

Sandy recovery program helps homeowners pay rent

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A new Hurricane Sandy recovery program is available to assist displaced residents pay rent if they are rebuilding or elevating their properties with state grants.

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Rental Assistance Program provides short-term rental assistance in the form of a grant to homeowners participating in the Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) or the Low-to-Moderate Income Homeowners Rebuilding (LMI) Program.

SSBG Rental Assistance Program funds are available only to assist with rent going forward and may not be used as a reimbursement for previously paid or incurred rent, according to the state website.

The program, which is funded with a \$9.5 million federal grant, provides assistance on a first-come, first-served basis to qualified applicants, according to the website. Residents can receive as much as \$825 a month for up to three months through the program, which is designed to cover the cost of temporary housing, state officials said.

It's also possible to get a three-month extension if there is need and the funding is available.

Homeowners must sign a grant agreement through either the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation program or the Low-to-Moderate Income Homeowners Rebuilding program in order to qualify.

To qualify for the program, homeowners need their current mortgage and the lease for a rental property located in New Jersey. The program does not cover past rent.



Cumberland Sandy Recovery

Charlsworth House owner Jim Fonash (left) and volunteer Roy Duffield of Woodstown, mover the restaurant's piano back into it's place inside the restaurant. Volunteers from Inspira Health Network and the Cumberland County Long Term Recovery Group held a day of service to help those still recovering from Hurricane Sandy. The group was working at the Charlesworth House, a Fortescue landmark restaurant that is yet to reopen. Wednesday Oct. 29, 2014. (photo Dale Gerhard/Press of Atlantic City