



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO  
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

Between

**PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING (PRDOH)  
CDBG-DR PROGRAM**

And

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN PUERTO RICO**



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**THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)** is entered into in San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 2 of June, 2021, by and between the **PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING** (hereinafter, "**PRDOH**"), a public agency created under Law No. 97 of June 10, 1972, as amended, 3 LPRA § 441 *et seq.*, known as the Department of Housing Organic Act with principal offices at 606 Barbosa Avenue, Juan. C. Cordero Dávila Building, San Juan, Puerto Rico, herein represented by William O. Rodríguez Rodríguez, attorney, of legal age, single, and resident of San Juan, Puerto Rico, in his capacity as PRDOH Secretary; and the **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN PUERTO RICO** (hereinafter, the "**OPC**", for its Spanish acronym), herein represented by Edwin García Feliciano in his capacity as Ombudsman, of legal age, married, and resident of Camuy, Puerto Rico.

**WHEREAS**, on September 2017, Hurricanes Irma and María made landfall in Puerto Rico causing catastrophic island wide damage, knocking out power, water, and telecommunications for the entire Island and its island municipalities. Hurricane María caused major structure and infrastructure damage to family homes, businesses, and government facilities triggering the displacement of thousands of residents of the Island from their homes and jobs.

**WHEREAS**, under various public laws, the United States Congress appropriated disaster recovery and mitigation funds for the recovery of Puerto Rico,

**WHEREAS**, the PRDOH was designated as the grantee for the CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds allocated to Puerto Rico through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**WHEREAS**, as per the OPC's request, it is the PRDOH's intention to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) with the OPC to establish procedures by which PRDOH may exchange data, subject to the Personally Identifiable Information, Confidentiality, and Nondisclosure Policy (**PII Policy**), with the OPC.

**WHEREAS**, the exchange of this information is important to help channel the petitions from the Municipalities residents given the OPC's auditing role under Act 134 of June 30, 1977, as amended.

**NOW THEREFORE**, in consideration of the mutual promises and the terms and conditions set forth herein, the PRDOH and the OPC agree as follows:

**I. INTRODUCTION**

CDBG-DR is a Federal Program that provides grants to help cities, counties, and States recover from Presidentially declared disaster, especially in low-income areas, subject to availability of supplemental appropriations.

The purpose of the PRDOH CDBG-DR Program is to address unmet recovery needs of the Government of Puerto Rico after the effects of Hurricanes Irma and María. The CDBG-DR

funds are available for necessary expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the “most impacted and distressed” areas resulting from the major disaster declarations.

As outlined in this MOU, PRDOH is sharing with the OPC certain information pertaining to those applicants who submitted an application to the Home Repair, Reconstruction, or Relocation Program (**R3 Program**). PRDOH designed the R3 Program for the long-term recovery of unmet housing need across the Island.

**II. ROLES**

**A. PRDOH shall:**

1. Provide the information listed in Table 1, regarding R3 Program applicants.
2. Provide a point of contact person to facilitate communication between the OPC and PRDOH.

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Table 1. (The data will be in excel format)

Case ID	Property Address	Award Type	Construction Status	Total Cost	Cost of Constructions Started
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**B. The OPC shall:**

1. Maintain the confidentiality of the information as stated in this MOU and the PII Policy.
2. Only share the information provided by PRDOH with the specific OPC staff who have a “need to know” over the information.
3. Provide a point of contact person to facilitate communication between PRDOH and the OPC.

**III. POINTS OF CONTACTS (POC)**

**PRDOH**

Christian Pagán Mercado, JD  
 Director for Disaster Recovery  
 606 Barbosa Ave.  
 San Juan, P.R. 00918  
 (787) 274-2527  
[cpagan@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:cpagan@vivienda.pr.gov)

**OPC**

Rolando J. Meléndez Aponte  
 Auxiliary Ombudsman  
 P.O. Box 41088  
 San Juan, P.R. 00940-1088  
 (787) 724-7373, ext. 2407  
[rmelendez@opc.pr.gov](mailto:rmelendez@opc.pr.gov)

**IV. TERM, TERMINATION AND AMENDMENT**

- A. This Agreement will take effect when signed by both parties and continue for **twelve (12) months**, ending on 2 of June 2022 unless sooner terminated. This Agreement shall not be automatically renewed.
- B. This Agreement may only be amended upon written mutual consent of both parties.

