

# FEMA Allocates Nearly \$18.4 Million to Repair the Roberto Clemente Stadium

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GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved an obligation of approximately **\$18.4 million** to the Roberto Clemente Walker Stadium. These federal funds are earmarked for permanent repairs to this sports facility managed by the Municipality of Carolina.

Aside from its sociocultural importance, the home of professional baseball's Carolina Giants team plays a very important role in Carolina's economy. The stadium, named in honor of one of the glories of Puerto Rican baseball and built in 2001, has hosted important events such as two Caribbean Series (2003 and 2007), which generated an economic impact of over \$2 million. They also hold the Little League Preparatory Tournament (with more than 100 teams) and carry out social work with Mano Amiga Gigante to receive and distribute donations for disasters. In addition, mass vaccinations and now COVID-19 tests have been carried out at the stadium.

"We recognize that sports are a fundamental tool to provide quality of life to our communities. We are pleased to contribute by allocating funds for the improvement of facilities such as this iconic stadium, in support of the sporting spirit of our people. This also contributes to help Puerto Rico host local and international events in different sports disciplines," said the said the Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico, José G. Baquero.

Repairing the stadium represents a great economic impact for local merchants and suppliers, as well as for the municipality, restaurants and surrounding businesses. It also impacts other industries such as transportation, hotels, logistics and event coordination.

"Seeing this stadium after the hurricane, all of it flooded, the artificial turf that we had just installed and had not yet used, and seeing the massive damage and destruction it suffered, was a shock of sadness for us. However, thanks to the help of FEMA and the money we have received, we are already over 90 percent of the



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total restoration of this iconic structure,” said Carolina’s mayor, José Aponte Dalmau.

For Aponte Dalmau, this stadium not only represents and distinguishes Carolina, but the entire island for bearing the name of Roberto Clemente, who’s legacy is an example of love for the service of others. “He gave his life in the best moment of his career to help others. And the stadium not only bears his name, I believe it also bears his soul. His soul as a humanist, his soul as a sportsman, his soul as a Carolinian,” said the municipal executive.

The repair work at the stadium includes the removal and replacement of seats, lighting, fences and safety nets, the scoreboard, the electrical system, the transformer, the clay areas at the baseball field, the stair railings, and the wooden benches. Of the funds allocated, close to **\$1.2 million** is earmarked for hazard mitigation to prevent future damage, such as installing tempered glass and reinforcing the geotextile pavement, among others.

Roberto Clemente, born in the San Antón neighborhood in Carolina, was the first Latin American player to reach 3,000 hits. He also starred in the 1971 World Series, won 12 Gold Gloves, and in 1973 became the first Latino to be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

For the executive director of the Puerto Rico Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resilience (COR3), Eng. Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, this obligation will help rescue this significant sports facility and will allow families to enjoy sports in a much safer space. “Our commitment is to support the Municipality of Carolina in the process of rebuilding this important sports center,” said Laboy.

For more information on Puerto Rico’s recovery from Hurricane María, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://fema.gov/disaster/4339) and [recuperacion.pr](https://recuperacion.pr). Follow us on our social networks at [Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico](https://Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico), [Facebook.com/COR3pr](https://Facebook.com/COR3pr) and [Twitter @COR3pr](https://Twitter.com/COR3pr).





**CAROLINA, Puerto Rico** (March 26, 2021) –FEMA approved an obligation of approximately **\$18.4** million to the Roberto Clemente Stadium for permanent repairs to this sports facility managed by the Municipality of Carolina. Photo FEMA/Eduardo Martínez





**CAROLINA, Puerto Rico** (March 26, 2021) – The Roberto Clemente Stadium, named in honor of one of the glories of Puerto Rican baseball and built in 2001, has hosted important events such as the Caribbean Series in 2003 and 2007. Photo FEMA/Eduardo Martínez