional funds will be awarded under SHP and their obligations to carry out the grant term will remain in place. Such requests shall be made in writing (e-mail is acceptable) by the grantee and should include why approval is needed and how the grantee will be able to sustain the project once SHP funds have been expended. Finally, although HUD may allow grantees to drawdown grant funds earlier in the operating year, grantees should not do so unless they expect to expend those funds within three days.