



**2013 Annual Awards Entry Form**  
(Complete one for each entry.)

Entry Name Responding to Hurricane Isaac: HOME TBRA Program

Fill out the entry name <i>exactly</i> as you want it listed in the awards program.
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Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Monday, July 1, 2013.**

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Name \_\_\_\_\_

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO

**Background:** Hurricane Isaac was only a Category 1 when it hit in 2012 (seven years to the day after Hurricane Katrina) and caught many Louisiana residents by surprise, but the Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC) and its Disaster Housing Task Force had mobilized in the days before, so that they could be ready to take action immediately following the storm. It was a good thing that LHC was ready. The slow-moving storm brought with it more than a foot of rain to some places and a violent storm surge that left people stranded on rooftops throughout coastal Louisiana. In the aftermath of the storm, more than 4,000 people were in shelters across the state.

LHC and the Disaster Housing Task Force (LDHTF) took action in the days following the storm upon hearing that shelters in places like Jefferson and St. John the Baptist Parish could not close because many people still did not have places to go. LHC/LDHTF made the decision to set aside money from the existing HOME program for a HOME TBRA program specifically for those affected by Hurricane Isaac in 26 parishes. While the program is limited to those at or below 80% AMI, the program is targeted to the following populations with the amount of points given based on that category:

- 60% AMI (4 points)
- Applicants verified as homeless (3 points)
- Elderly persons (2 points)
- Individuals with mental or physical disabilities (1 point)

Participants are served on a first come, first served basis.

Eligible units under the TBRA can be publicly or privately owned and the rents charged have to be reasonable. The HOME TBRA assistance contracts with individual households last for one year and the contract can be renewed, as long as there are HOME funds available. Of course, with the goal of identifying a permanent housing option at the end of the program, rental assistance contracts may be shorter than one year.

When the program was initially rolled out in fall 2012, LHC anticipated that it could serve 75-100 households and expected that they would mostly be looking for 1BR units. Instead, most of the households approaching LHC for help were larger families, which will result in a smaller number served. Further, after encounters with this population, LHC realized that most of the households needed assistance with finding permanent housing after the year-long TBRA contract expired. To address that need, case management, provided by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), was added. DCFS helps both those families in the program AND those on the wait list by connecting them with the services they need to find and maintain permanent housing.

**Is innovative and replicable:** This is the first comprehensive HOME TBRA program implemented in Louisiana and it has many innovative attributes. LHC, realizing that rental

assistance without case management frequently results in a return to homelessness, took the initiative to put in place a particularly innovative piece-- the use of FEMA-funded DCFS Case Managers to help both HOME TBRA recipients and those on the wait list to develop an exit plan and connect them with permanent housing. Additionally, with a wait list of 250, DCFS has assisted LHC in contacting those families on the wait list to see if they still need assistance. DCFS's Case Managers help make sure that the clients remain engaged while on the wait list and can move them into housing quickly as it becomes available. This ensures that LHC is still serving the people most in need. LHC now has an MOU in place with DCFS and plan to implement the same type of program with youth aging out of foster care. Additional conversations are being held about maintaining allocations each year for HOME TBRA especially for disasters (ex. house fires, etc) and maintaining the innovative case management piece. It is most likely that as a result of this program, TBRA will remain an important piece in the continuum of LHC services.

***Responds to an important state housing need:*** After Hurricane Isaac, St. John the Baptist and Jefferson Parish could not close shelters because they had people with no place to go. LHC realized they needed to address this population and as a result, set aside HOME dollars for the TBRA program to help assist displaced residents in finding and securing private housing.

***Demonstrates measurable benefits to HFA targeted customers:*** One of the greatest benefits of this program is that it provides a bridge to get people out of shelters and ultimately into permanent housing. In the wake of storm such as Isaac, it keeps people in and returns people to their communities of origin, which helps communities recover faster.

***Has a proven track record of success in the marketplace:*** So far, LHC has served 57 families as part of the HOME TBRA Isaac program and anticipates that it will be able to serve approximately 20 additional families. Those 57 families continue to be served, which shows the strength of the case management function. One of the greatest success stories so far was that of a single Laplace resident whose residence was unlivable after the storm. Before the storm, she was working as a tour guide in Southern Louisiana and operating her office out of her home. After the storm, she found it hard to earn income and eventually began living in her vehicle. She submitted an application for TBRA and was placed successfully into housing in May; she receives assistance with her security deposit, rent and utility payments. As part of the case management piece, she is also receiving assistance with employment opportunities and permanent housing.

***Provides benefits that outweigh costs:*** The HOME TBRA program, because it is administered by the State, has low administrative costs, allowing for more money to go directly to the clients. Clients in the program become an integral part of the local economy where they otherwise would be living off public resources; those who transition successfully into permanent housing further solidify those gains both for themselves and for communities in which they live.

***Demonstrates effective use of resources:*** LHC's quick decision to creatively use its existing HOME funds to meet the needs of residents after Hurricane Isaac is, in itself, an effective use of resources. The LHDTF served as the mechanism for LHC to make this quick decision and using existing resources instead of waiting for other allocations decreased the response time to an immediate housing need.

***Effectively employs partnerships:*** The biggest partnership during this process and one that will continue as LHC expands this program is the partnership with DCFS. Other key partners include the parishes that were immediately affected by Isaac.

***Achieves strategic objectives:*** While the FY2013 Strategic Plan is still under development, this initiative adheres to an important core goal of the draft: Aggressively work to increase the number of people securing Permanent Supportive Housing. The TBRA program provides housing stabilization and a bridge for an effective transition into permanent housing. LHC is well-positioned with the new HUD 811 Project- Rental Assistance Demonstration (one of 13 awards made nationally), S+C, partnerships with continuums, and other permanent housing resources to move people seamlessly into permanent housing.

***Conclusion:*** LHC's decision to use HOME funds creatively in the wake of Hurricane Isaac not only provided a much-needed resource for displaced families it also has provided the framework for a TBRA program that did not exist before. If LHC receives additional allocations from the State level, it will be prepared to implement this program immediately on a broader basis. Unusual for TBRA programs is the pairing of case management resources with rental assistance. LHC looks forward to implementing this model in future rental assistance programs.