

PRESS RELEASE

Comr. George P. Bush announces Temporary Housing Unit sales program for eligible Hurricane Harvey survivors

FEMA grants sales option for survivors residing in temporary housing units in participating counties and municipalities

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AUSTIN — Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush announced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has granted a Temporary Housing Units (THU) Sales to Occupants program for Hurricane Harvey survivors still residing in federally funded manufactured housing units and travel trailers. Commissioner Bush sent an official request on Oct. 12 requesting the sales program be made available for eligible survivors in counties and municipalities wishing to participate in the program. To date, the following counties have agreed to participate in the sales program: Austin, Calhoun, Galveston, Harris, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto, Tyler and Victoria. Please note some cities within these counties have opted out and thus the sales program will adhere to the jurisdiction having authority over the matter.

"Hurricane Harvey was one of the largest and most devastating storms to hit the Texas Coast," said Commissioner Bush. "While most Texans have made great strides towards recovery, others are struggling to find a workable permanent housing solution. While we continue to work with local partners on implementing long-term housing programs, we want to ensure that we have as many options available to survivors to make recovery a possibility. FEMA granting approval of this temporary housing unit sales program provides Texas communities with one more tool in our recovery toolbox."

According to federal requirements, FEMA's temporary housing assistance is set to expire on Feb. 25, 2019, 18 months after the date of the disaster. Along with the request for the sales program, Commissioner Bush also sent a request for an extension of the deadline from Feb. 25, 2019, to Nov. 25, 2019, as well as a rent waiver for survivors. The extension was granted through Aug. 25, 2019, however, the rent waiver was declined and thus households approved for the extension will have to pay rent to FEMA to remain in the THUs.

Currently, there are 1,582 households in the THUs being administered by the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The GLO is diligently assisting those remaining in temporary housing units with working toward their permanent housing plan by connecting residents with available housing solution resources such as rental resources, Disaster Case Management, Long-Term Recovery Groups, and ensuring

eligible households are aware of the Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) resources and application processes. The GLO is also participating in the Joint Housing Solutions Working Group (JHSWG) and leading a sub-committee focused on transitioning THU occupants to their permanent housing plan.

The temporary housing assistance eligible for the sales program includes federally-funded manufactured housing units and travel trailers. The GLO recertification teams will increase the frequency of both owner and renter recertification visits to help identify persisting issues and unmet needs that hinder survivors ability to achieve a permanent housing plans. In addition to local governments' option to opt in or out of the sales program, the location has to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, codes and ordinances (including but not limited to flood plain hazard areas) and secure all necessary permits.

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