

FEMA Obligates Nearly \$5.4 Million for Repairs to ASSMCA Facilities

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This obligation includes 50 projects for emergency work and permanent work

GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico – FEMA has obligated nearly **\$5.4 million** in funds for emergency measures and permanent work projects to repair hospitals and healthcare facilities managed by the Puerto Rico Administration of Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services, known as ASSMCA, by its Spanish acronym.

Among the 50 approved projects, **\$2.4 million** has been assigned for eight architectural and engineering design costs projects in multiple buildings owned by the entity. These funds are the cornerstone to resilient building, since they incorporate key services in order to build stronger structures; and not simply return facilities to their pre-disaster conditions.

“Concerns about the recent earthquakes, together with the health situation in the country, has highlighted the importance of services focused on mental health. These funds will allow permanent improvements to be made to the facilities where citizens receive the services they need as part of their recovery,” said Alex Amparo, Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The thousands of residents that turn to ASSMCA’s PAS Helpline for crisis counseling and referrals related to their emotional health will benefit from these grants, given that the buildings where the call center is located are among the obligated projects. Both the organization’s headquarters in Bayamón and the General Psychiatry Hospital in Río Piedras are in the process of contracting architectural and engineering firms to evaluate and develop the necessary blueprints after receiving approvals of over **\$193,000** and **\$674,000**, respectively.

“When a major event occurs, it is of the greatest importance to be able to rely on mental and emotional support services because they are essential tools for a better recovery of our citizens. To the extent that the infrastructure of these kinds



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of services are upgraded and built stronger, it will provide a safer place to provide services in future disasters. Recovery is diverse and overarching, all areas are critical in building a stronger Puerto Rico with the collaboration of every sector,” said the Executive Director of the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency, Ottmar Chavez Piñero.

In addition, over **\$151,000** was approved for the Transitional Treatment Center and Methadone Clinic located in José de Diego Avenue in Cayey and an additional **\$280,000** for the Forensic Psychiatry Hospital in Barrio Machuelo in Ponce. Both facilities provide a broad range of services to the community, such as prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services for citizens dealing with mental health conditions, addiction disorders or substance dependence.

“Without a doubt, the funds awarded by FEMA provide an opportunity to continue improving our service centers facilities, specifically the infrastructure, that were damaged by Hurricane María. At the same time, this will allow us to move forward even more in the planning we’ve put in place to improve the access and delivery of quality services in an appropriate, convenient and decent environment,” said ASSMCA Administrator, Suzanne Roig Fuentes.

As part of their efforts throughout their 27-year history, ASSMCA has aimed to ensure the delivery of comprehensive mental health services pursuant to their vision of achieving a more mentally healthy and resilient society.

As social distancing measures are being taken in the island, ASSMCA put in place an action plan that includes emotional support, crisis counseling and intervention for patients, families and first responders. If you need emotional support and want to speak with an ASSMCA representative, contact Línea PAS by dialing **800-981-0023**.

For more information on Puerto Rico’s recovery after Hurricane María, visit fema.gov/disaster/4339.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at **800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS** - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call **800-462-7585**.

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