

New Jersey Superstorm Sandy Recovery

Maximizing CDBG-DR Funds for Community Rebuilding



Photograph by Mike Groll, API

Among the ways ICF helped New Jersey's Department of Community Affairs (DCA) implement the state's \$4.1 billion Superstorm Sandy Disaster Recovery Program include:

- Provided subject matter expertise on CDBG-DR; the Stafford Act; FEMA programs; construction, housing, economic development, infrastructure, and environmental reviews; HUD Section 3 Program; the Davis Bacon Act; relocation; language access plans; and other cross-cutting federal requirements.
- Set up more than 130 staff to augment DCA staff at headquarters and nine Housing Recovery Centers to help expand capacity quickly.
- Set up critical storm recovery departments such as finance, compliance, procurement, and communication with the ultimate goal of transferring knowledge and responsibility to DCA staff.
- Designed and conducted more than 150 distinct training sessions with a total of 3,100 attendees, including New Jersey state staff members and other stakeholders, in 18 months.

Need

When Superstorm Sandy hit in October 2012, New Jersey's state and local governments were faced with the monumental task of responding to the immediate, critical needs of citizens while establishing a comprehensive, long-term recovery process.

In March 2013, the federal government allocated funding for Sandy recovery, but assigning these resources as quickly and effectively as possible required expert guidance in the management of Community Disaster Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds. New Jersey needed to know how to:

- best use the resources available to balance competing priorities with speed
- stand up the functions and programs required for recovery
- remain compliant with Federal regulations and reporting requirements

The cost of non-compliance would compound an already dire situation and add to the risk that the State would not be able to fund important recovery efforts for its communities.

Solution

Managing funding to the satisfaction of federal requirements was fundamental to New Jersey's ability to meet the needs of Sandy-impacted residents and communities. While a primary concern was housing, more than 20 programs were ultimately established across all sectors to promote recovery, resumption of business, long-term sustainability, and improved resilience.

Contact

ICF Disaster Recovery and Community Rebuilding

Learn how ICF can help your state rebuild after a natural disaster.

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ICF's 25-years of work with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gave them the experience and expertise to help New Jersey staff navigate the CDBG-DR and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements. After an initial advisory role, ICF's responsibilities were expanded to provide a full suite of end-to-end services.

Benefit

Recovering and rebuilding strong communities following the unprecedented damage of Superstorm Sandy required New Jersey state officials to work through the highly complex, natural disaster aftermath efficiently and effectively. Expert policy knowledge and in-depth understanding of the regulatory context in which disaster recovery programs are implemented ensured CDBG-DR funding was deployed where it was most needed and helped maximize the use of CDBG-DR funds for matching.

Beyond its role in helping manage through the crisis at hand, ICF's work was driven by the goal of transferring knowledge to state and local resources and building capacity for ongoing and subsequent disaster recovery work. With groundwork laid by proven experts, New Jersey state officials were well-positioned to reassure citizens and focus on rebuilding.



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