

PRESS RELEASE Sept. 2, 2021 Contact: Spencer Watson | (m) 501 804 4822 | <u>sswatson@littlerock.gov</u>

## 600 Aided by Little Rock Housing Voucher Program

LITTLE ROCK – With more than 2,500 calls in less than 48 hours, the City of Little Rock was able to field approximately 300 requests for assistance from individuals and families displaced from Louisiana and Mississippi by Hurricane Ida and will house more than 600 people in more than 150 local hotel rooms, reaching the capacity of the outreach program.

"Clearly we saw a need, and I'm pleased that we were able to assist, as good neighbors should," said City Manager Bruce Moore. "Unfortunately, the total need is more than Little Rock can accommodate alone, but we will continue to provide what assistance we can as our guests prepare to return home."

On Tuesday the City announced that its Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs would provide vouchers to allow those displaced by the hurricane to temporarily stay in Little Rock at the City's expense. The program, which provided for a stay of up to three days, was made possible thanks to the participation of 10 local hotels who were able to provide rooms to the City for the voucher program, often at a discounted rate.

By Wednesday evening 40 rooms had been filled. By midday Thursday, an additional 30 rooms were filled, and enough requests for assistance had been verified to fill the remaining 80 available rooms by Friday morning.

"This effort would not have been possible without the participation and partnership of our generous local hotel owners and managers, who served as caring corporate citizens in this time of crisis," Moore said.

In addition to housing, the Arkansas Food Bank contributed 75 emergency food kits, which will each feed two people for a day. Approximately 15 kits were distributed on Wednesday; the remainder are being given out Thursday and Friday, along with water. Further food assistance can be obtained by calling 501-410-6999.

The American Red Cross Greater Arkansas Chapter, located in Little Rock, provided fuel cards for evacuees needing assistance.

In addition to the city's support, other relief organizations include:

- FEMA Assistance and Alerts:
  - To register with FEMA, go online to www.DisasterAssistance.gov. Persons with a smartphone can download the FEMA app at https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app. and register. Registration by telephone also is available by calling 800-621-3362. For TTY call 800-462-7585. Those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS) also can call 800-621-3362.
- Emergency Information from Red Cross: <u>Mobile Apps and Voice-Enabled Skills and</u> <u>Actions | American Red Cross</u>
  - Impacted Areas: Those looking for an evacuation shelter are encouraged to call 2-1-1 or text 'LAShelter' to 898-211. Additional information and safety tips are available at RedCross.org, 1-800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767) or by downloading the free Red Cross Emergency App from any app store.

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