

NO LOSS OF BENEFITS FOR NEW JERSEY SENIORS RECEIVING DISASTER AID

TRENTON, N.J. — Seniors who suffered losses when hurricane Sandy pummeled New Jersey don't have to worry about being hit a second time if they receive disaster funds. FEMA disaster assistance is not counted as income, is not taxed, and has no effect on Social Security or other government benefits.

Federal Coordinating Officer, Michael J. Hall said, "When seniors get a check from FEMA, the Internal Revenue Service knows that it's to help them get back to where they were before the storm. It is not counted as income. Older adults won't have a penny of this assistance taxed or have any benefits cut."

Seniors and others who had disaster related losses may **apply for assistance** online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by web enabled mobile device at **m.fema.gov**. By phone or 711/VRS, call **800- 621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 800-462-7585**.

Seniors are encouraged to call and register. A FEMA specialist will explain the types of help available and walk callers through the registration process. They are knowledgeable about the process and can answer their questions in a language they feel comfortable speaking.

State Coordinating officer, Lt. Jeff Mottley said, "If seniors receive an SBA application form after registering with FEMA, it's very important for them to complete and return it. The application helps determine their eligibility for a wide range of disaster relief programs. It's not just for a loan."

New Jersey seniors affected by the storm can find out how to apply for an SBA loan by calling **800-659-2955** or by visiting www.sba.gov/disaster. For more information about other elder care issues, call the national referral service, Eldercare Locators, at **800-677-1116**.

SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.