

St. Johns County Community Development Block Grant — Disaster Recovery Outreach and Marketing Policies and Procedures

Revised May 20, 2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents..... 2

Version History..... 3

Version Policy 3

Policy Change Control 3

Introduction 4

CDBG-DR Overview 4

Target Communities and Populations 5

Community Outreach 5

Communications and Outreach Materials 7

Media 8

Media Relations 8

Conclusion 9

Appendix: Outreach Partners and Locations..... 11

VERSION HISTORY

St. Johns County CDBG-DR General Policies and Procedures

Version	Date	Page	Description
#1	01/23/2019	N/A	NA
#2	09/26/2019	Various	See Program and Policy Change Tracking Ledger
#3	05/20/2020	Various	See Program and Policy Change Tracking Ledger

VERSION POLICY

Version history is tracked in the table above, with notes regarding version changes. The date of each publication is also tracked in this table. The first version of this document is 1.0.

Substantive changes within this document that reflect a policy change will result in the issuance of a new version 2.0, an increase in the primary version number. Future policy changes will result in additional revision and issuance of a new primary version number.

Non-substantive changes within this document that do not affect the interpretation or applicability of the policy (such as minor editing or clarification of existing policy) will be included in minor version updates denoted by a sequential number increase after the primary version number. Such changes would result in a version number such as 2.1, 2.2, etc.

POLICY CHANGE CONTROL

Policy review and changes for the St. Johns County Outreach and Marketing Review Process are considered through a change control process. When policy clarifications, additions, or deletions are needed to more precisely define the rules by which the program will operate, program staff will discuss potential changes with Program and Policy Review Committee (“Review Committee”) for their review and consideration. Their consideration will include a determination as to whether the action is a policy or process issue. Actions identified as policy issues will require review and determination by the Review Committee. The issue will be discussed by the committee members at an internal committee meeting.

The Review Committee will take a decision to approve the change, deny the change, or defer action on the request. If the change is approved, the Review Committee will communicate its decision to the Program Manager. The Program Manager disseminates the new policy in a communication via email to all program staff and instructs the Compliance Specialist to reflect the change in the next revision to written policies and procedures. If the Review Committee decides to deny a change, no further action is taken. If a change is deferred, the Review Committee will request additional supporting information as necessary and place the item on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.

The Review Committee meets as needed, to consider all pending requests but may meet as frequently as necessary to consider critical policy decisions. The Review Committee will consist of the Housing Program Supervisor, CDBG-DR Grant Administrator (who will be the Vice Chair), and the CDBG-DR Project Specialist. The Review Committee will provide recommendations to the Chair (Disaster Recovery Director) for final approval. The Review Committee has authority to review and approve policy changes, render decisions on individual case appeals

INTRODUCTION

This Outreach Plan provides a roadmap on how St. Johns County will inform St. Johns County residents of the availability of Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to recover from Hurricane Matthew damage. The County's commitment to working with local community advocacy groups and neighborhood organizations is a natural extension of the commitment to ensuring residents have the opportunity to participate in the CDBG-DR program. The County will work together with these groups, and through direct community engagement, to disseminate CDBG-DR program information throughout the St. Johns County.

The Intake Center will be the central hub for citizens to obtain information about the assistance available to them through the CDBG-DR program. The Intake Center is located in the County's Health and Human Services building. The Health and Human Services building is the central hub for social services for St. Johns County and has access to public transportation.

CDBG-DR OVERVIEW

St Johns County has entered into a subrecipient agreement with the Florida DEO to administer disaster recovery programs launched in response to the destruction caused by Hurricane Matthew, which made landfall on or about October 7, 2016.

DEO is the grantee for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CDBG-DR funding. Pursuant to Public Laws 114-254 and 115-31, HUD allocated CDBG-DR funds to the State of Florida to be distributed in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-declared counties impacted by Hurricanes Hermine and Matthew for activities described in the State of Florida Action Plan for Disaster Recovery.

HUD appropriated \$45,837,520 in CDBG-DR funding on March 1, 2019, and an additional \$43,794,600 on September 27, 2019 for St. Johns County in response to Hurricane Matthew. The allocations were appropriated under HUD's Federal Register published on August 7, 2017 at 82, FR 38812; January 18, 2017, at 82 FR 5591; and Federal Register Notice published on November 21, 2016 at 81 FR 83254 (prior notice) that describes the allocation's applicable waivers, alternative requirement.

Under the subrecipient agreement between DEO and St Johns County, the County will use CDBG-DR funds to principally benefit Low to Moderate Income (LMI) persons in a manner that ensures that at least 70 percent of the grant amount is expended for activities that benefit such persons. Funds will be used for housing and infrastructure activities in the areas most impacted and distressed as a result of the storm.

TARGET COMMUNITIES AND POPULATIONS

CDBG-DR funded programs are intended to primarily benefit LMI persons as defined by HUD. The goals of this Outreach Plan are to maximize participation in CDBG-DR funded recovery programs and to ensure that LMI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals and families have access to the services they need to recover and fully participate in recovery programs.

