

Hurricane Fiona Two Months Later

Release Date: Novanm 22, 2022

San Juan, Puerto Rico — It has been just over two months since Hurricane Fiona impacted individuals and communities across Puerto Rico. The heavy rains and strong winds damaged homes, businesses and critical infrastructure. Nevertheless, FEMA, the Government of Puerto Rico and other federal and local partners swiftly came together to support the island's recovery.

FEMA Individual Assistance & SBA Numbers

- FEMA has provided nearly **\$574M** in individual assistance to help the recovery efforts of more than **712,000 Puerto Rico households**. *(as of Nov. 20)*
- The U.S. Small Business Administration has also approved nearly **\$21M** in low-interest loans for homeowners and businesses. *(as of Nov. 20)*

FEMA Public Assistance Numbers

- The agency has already received **292 requests for Public Assistance** and identified **262 that are eligible**.
- **The first project under Public Assistance**, a category Z project for the recipient, was obligated on October 28, for a total award amount of **\$5.8M**.

Disaster Recovery Centers

- We opened **43 temporary Disaster Recovery Centers** across the island in locations to serve survivors with the greatest support needs. Currently, **15** remain open.
- DRC staff have provided in-person support to survivors during more than **156,800 visits**; in addition, hazard mitigation specialist have counseled over **61,800 Puerto Rico residents** on resilient repair and rebuilding techniques.
 - Once there is less of a need for in-person services FEMA works with the Government of Puerto Rico to close these temporary centers.

Disaster Survivor Assistance Crews



- Recovery centers are just *one of the many ways* FEMA is supporting Puerto Rico survivors. More than **100 Disaster Survivor Assistance staff** have canvassed the hardest hit areas to ensure all survivors get the help they need, and FEMA specialists routinely call applicants if additional information is needed from them.
 - DSA crews have interacted with **more than 39,200 survivors**, resulting in **over 6,400 registered survivors** and **13,200 others** receiving **case updates** and **whole community referrals**.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

- Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available to eligible survivors. DUA is a part of the federal disaster assistance process but is administered by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources. More than **\$2.1M** has been awarded, to-date. Claims must be filed by **Nov. 30**, Visit www.trabajo.pr.gov for more information.

Disaster Legal Services

- Disaster Legal Services (DLS) is also available. Survivors can receive free legal assistance for certain disaster-related issues. This service is provided by the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association and Servicios Legales de Puerto Rico, in collaboration with FEMA, by calling the toll-free legal aid hotline at **1-800-981-5342, Monday to Friday (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.)**. Survivors can also contact them by email at info@ayudalegalpr.org.

Ensuring Equitable Accessible Communications in Puerto Rico

- As of Nov. 2022, FEMA has 1,063 FEMA staff supporting the Fiona response: approximately 626 are residents of Puerto Rico and 62 percent are Spanish speakers.
- Puerto Rico based FEMA employees were transitioned to support Hurricane Fiona initial response.
- FEMA has ensured the deaf and hard of hearing community has equal access by creating a reasonable accommodation process and providing in-person and virtual Puerto Rico Sign Language (PRSL) interpreters services.
- Language interpretation services have been provided to assist survivors.



- FEMA is also **hiring even more Puerto Rico residents** to assist with disaster response and recovery efforts as temporary employees. More than **200 positions** were posted at [USAJOBS.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov), and are already being filled.

Although the federal government cannot make you whole, it is part of the solution. Many entities are involved including local and state agencies, nonprofits, voluntary and faith-based organizations, and the private sector to assist in survivor recovery. Visit fema.gov/disaster/4671 to learn more about Puerto Rico's recovery after Hurricane Fiona.

