

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Landlords Have Until June 1 To Sign Up For FEMA Repair Program

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency said on Monday that landlords who own a multi-family dwelling in need of repairs and are willing to lease to eligible hurricane survivors have until June 1 to sign up for FEMA's Multi-Family Lease and Repair Program (MLRP).

This program provides funds to make rental units habitable again, and at the same time helps survivors of hurricanes Irma and Maria, FEMA said.

Here's how it works: FEMA may have the property repaired using a third party contractor or landlords may choose to complete the repairs using their own contractors once repairs

and costs have been agreed upon. The repairs or improvements to make units habitable do not need to be hurricane- or flood-related. The value of the work will be deducted from the value of the lease agreement, and may not exceed its total value.

To qualify for MLRP funds your property must meet certain criteria.

1. It must have two or more units with at least one unit available to qualify as a multi-family dwelling. Each unit must provide independent living facilities for one or more people, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking and sanitation.
2. It must have been previously used as a rental unit.
3. It must be located on St. Croix, St. John or St. Thomas.
4. You must be willing to have at least one unit repaired or improved to be accessible to applicants with disabilities or other access and functional needs.

In addition, the property must be accessible to community services like schools and grocery stores, and not be located in a flood-prone area. FEMA will require a lease of exclusive use of the property as temporary housing. The property owner must provide all property management services, and repairs must comply with local building codes.

Remember time is running out to participate in the Multi-Family Lease and Repair Program. If you're a property owner who would like your property considered for this program email FEMA-USVI-MLR@fema.dhs.gov.