



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING



Evonne M. Klein
Commissioner

July 9, 2018

The Honorable Martin M. Looney
Senate President Pro Tempore
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Leonard A. Fasano
Senate Republican President Pro Tempore
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 3402
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Bob Duff
Senate Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Joe Aresimowicz
Speaker of the House
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 4105
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Matthew Ritter
House Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 4106
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Themis Klarides
House Minority Leader
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Ave., Room 4200
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: PUBLIC ACT 18-81: AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE STATE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 AND DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 — SECTION 19

Dear Legislative Leaders:

As you are aware, Section 19 of Public Act 18-81 *An Act Concerning Revisions to the State Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 and Deficiency Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2018* appropriated specific funds for the purpose of providing assistance to persons residing in Connecticut who were displaced by Hurricane Maria. Specifically, the Department of Housing received an appropriation of \$600,000 for Housing/Homeless Services for evacuees impacted by Hurricane Maria.

The Connecticut State Legislature has appropriated funding to assist these families, so I believe it is important to keep you informed as to the intended use of these funds.

Since the first evacuees arrived, the State of Connecticut, through a variety of state agencies, and its partners has been working diligently to provide a variety of services to these families, including the development of a detailed service guide; a centralized portal for accessing state services and obtaining referrals; case management services to assist in accessing both state and federal resources; and coordination with state and local service providers, including assistance in finding permanent housing solutions.

The State and its Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) partners have been working with more than 1,245 households who have come here, either with the intention to stay permanently, or to have a safe temporary place to live until their situation stabilizes in Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands. Specifically, our priority has been to assist the neediest families; those who resided in FEMA approved Connecticut hotels under the federal Temporary Financial Assistance (TSA) program. At one time, there were as many as 187 households staying in these hotels. Since mid-January, the Department of Housing, under the specific direction of the Governor, and with the assistance of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, has been providing assistance to families staying in these hotels who were suddenly faced with terminations of their TSA assistance from FEMA. This specific assistance has allowed those households to remain in hotels until they were matched with permanent housing solutions, or referred to the Coordinated Access Network. Our partners and the Disaster Case Managers have worked in conjunction with FEMA Immediate Disaster Case Managers, to address the needs of these households and households who did not receive FEMA assistance. On or before July of this year, we anticipate successfully assisting more than 150 of these households in either returning home, or finding a permanent place here in Connecticut. We are committed to continuing this assistance.

Through the State's Unified Command, under the State's Emergency Response Framework, there are weekly meetings between the state agencies (DSS, DOH, SDE, DESPP) and our VOAD partners to address individual disaster case management issues, ensure coordination and collaboration between all participating partners, and provide consistent and effective assistance to these households in need.

Through the fundraising efforts of the United Way and the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), private funding in excess of \$450,000 has been raised, and is being used to assist many of these households through "diversion" assistance. This diversion assistance is designed specifically to divert families from unnecessary referral and placement into the State's homeless services systems. It has included the purchase of furniture, transportation assistance, first month's rent, security/utility deposits, short term rental assistance (3 months or less), case management services (which are very different than disaster case management services), licensure assistance, job placements/referrals, educational opportunities, medical services and supplies, clothing, and a variety of specialized services designed to directly address individual household needs.

The flexibility to provide assistance to these households based on their specific needs has led to very successful outcomes for many of these hundreds of families. With these successes in mind, the Department will leverage the funds appropriated under Public Act 18-81 with these privately raised funds through the United Way and CCEH. Based on our success, maintaining the flexibility in the application of these funds through the wide variety of diversion assistance is the best way to both address the specific needs of our evacuees families, as well as to maximize the most effective and efficient use of these funds.

After an analysis of the unresolved or open cases that are currently being handled through the Disaster Case Managers, we anticipate the following need:

• First Month's Rent/Security Deposit	100 Households	\$250,000
• General Diversion Assistance	300-600 Households	\$300,000
• Case Management Services	6 months of service	\$ 50,000

These funds will be used as budgeted above. I will provide you with a quarterly report after we begin to draw down this funding. It is clear by your actions that you are committed to assist our fellow citizens from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Department of Housing will do so in a responsible, effective, and efficient manner.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 860-270-8037.

Sincerely,



Evonne M. Klein
Commissioner

- CC: The Honorable Kevin D. Witkos, Deputy Senate Republican President Pro Tempore
The Honorable Catherine A. Osten, Senate Democratic Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Paul M. Formica, Senate Republican Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee
The Honorable John W. Fonfara, Senate Democratic Co-Chair, Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee
The Honorable L. Scott Frantz, Senate Republican Co-Chair, Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee
The Honorable Vincent J. Candelora, House Deputy Republican Leader
The Honorable Toni E. Walker, House Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Jason Rojas, House Co-Chair, Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee
The Honorable Melissa H. Ziobron, House Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Christopher Davis, House Ranking Member, Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee