

Sandy Recovery Money Available to Fill Vacant Apartments

If you have vacant units, one of the federally funded Superstorm Sandy recovery programs can provide you with a steady revenue stream for two years for an apartment leased at fair market value.

Launched by the Christie Administration to encourage property owners to fill their vacant apartments, the Landlord Incentive Program allocates \$40 million in grants to provide rental property owners with approximately the difference between 30 percent of the tenant's monthly income and the fair market rents each month during the two year period of the program administered by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

For example, a landlord in Monmouth County would receive the fair market rent for a two bedroom apartment at \$1,410 a month (about \$820 paid by tenant with an incentive of about \$590 paid by the State). Each individual incentive varies based on county, the property's number of bedrooms, and the tenant's income.

The fair market value varies in the nine Sandy-impacted counties. For a two-bedroom apartment, participating landlords would receive a total of \$1,173 a month in Atlantic; \$1,450 in Bergen; \$1,019 in Cape May; \$1,202 in Essex; \$1,322 in Hudson; \$1,420 in Middlesex; \$1,410 in Monmouth; \$1,410 in Ocean; and \$1,202 in Union.

Large multi-family property owners with hundreds of units and smaller landlords with only one empty apartment to rent are equally eligible.

The program offers landlords the unique opportunity to use the federal funding coming to our state to fill vacancies at their existing properties while helping to provide sufficient affordable housing to remove the pressures on the housing supply created by Superstorm Sandy.

This is a win-win program for landlords and tenants as the Christie Administration works to restore our communities following the unprecedented damage caused by the worst natural disaster in New Jersey history. DCA is projecting the program will provide safe, suitable and affordable housing for at least 1,000 families.

The program covers existing market rate units that are currently vacant or will become vacant within the next 90 days. Under the program, 75 percent of the funds will be allocated to units located in the nine Sandy-impacted counties. The remaining 25 percent of the funds can be utilized statewide.

Rental property owners who own existing, vacant market-rate units can apply by visiting the DCA's online grant management system at <https://njdcasage.state.nj.us/Portal.asp>. Prior to applying, all potential applicants must attend a mandatory technical assistance workshop about the program. The next workshop will be held at 10 a.m. on October 10th at the Middlesex County Fire Academy, 1001 Fire Academy Drive, Sayreville, NJ 08872, Classroom 2B. Landlords should RSVP by October 9th to Lisa Downes: lisa.downes@dca.state.nj.us.