



# HUD NEWS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Ben Carson, Secretary

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## HUD ALLOCATES \$42.7 MILLION TO HELP PROTECT LOW-INCOME

### PUERTO RICANS IMPACTED BY COVID-19

*Funds can be used for personal protective equipment, childcare costs, travel costs to receive testing, among other actions*

**SAN JUAN, PR**—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson today announced his Department will allocate \$42,771,266 in COVID-19 relief funding to help low-income Americans in Puerto Rico residing in public housing. The funding, made available by the CARES Act legislation President Trump signed into law on March 27, 2020, will be awarded to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) across the Nation, including Puerto Rico. [A list of allocations can be found here.](#)

“As a result of President Trump’s strong leadership, we were able to secure necessary funding through the CARES Act to help keep Americans living in public housing safe through these unprecedented times,” said Secretary Carson. “HUD has worked hard to ensure that these funds will reach Public Housing Authorities quickly and efficiently, so they are well equipped to protect their residents and staff as we all work together as a Nation to combat this invisible enemy.”

“This funding will directly help the Puerto Rico Public Housing Administration protect their residents and staff during an extraordinarily challenging time as we work together to address the COVID-19 virus,” said Denise Cleveland-Leggett, HUD Southeast Region Administrator.

These funds will be allocated through the Public Housing Operating Fund and can be used by PHAs for the following actions:

- **Prepare for a Coronavirus Outbreak**
  - Creation or update of infectious disease outbreak plan;
  - Sourcing and purchasing personal protective equipment for PHA staff;
  - Coordination with providers of services needed to support residents as a result of coronavirus, including cost of delivery of goods, supplies, and equipment;
  - Coordination with local health service providers for activities, including: the development or provision of guidance to staff or residents, travel for testing, or other reasons related to coronavirus;
  - Childcare costs for residents so that they can continue to work, and childcare costs for staff performing essential functions (as defined at the state/local), to the extent they would not have incurred otherwise; and
  - Other reasonable expenses related to preparing for the coronavirus.
  
- **Prevent a Coronavirus Outbreak**

- Costs related to maintaining adequate social distancing, including modifying or limiting access to communal spaces, increasing service hours to prevent crowding in waiting areas, or any other costs incurred to ensure adequate distance among staff and residents;
- Costs of delivering supplies so that staff or residents can shelter in place, thereby reducing exposure to the greatest number of people;
- Direct costs related to limiting the spread of the coronavirus, including travel costs for testing, or other preventive health measures related to coronavirus;
- Expenses of isolating people suspected of being exposed or those at high-risk of serious complications if infected (e.g., elderly residents, and residents with underlying conditions);
- Costs of protecting residents (particularly high-risk residents) from exposure from interaction with PHA staff and vice versa; and
- Payment of salaries of PHA staff unable to work because of the coronavirus public health restrictions (e.g., office management staff who cannot go into the office and cannot perform work remotely, or payment of full salaries of PHA staff forced to work part-time because of lack of child care).

- **Respond to a Coronavirus Outbreak**

- Expenses of caring for PHA staff and residents who have tested positive, but do not require immediate hospitalization, including:
  - Payment for increases in sick leave allowances for PHA staff;
  - Physical, personnel, or security costs incurred to limit movement;
  - Costs to safely transport residents that tested positive to a quarantine facility; and
  - Costs of supporting residents in quarantine such as health-related supplies (e.g., masks and cleaning supplies).
- Expenses to safely transport residents/staff in need of medical attention;
- Expenses incurred because of coronavirus restrictions impacting PHA operations (e.g., paying for transportation expenses for PHA staff who rely on public transit that is no longer available);
- Costs to facilitate and coordinate with local schools and local governments receiving funds from the Department of Education for the education of students in public housing households;

- Internet connection infrastructure; and
- Tablets or other low-cost computers for students.
- Other reasonable expenses incurred while responding to the coronavirus.

In addition to the funding, HUD is announcing that PHAs may use Operating Funds and Capital Funds provided through prior Acts, for eligible Operating Fund and Capital Fund activities, or for coronavirus purposes.

For more information on HUD's response to the Coronavirus pandemic and the actions the Department has taken, please visit [Hud.gov/coronavirus](http://Hud.gov/coronavirus). Public Housing Authorities across the Nation have jumped into action to help assist their tenants and their communities during this unprecedented time. Read more about their stories featured in HUD's *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* campaign, [here](#).

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*HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and <http://espanol.hud.gov>. You can also connect with HUD on **social media** or sign up for news alerts on **[HUD's Email List](#)**.*

*You can follow Secretary Carson on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).*