

FEMA Awards St. Vincent's Medical Center Riverside \$8.35 Million for Wind Protection, Flood Control

Release Date: Me 5, 2021

ORLANDO, Fla. – FEMA has approved a grant of **\$8,357,001** for St. Vincent's Medical Center Riverside in Jacksonville to install windows and doors that can withstand 142 mile-per-hour winds and other critical protections against rushing floodwaters during a storm.

Funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) was approved in response to a proposal by the City of Jacksonville after Hurricane Irma in 2017. The grant covers installation of impact-resistant windows and doors, wind protection for openings such as vents and exhaust fans, and installation of flood panels at critical doors and vents. The roof and exterior walls of the building will also be strengthened.

The funding will add 1,900 linear feet of vertical flood barrier to the St. Johns River seawall to provide additional protection around the hospital property and a stormwater pumping system to reduce localized flooding.

The HMGP is an important source of federal disaster assistance. Program funding may become available after the president declares a major disaster, with a goal of strengthening communities by improving buildings and critical infrastructure. A 2018 report by the National Institute of Building Sciences found that one dollar spent on hazard mitigation saves more than six dollars of recovery and rebuilding costs.

Generally, the HMGP may provide a state, tribe or territory with additional grants up to 15 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA for a federally declared disaster. States such as Florida that meet advanced mitigation planning criteria may qualify for a higher percentage.



Florida has a FEMA-approved Enhanced Mitigation Plan, making the state eligible for HMGP funding not to exceed 20 percent of the estimated total amount of grant money spent by FEMA in the Hurricane Irma disaster. From this amount, the HMGP reimburses the state up to 75 percent of eligible costs for hazard mitigation projects. The remaining amount comes from other sources such as state and local assets and a combination of cash and in-kind sources.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

