

Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and Emergency Preparedness
State of Louisiana

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 4, 2017

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**Louisiana's Request to Extend Temporary Housing for Some Flood Survivors
Receives Partial Approval by FEMA**

BATON ROUGE (December 4, 2017) – The state's request to extend the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) temporary housing program for eligible survivors of the historic 2016 August flood has been partially approved. FEMA has approved the use of its Manufactured Housing Units (MHUs) until May 15, 2018. However, FEMA has denied the state's request to waive the rent for those MHUs. That means occupants will be charged a Fair Market Rent (FMR) beginning **March 1, 2018**. The state is planning to appeal that decision.

"Staff from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and several other state agencies are working to coordinate a meeting in-person with FEMA leadership later this month to address the continued need for direct housing," said GOHSEP Director Jim Waskom. "Different options and obstacles exist for our families depending on a variety of recovery factors such as income-level, contractor issues, availability of rental properties and insurance issues. **We intend to brief FEMA on these issues and request that they reconsider their denial of the rent waiver.**"

The extension does waive the \$550 monthly penalty occupants would normally pay in addition to rent, if they remain past the May 15 deadline. Rent covers some of the costs and services FEMA provided at no charge prior to the 18-month deadline. The 2018 FMR for the Baton Rouge metropolitan region is \$789 for a one-bedroom property to \$1,155 for a three-bedroom property

By federal law, FEMA's temporary housing program ends 18 months after a disaster declaration date. In the case of the 2016 August flood, the MHU program was set to end

March 1, 2018. However, the historic flooding and widespread catastrophic damage, coupled with the additional strain caused by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma to the Gulf Coast, created overwhelming challenges for short-term, interim and permanent housing options. This is also why the state requested a waiver of rent for those allowed to stay in MHU's during the extension period.

The state is working closely with FEMA on MHU occupants who are participating in the Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program to help rebuild and repair their impacted homes. Restore Louisiana is currently reaching out to those applicants. If you have applied and have any questions, call 866.735.2001 or visit Restore.la.gov. MHU occupants who need assistance accessing other types of recovery resources may contact the state's Disaster Case Management program by at 1-844-581-2207 (8:00am-4:30pm M-F) or by emailing DCMPinfo@la.gov

MHUs are still a temporary solution, so it's important for those who stay in the program beyond February to continue working on permanent housing plans.

Here are the latest MHU Program statistics provided by FEMA:

As of November 8, 2017-

Move Outs

- More than **2,000** households—about **45 percent** who received FEMA-provided mobile homes—have recovered and returned to a repaired home or found other suitable permanent housing.
- Approximately **eight** households moved out of MHUs every day in **October 2017** to return home.
- Many units—after being cleaned and passing quality inspections—have left Louisiana to help disaster survivors elsewhere.

Looking Forward

- Nearly **62 percent** of current occupants are on track to return home before the original **Feb. 14, 2018** deadline.
- **More than half** of mobile home occupants are making repairs to their damaged home.
- FEMA has created a special section on its website to help occupants return home at www.fema.gov/disaster/4277 under the “Resources for FEMA Housing Occupants” section.

Current MHU Statistics

- As of Nov. 8, **2,437** households remain in FEMA-provided mobile homes. Roughly **140** households have more than one unit.
- This amount includes:
 - Ascension Parish: **239**
 - East Baton Rouge Parish: **1,110**
 - Livingston Parish: **716**
- About **2,200** units are on a survivor's property.
- An estimated **390** units are in a commercial mobile home park.
- About **20** units are on sites FEMA prepared specifically for mobile homes.

Under FEMA's current MHU status, program occupants who continue to meet FEMA's eligibility criteria to remain in MHUs beyond the 18-month deadline of February 14, 2018. However, such occupants will be charged a monthly rental fee based on the current Fair Market Rent (FMR) set by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Fees will vary depending upon the size of the MHU. HUD defines FMR as a housing market's monthly cost of a modest, non-luxury rental unit.

MHU occupants who believe they cannot pay the full HUD FMR may contact their FEMA representative for information on how to appeal.

FEMA has been careful to ensure that MHU occupants are aware of the program deadline. Notice of the deadline date was provided to MHU occupants 120, 90 and 60 days prior to the deadline. They will also receive a 30-day notice.

Visit www.511la.org for road updates during an emergency. Keep your phones charged and near you while the threat continues in order to receive potential emergency messaging.

Find more tips on weather and preparedness on GOHSEP's Facebook and Twitter accounts. You can receive emergency alerts on most smartphones and tablets by downloading the new Alert FM App. It is free for basic service. The Get A Game Plan App is another resource available to help you and your family prepare for any type of emergency. You can download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at www.getagameplan.org.

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