

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, HUD SECRETARY DONOVAN AND REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY GROUPS
ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF NYC HOUSING RECOVERY TO HELP VICTIMS OF HURRICANE SANDY
MOVE INTO HOUSING**

*Apartments in Privately-Owned Buildings Being Made Available to Households Displaced by
Hurricane Sandy*

http://www.nyc.gov/portal/site/nycgov/menuitem.c0935b9a57bb4ef3daf2f1c701c789a0/index.jsp?pageID=mayor_press_release&catID=1194&doc_name=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nyc.gov%2Fhtml%2Fom%2Fhtml%2F2012b%2Fpr460-12.html&cc=unused1978&rc=1194&ndi=1

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Mathew M. Wambua, and Director of Housing Recovery Operations Brad Gair today announced NYC Housing Recovery, a City initiative to make a pool of vacant apartments available exclusively for New Yorkers that have been displaced from their homes because of Hurricane Sandy. Displaced households will be able to register with the City for assistance in finding short or long-term housing through this new program. Leaders of the City's major real estate trade organizations including Rent Stabilization Association President Joseph Strasburg, the New York State Association for Affordable Housing President Donald Capoccia, and the Real Estate Board of New York President Steven Spinola, have worked to mobilize their memberships to help set aside thousands of apartments over the coming months for lease to storm victims.

"Thousands of New Yorkers can't live in their homes, either due to severe structural damage, or a lack of heat and electricity," said Mayor Bloomberg. "As we work to repair those damaged homes as quickly as possible, we are also working to connect people to housing options that fit their individual needs. This program will help New Yorkers who need a safe, warm place to stay, especially as the cold weather sets in."

"This initiative is an important step to ensuring that those who lost or were displaced from their homes have all available resources to locate new housing," said HUD Secretary Donovan. "It is imperative that we continue to work across federal, state and local lines combining government and private initiatives to ensure that families can find a safe, stable place to rebuild their lives."

"This program will be immensely helpful and a lifeline to New Yorkers who are desperate for housing. In 2011, when I proposed the creation of an online housing application, many benefits to an online system were noted," said Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "I am thrilled that this system will now help even more New Yorkers and serve as a tool in aiding Hurricane Sandy victims. I would like to thank NYSAFAH, RSA, and REBNY for working with their members to set aside thousands of invaluable housing units."

As a result of Hurricane Sandy, many New Yorkers across the city are unable to stay in or return to their homes and need to find stable short-term or long-term housing solutions. New Yorkers who have been displaced by the storm can create an account on the NYC Housing Recovery online portal to learn about housing options and find guidance on how to pursue housing opportunities on their own, or with help from the City with the aim of signing rental leases with the property owners and landlords.

"The need for shelter is something we all understand, and helping to provide relief to those most in need has been the imperative for all involved in this effort. In a city with extremely low vacancy rates, finding housing after losing your home or apartment can seem overwhelming. By pooling available apartments and providing guidance, and with the invaluable cooperation of our partners in the real estate industry, our hope is that we're taking some of the hardship out of the search," said HPD Commissioner Wambua. "Finding interim housing is a much needed step towards regaining stability and beginning the recovery process."

"We're making quick progress in getting displaced New Yorkers back in their homes through NYC Rapid Repairs," said Housing Recovery Operations Director Gair. "But for people whose homes need more than a quick fix, tapping into the vacant apartment stock is a great solution. Our partners in government and the private sector have been instrumental in getting these initiatives up and running."

People should first register online with FEMA or by calling 1-800-621-3362 to receive a FEMA registration number and a determination letter, or e-mail stating that they are eligible for FEMA's rental assistance because they cannot return to their homes. Depending on location and the type of apartment chosen for relocation, FEMA's rental assistance may help offset the cost of rent at the new apartment. If a household did not qualify through FEMA, but are not able to stay in or return to their home due to the storm, they may still register at NYC Housing Recovery, though housing options may be more limited.

Once registered with FEMA, New Yorkers can go to www.nyc.gov to find out more about NYC Housing Recovery and where they can register with the City on the portal and learn about the housing opportunities. Registering with the City will allow displaced New Yorkers to be kept informed of any additional housing options should they become available. After completing a profile, they will be presented with two options:

- People who want help finding an apartment or need help because of income limitations or disability status will be able to continue the NYC Housing Recovery portal registration process by providing additional information. Once completed, a representative from the City will contact the applicant and help match them with one of the approximately 2,500 available apartments which include income-restricted and market rate units.
- People who wish to find available housing on their own can do so through Urban Edge's Sandy Disaster Recovery page, or through FEMA's housing portal. Urban Edge has listings of available market-rate apartments, separate from the 2,500 units available through the City-assisted option, that have been pooled by the real estate industry for storm victims. Both sites allow people to control the search themselves, make direct connections with managing agents, and negotiate the lease.

The NYC Housing Recovery portal has been launched in its beta version in an effort to begin to address the housing emergency and connect people to available units as quickly as possible. The City will assess the system in real time as it is being used, and will address any issues as they arise.

If the internet isn't an option, people can call 311 to be directed to storm housing representatives who are available from 8am – 8pm, seven days a week. These representatives will register people over the phone and help guide them through the process. People may also go to any of the City's Restoration Centers where representatives will be on hand to assist with the registration process.

"NYSFAH is proud to be a part of New York City's initiative to secure housing for displaced victims of Hurricane Sandy," said Alison Badgett, Executive Director of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing. "Our members are eager to help in housing the many low- and moderate-income families who were impacted by the storm. With hundreds of units dedicated to this effort, New York's affordable housing industry is working with HPD to provide individuals and families the security and comfort of a home when they need it most."

"Hurricane Sandy left many New Yorkers without a roof over their heads or a safe place to call home. As the largest real estate industry trade organization in New York, the RSA has made it our mission to understand and respond to the needs of our City's tenants," said Joseph Strasburg, president of the Rent Stabilization Association. "In this time of crisis those needs are paramount, and we are proud to be a key partner in this effort to provide relief and shelter to victims of the storm. Working with our partners in government, RSA members have answered the call to lend a hand to our fellow New Yorkers by making hundreds of apartments available."

"Hurricane Sandy had a devastating impact on several of the City's neighborhoods. Since then, New York's real estate industry has worked tirelessly to get the properties damaged by the storm operational as soon as

possible for our commercial and residential tenants so that people could get back to work or to their homes," said Steven Spinola, president of the Real Estate Board of New York. "At the same time, we have been working with our government agencies to identify unoccupied residential units and to make them available to aid displaced New Yorkers. Like all New Yorkers, we will continue to do whatever we can to help those in need."

NYC Housing Recovery was created by the City after a meeting organized by HUD Secretary Donovan that gathered local government officials and real estate trade groups in the immediate aftermath of the storm. Following the meeting, government and real estate industry officials worked to identify and work through the complex issues and barriers that restricted landlords from offering their apartments to storm victims as interim housing, allowing the real estate industry to collectively identify the available apartments.

Apartments made available through the NYC Housing Recovery portal may be available for short- or long-term lease, are located in all five boroughs, and may be either market-rate or income-restricted. The term of the lease and type of housing will depend on a household's specific needs. There may or may not be fees associated with executing the lease, at the discretion of the owner, manager or realtor. The supply of this housing is limited; every effort will be made to accommodate people on a first-come first-served basis. The supply of apartments will continue to change, and the City will update households that have registered on the NYC Housing Recovery portal about additional housing options.

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