

Reconstruction Begins for Vieques Health Facility

Release Date: November 15, 2023

FEMA awarded nearly \$43.5 million to rebuild the facilities as a result of Hurricane María

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico -- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Deanne Criswell participated today in the groundbreaking ceremony of what will be the new health facilities for the municipality of Vieques.

Vieques residents will soon begin to witness the reconstruction of the Susana Centeno Diagnostic and Treatment Center (CDT, in Spanish), for which the agency allocated nearly \$43.5 million to address damage caused by Hurricane María. This is the project with the largest amount of funds that the agency has awarded at a municipal level as part of Puerto Rico's recovery.

FEMA also allocated nearly \$4.2 million to the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDH) for the temporary medical facilities currently operating in Vieques until the permanent facilities are completed. This temporary center provides services from the PRDH. The funds allowed for the temporary relocation of the CDT, medical trailers for clinical exams, obstetrics-gynecology and dentistry services, an Odulair dialysis trailer and an emergency power generator for the facilities.

"We understand how important this healthcare facility is to every single resident of Vieques and we have worked closely with the Government of Puerto Rico to make sure residents have the facility they need and deserve. Today, we see the results of our partnership as we take this important step in the island's recovery. We remain committed to the people of Vieques and look forward to inaugurating the facility when it is complete," Administrator Criswell said.

For pastor and community leader Urayoán Silva Rivera, the health center is the most important resource that the Vieques community needs since it creates a greater sense of safety by not having to travel to the main island in the event of an emergency. He explained that, by 4 p.m., his family reduces activities that may



FEMA

Page 1 of 3

involve some type of risk or danger, “when in the park, on the bike, in the places we go to, because we know that there is no hospital at night.”

Silva Rivera also said that, once the infrastructure of the health center is in place, the third sector will be able to support with the coordination of medical personnel transfers to the municipality and with the provision of health clinics.

The new health center will employ 54 people, including 16 health professionals. The facilities will include pediatric and adult emergency rooms, as well as dialysis, laboratory and infusion services.

The new structure will comply with current design codes and regulations for medical facilities and will be built to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building certification.

Six years after Hurricane María, Puerto Rico has over \$31.3 billion in FEMA allocations for nearly 10,900 projects that will help move recovery forward. Of these, 21 projects are aimed at the recovery of the municipality of Vieques, for a total of over \$62.2 million.

For more information about Puerto Rico’s recovery, visit fema.gov/disaster/4339, fema.gov/disaster/4473 and recovery.pr. Follow us on our social media at Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico, Facebook.com/COR3pr and X [@COR3pr](https://twitter.com/COR3pr).

Vieques Health Facility Groundbreaking Ceremony, Vieques, Puerto Rico



FEMA



VIEQUES, Puerto Rico (November 15, 2023) – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Deanne Criswell, along with the governor of Puerto Rico Pedro Pierluisi, participated today in the groundbreaking ceremony of what will be the new health center for the municipality of Vieques. Photo FEMA/Eliezer Hernández