Target Communities

All areas of St. Johns County impacted by the storms are targeted for assistance. Areas identified as remote or having limited public transportation will be provided access to satellite locations for assistance and will be served by mobile intake operations. These areas are discussed below under Mobile Intake Events.

Target Populations

Priority for funding is given to households who qualify as LMI as defined by HUD.

Limited English Proficiency

Census data indicate that St Johns County has a total LEP population of 4,938 (2.5%) out of 200,082 total population. Of the 4,938 LEP population, an estimated 2,545 speak Spanish as a primary language. No other language registers LEP estimates of more than 500 persons. Accordingly, materials will be made available in English and Spanish, with other translation services available upon request.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Training

The County or its outreach contractor will provide training regarding the relevant CDBG-DR programs and approved talking points to all contractor senior staff involved in management and supervision of outreach program.

Key Messages and Materials

The County will lead the messaging and provide approved talking points for CDBG-DR programs. Materials will be developed to support the outreach efforts, including posters, flyers, door hangers, fact sheets, paid advertisements, and social media.

Printed materials will be available in English and Spanish, consistent with the County's Language Access Plan, and the program will provide reasonable accommodations to requested printed material in other languages.

Based on approved talking points and materials, the County or its contractor will develop scripts to be used by outreach staff.

Partners

To notify LMI individuals throughout the affected County and LEP audiences identified in the LAP as quickly as possible, the County will leverage existing partnerships, including organizations that represent and interact with specific target populations. Examples include supportive housing and special needs providers, civil rights and consumer organizations, tenant and manufactured homeowner associations, municipal and County officials, senior citizens groups, and faith-based and cultural organizations. The County

will also seek to engage with statewide organizations that have chapters in the County and can reach residents through their own communications channels.

Outreach Strategies and Tactics

Outreach materials including funding availability notices and instructions for how to apply for funds will be distributed through the following channels.

- County recovery website www.sjcfll.us/restore will provide information on program offerings, eligibility, and how to access assistance.
- County local broadcasting station (GTV bulletin board) will carry advertisements of funding availability and deadlines for application.
- Email to the St. Johns County Continuum of Care (CoC) distribution list with information for dissemination to LMI and special needs communities.
- Social media (Facebook and Instagram) will be used to publish general program announcements.
- Outreach events at local libraries will make available printed materials and staff to answer general questions about the CDBG-DR program and accept applications.
- Tabling and leafletting at information booths at special events, local markets, and farmers markets will have printed materials and present staff will be able to answer general questions about the CDBG-DR program.
- Door campaigns, utility bill inserts, newspaper inserts, notices in post offices, libraries, tax collector offices, and posting material in public meeting spaces will disseminate program information broadly.
- Home visits will be available upon request for those with limited mobility.

The CDBG-DR program will partner with the library system and provide CDBG-DR printed material to be displayed throughout the different library branches.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Outreach activities will be monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis to ensure that LMI and LEP individuals are notified of the CDBG-DR programs available. The number of contacts made by program staff and partners within each segment of the targeted populations, including the geographic, demographic, and LEP constituencies, will be tracked. All Outreach projects will be tracked as well as presentations, tabling events, door-to-door outreach and other activities, the location of the activity, and any follow-up steps, including facilitating outreach in the appropriate language.

Timeline

Outreach and social media activities will begin immediately and continue throughout the program period. Outreach activities will be stepped up during peak periods – including program launches – and prior to application deadlines.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

The County, in collaboration with its outreach contractor, will develop materials in a variety of mediums to ensure that residents in the most impacted communities, including LMI and LEP communities, receive notification about all the CDBG-DR funded programs that are available to them and are prompted to apply. Materials will include:

- Printed materials (e.g., posters, flyers, fact sheets)
- Materials for online distribution (e.g., accessible versions of fact sheets and flyers)
- Print advertisements, including notices in publications that reach LEP communities
- Paid and public service announcements on broadcast and cable media
- Content for social media
- Press releases
- Other materials as appropriate

Community outreach and paid media will direct people who are still recovering from Hurricane Matthew to the www.sjcfi.us/restore website and Information Hotline (904) 209-1280. The Intake Center staff will direct people to information about programs for which they may be eligible to apply for financial assistance. The www.sjcfi.us/restore website meets federal standards for accessibility.

Text approved by the County will be adapted and translated. Spanish translations will be completed in-house by County translators; all other translation services will be handled by a single certified contractor. A glossary of terms has been developed to ensure that translations are culturally appropriate and consistent. Native speakers from the language bank or partner agency will be used for quality control for each language translation. The County will also collaborate with community-based organizations that have the skills, capability, and experience to address local language and cultural needs to ensure that communications and outreach materials are appropriate for the intended audiences.

Outreach and communications materials will be developed according to the following specifications:

- All outreach and communications materials will be translated into Spanish. Bilingual versions will be produced (i.e., information presented in English and Spanish) where possible and practical.
- Translated text will be culturally equivalent to ensure that the materials are appropriate for the intended audiences.
- Photographs and other images will be culturally appropriate for the intended audiences.

