

**New York State Office of the Attorney General
Charities Bureau**

Hurricane Sandy Relief Information- March 2013 Update

PLEASE NOTE: *In answering the questions below, please update the information you provided in response to our earlier questionnaire. If there has been no change in the information previously provided in response to any question, please indicate "no change." However, where financial information is requested, please provide aggregate amounts to date, rather than since the date of your earlier response.*

Name of Organization: Empire State Relief Fund ("ESRF")

1.	What is the dollar amount of donations and pledges that your organization has raised to date in response to Hurricane Sandy? If your organization has received any donated (in-kind) goods or services, please describe those in-kind donations and explain how you determined their value in sections (b) and (c).	
(a)	Category	Raised to Date
	Cash/cash equivalents	\$14,500,761.30
	Outstanding pledges	\$276,000.00
	Value of goods and services (in-kind) donated to your organization	\$0
(b)	Description of in-kind donations: None	
(c)	Explanation of how in-kind donations were valued: N/A	
2.	Are the amounts reported above being used solely for Hurricane Sandy relief? If not, please indicate the portion of those funds that have or will be used for other purposes and describe those purposes.	
	Expenses (minimal) related to merchant credit card processing and website maintenance.	
3.	How much has your organization spent or disbursed on Hurricane Sandy relief to date?	
(a)	Amount: \$7,806,875.89	
(b)	Please detail the above amount by completing the categories below:	
	Category	Amount to Date

	Direct expenditures by your organization on supplies and/or services (please only include any expenditures paid by your organization for direct Hurricane Sandy relief and not grants or funding provided to individuals, businesses or other organizations)	\$15,734.13
	Grants or funding provided to other organizations for Hurricane Sandy relief	\$0
	Grants or funding provided to individuals, families or businesses for Hurricane Sandy relief (please include any items such as emergency cash grants, loans, gift/debit cards or similar assistance)	\$7,791,141.76
	The value of any goods or services donated (in-kind) to your organization that were disbursed in response to Hurricane Sandy.	\$0
	Other (please describe)	
4.	Please describe the types of assistance that your organization has provided to those affected by Hurricane Sandy. What populations or geographical areas have been (or will be) served by your organization in response to Hurricane Sandy?	
	<p>Through a program administered by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation (“HTFC”), a New York State public benefit corporation operating under the integrated management structure of NYS Homes and Community Renewal, donations received by ESRF provide direct financial assistance, in the form of a grant, to homeowners affected by Hurricane Sandy. The ESRF grant aids in the cost of repairing damages incurred by the storm to the homeowner’s primary residence.</p> <p>New York State homeowners living in one of thirteen federally declared disaster areas are eligible for an ESRF grant, provided they meet certain other eligibility requirements. To date, awards have been issued to homeowners in eleven counties: Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk, Ulster, and Westchester. The majority of awards have been issued in Queens, Nassau, Richmond, Kings, and Suffolk counties, in that order.</p>	
5.	Has your organization provided grants or funding to other organizations for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts? If so, which organizations have received those funds, what is the dollar amount provided to them and what is the intended use of the funds? What policies and procedures does your organization follow to determine the need for such funding and to monitor the use funds?	

	<p>ESRF has transferred approximately \$7,791,141.76 in funds to HTFC. In turn, HTFC has provided direct ESRF grants to individual homeowners in the approximate amount of \$7,791,141.76. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) between ESRF and HTFC, grant awards have been based on data provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) regarding the homeowners’ individual unmet needs. (See also response below to question #6.) Under the terms of the MOU, HTFC provides monthly reports to ESRF regarding its distribution of ESRF funds and administration of the ESRF program.</p> <p>No other organizations have received any ESRF funds, at this time.</p>
6.	<p>Has your organization provided direct grants or funding to individuals, families or businesses for Hurricane Sandy relief? If so, please describe the types of the assistance that your organization has provided to date. What policies and procedures does your organization follow to determine the need for such funding and to monitor the use funds? For the purposes of this question please include any items such as emergency cash assistance, loans, gift/debit cards or direct payment of expenses on behalf those impacted by Hurricane Sandy.</p>
	<p>Through its partnership with HTFC, ESRF has provided direct financial assistance, in the form of a grant, to eligible New York State homeowners affected by Hurricane Sandy. The purpose of the grant is to aid in the cost of repairing damages incurred by the storm to the homeowner’s primary residence. The terms of eligibility for an ESRF grant were defined in the MOU prior to any funds being distributed. ESRF awards are contingent on donations made to the fund.</p> <p>Homeowners do not apply to HTFC or ESRF to receive ESRF grants. Instead, awards are made based on data provided by FEMA. Pursuant to an agreement between HTFC and FEMA, HTFC receives information about homeowners who have applied for and received the maximum award (\$31,900) from FEMA’s Individuals and Households Program, as well as the homeowner’s storm-related “real property loss,” based on a FEMA-verified damage assessment. Awardees of ESRF grants are homeowners whose FEMA-verified real property loss (i.e., repair costs), exceeded the aggregate of FEMA’s maximum Individual Household Program award and the NYS Homeownership Repair and Rebuilding Fund’s maximum award (\$10,000), as well as any insurance proceeds they may have received.</p> <p>HTFC has created a system to capture the information from FEMA and calculate award eligibility and values. Based on a report issued that identifies the number of applicants eligible for an ESRF award and the value, HTFC requests a wire transfer of funds to the ESRF board. After the funds have been transferred to an account set up specifically for ESRF awards, HTFC follows its normal procedures for issuing checks through the State treasury. A check and a letter explaining the use of funds are then mailed directly to each homeowner. No emergency cash assistance, loans, or gifts/debit cards are issued.</p>

7.	What is your organization's plan for using any surplus funds not spent for Hurricane Sandy relief?
	ESRF does not anticipate a surplus. It is ESRF's intent to distribute all funds raised to date for Hurricane Sandy relief.
8.	Has your organization received funding from other organizations for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts? If so, please identify the organizations that provided the funds, the amount received and a description of how the funds have been or will be used.
	ESRF has not received any funding from other organizations, excluding charitable donations.
9.	Is your organization still conducting fundraising for relief efforts? If so, please describe the methods by which you are raising funds.
	ESRF continues to solicit donations for Hurricane Sandy relief through personal solicitation, advertisements in movie theaters, television commercials and an active website.
10.	Is your organization still conducting relief efforts? If so, please describe how individuals, businesses or organizations seeking assistance can contact your organization.
	ESRF is still receiving reports from HTFC on homeowners eligible for an award. As indicated in the response above to question #6, there is no application for assistance. Determinations regarding grant awards are made automatically through the system developed and maintained by HTFC. This allows limited ESRF resources to continue to serve those with the greatest need measured equitably across the disaster areas and help to prevent a duplication of benefits provided to individual homeowners. Homeowners seeking further information may call 1-855-NYS-SANDY.

Richard J. Sirota, Treasurer

Date


Signature of Representative

3/22/13

Please email this document with your responses to sandyresponse@ag.ny.gov by March 22, 2013. You may obtain an electronic copy of this document by emailing a request to that same address.