



United States Department of Agriculture  
Rural Development

## **ATTENTION: PERSONS DISPLACED BY DISASTER**

### **Housing Available Through USDA Rural Development**

USDA Rural Development's *Multi-Family Housing Program (MFH)* provides clean and safe housing located in rural areas. Individuals/families displaced by Hurricane Michael are eligible to be placed in available housing.

As an individual/family made homeless by this disaster, you may apply for occupancy as a "DISPLACED TENANT" and receive priority admission to any apartment complex financed by USDA. You will be placed on a special priority list to be offered a vacant apartment.

For residents already receiving USDA rental assistance (RA) in apartments made uninhabitable by the hurricane, the Agency can allow the transfer of the RA to another eligible apartment complex under some conditions.

Attached is a listing of USDA *MFH* apartment complexes located in Florida. Many of these complexes have vacant apartments available for immediate occupancy. Please feel free to contact any of the complexes listed to inquire about available apartments.

USDA Rural Development is committed to providing suitable housing for persons displaced by the hurricane. Please do not hesitate to contact any of the apartment complexes on the attached list or contact the USDA Rural Development offices listed below.

USDA Rural Development  
3070 Adora Teal Way  
Crestview, Florida 32539  
(850) 682-2416 (Ext. 3378)  
Bryan.Hooper2@fl.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development  
2741 Pennsylvania Ave, Suite 5  
Marianna, Florida 32448  
(850) 526-2610 (Ext. 6461)  
Mike.Ubias@fl.usda.gov

**The health and safety of displaced rural Florida residents is  
USDA's utmost concern!**

# **USDA RENTAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

## **BACKGROUND:**

USDA Rural Development (RD) will help in providing rental housing in rural areas and support assistance to those individuals/families affected by the recent hurricane.

## **ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS:**

- A. Tenants or homeowners whose property is financed by USDA Rural Development
- B. Other affected tenants or homeowners
- C. Anyone else who needs housing

## **HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:**

For Presidentially-declared disasters, the following waivers are available for MFH housing. In addition, regardless of whether the disaster is presidentially-declared, the agency may offer LOPE letters to any victim of a disaster. The person does not need to be a resident of an RD financed property. The LOPE letter is good only at a property financed by RD.

RD does not "place" people in RD properties because we do not own these properties. Therefore, it remains up to the owner to qualify and otherwise screen applicants who may be victims that are sent their way, in accordance with approved tenant selection policies.

The agency does not have Rental Assistance available for disaster victims, and the RD Voucher program cannot be used for these purposes.

The waivers are listed in HB-2-3560, Chapter 9, Section 6 and include the following:

1. Applicants may receive a Letter of Priority Entitlement (LOPE) issued by USDA Rural Development or may provide the property owners with documentation of being registered with the FEMA in lieu of a LOPE letter.
2. If an applicant does rent in a Rural Development-financed property, the FEMA registration number must be entered into Multi-Family Information System (MFIS). Within 90 days, field staff will need to conduct a random sampling of tenant files to assure that the FEMA data was input into MFIS correctly. (see the HB for further guidance)
3. Allow for imputed income from assets due to homeownership affected by the disaster.
4. Zero income applicants will be allowed to reside in apartment units; rental assistance, if available at the property, will be made available to the applicant;
5. Collection of security deposits per 7 CFR 3560.204 may be waived, if requested by the owner of the property.
6. Owners of elderly-designated properties may rent to age-ineligible applicants for 6 months from the date of the State Director decision.
7. The annual lease required per 7 CFR 3560.156 (b)(2) is waived and leases may be issued on a month-to-month basis.

For property owners affected by the disaster, a moratorium could be granted for up to six months. Please see HB2, Chapter 9, Section 6 for more information.