

HURRICANE KATRINA FAMILY ASSISTANCE INFORMATION SHEET

When families arrive in the Denver metropolitan area, many are housed temporarily at Arapahoe Community College dormitories at Lowry. Other areas of the state are providing shelter as well. Also, many families are staying with relatives and friends in the metro Denver and throughout the state.

Each location within the state has the option to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop their own plan to assist the victims of Katrina. This information sheet will outline what the State of Colorado is doing to assist these families.

Identification Credential

At this time, victims being assisted in metro Denver must go Lowry to register and get credentialed. The process to get credentials includes receiving a photo ID, providing family information and a criminal background check. This must be done even if the family is not living at Lowry. The location of the credential center is 744 Boston Street, Aurora, CO 80010. This location may change to a Red Cross site once families' migrating to Denver slows down.

Family Assistance Center (FAC)

The FAC is located on the southwest corner of 1st and Havana. Large tents are on the property so it is easily recognized. In order to be served at the FAC, a family must be credentialed and ride the shuttle service provided at Lowry to the FAC. Busses arrive at the FAC at 10 AM, 12 PM, 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. When families arrive, the Red Cross assigns a volunteer to assist the family at the FAC. This volunteer is responsible for walking the family to each service provider at the FAC.

Services at the FAC include but are not limited to the following; Red Cross emergency money, assistance in registering with FEMA, setting up a bank account, job information provided by DOLE, TANF and food stamp benefits and assistance to locate transitional housing.

Housing Support

Colorado Division of Housing (DOH), Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs (SHHP), Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) and Denver Regional HUD have staffed the transitional housing services at the FAC. The housing provided is termed "transitional" given that FEMA is providing limited rental assistance. It is our understanding, that after this emergency assistance is exhausted, the family will be responsible for their rent. Longer assistance may be needed, but we do not know whether HUD will provide vouchers. Governor Owens has requested that housing agencies use their resources to serve Colorado residents and use the FEMA dollars for those families affected by the hurricane.

At the FAC, housing volunteers are assessing family needs for transitional housing and are researching available units for the family to rent. Landlords wanting to rent their units to victims of Katrina are being asked to list their units at www.coloradohousingsearch.com. Please stress to landlords that listing their unit at this site is the way to make them available, in that we are trying to develop "one" website that we can refer to. CHFA provided 50 fully furnished units that were used for elderly and handicapped individuals and for large families. HUD has provided a list of units and we are posting additional units at the site as well.

Security Deposit and Rent Payment

DOH is providing security deposits and will enter into a 3-month lease with landlords for rent payment. After 3 months, the lease will go month to month and DOH will provide the rental payment for up to **12 months**. The Division of Housing has decided to do this in order to provide landlords security in knowing that they will receive the rent for these families. FEMA's reimbursement system cannot be depended upon and could delay family payment for up to four months. DOH can pay up to the FMR of the county in which the family is residing. DOH can provide this assistance statewide if needed and will be reimbursed by FEMA.

Security Deposit and Rent will be billed to:

Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of Denver
2525 West Alameda Ave.
PO Box 192020
Denver, CO 80219

The invoice must include the following:

Renter/Client Name
FEMA Number
Address of the unit and the number of Bedrooms
Security Deposit amount (Up to one months rent)
Rent including Utilities amount (it is recommended that the landlord pay utilities).
Start date of the Lease

Upon receipt of the invoice from the landlord, Catholic Charities will send staff to inspect the unit and sign a 3-month lease with the landlord. After three months, the family will be responsible to contact Catholic Charities to let them know that they have stayed in the unit and rent payments are needed.

FEMA Assistance

Each family can receive personal services funds from FEMA. The amount will vary depending on the circumstances of each family. Have families contact their FEMA representative for more information. Please stress to families that it is very important to update their FEMA information when anything changes regarding their circumstances.

Red Cross Assistance

It is recommended that the family register with Red Cross in the area in which they are residing.

United Way

The United Way 211 number is being used for families to tap into support services and donations.