The County will provide input for customization and be responsible for distribution of materials through outreach in LMI and LEP communities. The County will also leverage

the social media channels of partner organizations to disseminate information approved by the County. Digital versions of approved materials will be saved in a cloud-based system for shared access by the County and its partners.

Content

Content for communications and outreach materials will be based on key messages approved by the County. As noted above, content will be customized as needed to ensure it is appropriate for the intended audiences in terms of culture, subject matter, and accessibility. All content will be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to production.

Text and images will be developed in accordance with County style guides, as applicable. Text will be straightforward, succinct, and consistent across all communications mediums. Emphasis will be placed on directing applicants to the www.sjcfi.us/restore website.

MEDIA

Print: The majority of the print budget will be dedicated to newspapers with the largest circulation in the affected areas and targeted LMI and LEP communities. However, strong focus also will be placed on smaller ethnic papers that reach specific LEP communities. Frequency of placements in print media will vary throughout the campaign. Brochures in English and Spanish have been printed and distributed around the County.

Cable: The County cable station GTV will run frequent public service announcements regarding funding availability, outreach events, and how to apply, at no cost to the County.

Radio: PSA launched once as Intake Center opened.

Online: Ads in online properties of major newspapers, including the St. Augustine Record (www.staugustine.com), as well as website publications that reach LEP communities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All media outreach will be closely tracked and monitored. Methodologies include:

- Evaluation of registrations by address using GIS
- Ask homeowner how they heard of program upon registration
- Recorded outreach efforts comparing to registrations via survey

MEDIA RELATIONS

SJC will supply information and updates to media outlets throughout the region about the CDBG-DR programs and FRM-funded rental units as they become available. At a minimum, SJC plans to issue press releases to provide notice of the following milestones:

- Launch of CDBG-DR programs
- Advance notice prior to closing of application periods for CDBG-DR programs

- Confirmation when application periods have closed
- Proposal/approval of significant amendments to the Action Plan that affect program structure or eligibility criteria.

The County advertised on March 1, 2020 the closing of the application period for housing assistance, notifying the community that registrations will be accepted through April 30, 2020. The deadline to register for the program was further extended to May 29, 2020, and publicly advertised through print and posting on the CDBG-DR website.

The County will work closely with media outlets throughout the area to ensure information is distributed as broadly as possible. Spokespeople will be available for phone interviews and appearances on English-language radio stations as well as radio stations that serve LEP communities in the impacted counties. Media events will be scheduled as time and circumstances permit.

Timing and Tracking

The media relations campaign will kick off upon launch of CDBG-DR programs. Monitoring of media relations will be conducted via tracking of mentions, placements, and impressions.

Timeline

January 7, 2019	Intake Center Grand Opening
January–February 2019	Post Launch Multimedia Campaign
January–February 2019	Booth Events
April–June 2019	Additional Media Surge
April, 2020	Additional Media Surge and Notification of Deadline
May 29, 2020	Deadline to Accept Registrations

CONCLUSION

This Outreach & Communications Plan supports the commitment of the State of Florida and St Johns County to connect LMI and LEP homeowners with disaster recovery programs and services related to Hurricane Matthew. The plan includes multiple strategies for notifying homeowners in the most impacted communities of the CDBG-DR programs and services that are available and prompting them to access those for which they are eligible. In execution of the strategies, significant resources will

be dedicated to ensure homeowners are notified in the language that they understand. Outcomes and effectiveness of the plan will be closely monitored by St. Johns County. Resources will be re-allocated and re-deployed as needed based on application trends, program deadlines, and other developments to ensure that all target audiences are informed.

APPENDIX: OUTREACH PARTNERS AND LOCATIONS

The following outreach partners and locations assist the County in promoting information about housing and community development programming on an ongoing basis.

St Johns County Outreach Partners – Housing and Homelessness

- Habitat for Humanity
- Emergency Services Coalition
- Alpha Omega Miracle Home
- St. Johns Welfare Federation DBA Bayview
- Council on Aging
- Early Learning Coalition
- Betty Griffin House
- Emergency Services Homeless Coalition
- St. Francis House
- St. Johns Housing Partnership

**Outreach Plan
Program and Policy Change Tracking Ledger**

Page # (subject to)	Section	Change in Detail	Policy Change Effective Date
1-9	All	Various formatting, grammatical, and spelling corrections not affecting the content or intent of the policy	9/26/2019
2	Version Policy	Added language on non-substantive changes to document to include minor editing or clarification of existing policy	9/26/2019
1-11	All	Various formatting, grammatical, and spelling corrections not affecting the content or intent of the policy	5/20/2020
4	Policy Change Control	Removed bi-weekly wording to clarify meetings of the Review Committee will be "as needed", and removed language on waiver request review.	5/20/2020
4	CDBG-DR Overview	Added additional funding awarded to St. Johns County in September, 2019	5/20/2020
7	Communications and Outreach Materials	Removed language on application deadlines, RROF, and FONSI notices as not relevant to this policy	5/20/2020
9	Media Relations	Added 05/29/2020 registration deadline and application closing period	5/20/2020