

FEMA Reaches 8,000 Project Obligations Related to Hurricane María

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This represents an injection of over \$2.4 billion to the municipal governments

GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico— The Federal Emergency Management Agency announces/marks another milestone in Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane María, reaching over 8,000 projects approved for nearly \$25.6 billion in federal funds.

The total projects with funds allocated so far ranges from debris removal and emergency protection measures granted at the beginning of the recovery, to permanent work and administrative expenses for municipalities and government agencies. The allocations also cover projects for nonprofit organizations.

“At FEMA, our commitment to the rebuilding and recovery of Puerto Rico is seen every time we allocate funds for a project, with every stone that is laid to reconstruct a building and with every road that is now safer and stronger. These awards cover all categories of permanent work, such as education, health, historic buildings, roads and bridges, sports and recreational facilities, among others,” said Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico José G. Baquero.

One of the nonprofit organizations with approved funding of more than \$300,000 is the Ruth Home (*Hogar Ruth*), a shelter that has been providing services to survivors of domestic violence since 1984.

“During 2020 a total of 6,575 participants received our services. One of the most difficult challenges for any nonprofit organization is to be able to access funds that allow for reconstruction. Without access to these funds, it would have been impossible to return to the normalcy required after what we went through,” said Lisdell Flores Barger, the shelter’s executive director.

On the other hand, the allocations cover close to \$56 million for 54 projects of the Department of Health.



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Similarly, in terms of bridge and road repairs, nearly \$1.2 billion has been approved to strengthen the transportation infrastructure throughout Puerto Rico. The funds for hazard mitigation measures are intended to strengthen this sector - one of the most affected by the hurricane - and thus allow for efficient evacuation and delivery of supplies during future disasters.

In addition, funds have been approved to bring back the luster to municipal and community recreational facilities around the island. In this classification are some \$18.4 million allocated for permanent repairs already completed at the renowned Roberto Clemente Walker Stadium in Carolina. This sports venue, which has been the scene of important international competitions, also fulfills a social function by serving as a center for receiving and distributing donations for disasters. Mass vaccinations and now COVID-19 tests have also been carried out there.

Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, executive director of the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency (COR3), said that most of the subrecipients are now conducting the initial bidding processes to complete reconstruction projects. "To advance this work, we have announced changes in our reimbursement policy, as well as other initiatives that promote the development of the works. To date, over \$4.7 billion has been disbursed for projects completed under the emergency and permanent works categories. We will continue to work as a team to expedite the reconstruction processes for the benefit of our people, in compliance with the public policy of Governor Pedro R. Pierluisi," Laboy Rivera added.

FEMA obligates project funds to applicants through COR3. In order for applicants to receive the money awarded, they must submit the required documentation to ensure compliance with local and federal requirements.

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