**V. PROTECTION OF DATA**

- A. Any data obtained from the other party may only be used for the purpose established in this MOU. All personal and confidential information provided by PRDOH pursuant to this Agreement belongs to, and will remain the property of PRDOH. Both parties agree to strictly control the use and retention of any personal and confidential information provided by the other party so that only those

personnel who have a need to know have access to such material. No further dissemination or use of the data provided by PRDOH is authorized without written permission from PRDOH.

- B. The OPC will refer those who request personal and confidential information provided by PRDOH to the PRDOH point of contact named in this Agreement. Each party's responsibility to protect personal and confidential data from unauthorized disclosures will survive the term of this Agreement
- C. Both parties agree that information will be transmitted in a secure manner to protect sensitive and personally identifiable information (**PII**). Both parties agree that there will not be computer matching.

## VI. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. PII refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. Non-PII can become PII when, together with additional information that has been publicly available (medium or source notwithstanding), could be used to identify an individual. 2 C.F.R. § 200.79.
- B. PII should only be used to direct the objectives of the R3 Program. PII must not be used for political purposes.
- C. All records and data will be subject to existing federal and state record retention requirements, such as the CDBG-DR Program PII Policy. The PII Policy can be found in **English** at <https://cdbg-dr.pr.gov/en/download/personally-identifiable-information-confidentiality-and-nondisclosure-policy/> and **Spanish** at <https://cdbg-dr.pr.gov/download/politica-sobre-informacion-de-identificacion-personal-confidencialidad-y-no-divulgacion/>.
- D. Access credentials should not be shared with unauthorized personnel or employees of the CDBG-DR Program or the OPC
- E. OPC employees and/or individuals who will handle or have access to personally identifiable information shall be instructed as to the confidential nature of the information and the criminal or civil repercussions they may face for mishandling sensitive or protected information.
- F. OPC employees and/or individuals who will handle or have access to personally identifiable information shall complete the PII Training available in the following link [https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/privacy\\_training/index.htm](https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/privacy_training/index.htm). Written confirmation of PII Training completion shall be sent to the PRDOH POC identified in this MOU, before the information is shared.
- G. The OPC shall employ appropriate technical, physical, and administrative security measures to protect personally identifiable information.
- H. The OPC shall prohibit the disclosure of personally identifiable information to third parties without written consent of the applicant.
- I. The OPC shall ensure that individuals with access to personally identifiable information understand what protection of personally identifiable information entails.

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- J. In the event of a suspected or actual security-related incident, a Security Incident Notice must be issued **immediately** and sent to the PRDOH CDBG-DR Program Legal Director at [LegalCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:LegalCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov).
- K. The OPC shall ensure that all employees/contractors/agents/consultants who have access to personally identifiable information comply with the CDBG-DR Program PII Policy and with the requirements and regulations included in Part 200 of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 C.F.R. Part 200).
- L. PRDOH and the OPC further recognize that the shared information is subject to the rights of audit and inspection of various federal and state agencies and the disclosure of such information may be required by law.
- M. Nothing in this Agreement is intended to conflict with current law(s), regulation(s), or the directives of PRDOH. If a provision in this Agreement is found to be inconsistent with such authority, then that provision shall be reviewed and modified or annulled as agreed to by PRDOH and the OPC in writing, but the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall remain in force and effect unless otherwise noted.
- N. The OPC, as recipient of the PII, shall hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Government of Puerto Rico, PRDOH and the U.S. Department of Housing from any and all claims, actions, suits, charges and judgments whatsoever that arise out of the Recipient's performance or nonperformance of the services or subject matter called for in this Agreement.
- O. The OPC acknowledges and agrees that a breach of the terms of this Section will cause PRDOH and applicants to suffer irreparable damage that could not be remedied or compensated adequately only by mere monetary retribution. The OPC further agrees that money damages may not be a sufficient remedy for any breach of this Section. Accordingly, the OPC agrees that PRDOH shall have the right to seek injunctive relief and the specific performance of the provisions of this Section to enjoin a breach or attempted breach of the provision hereof, such right being in addition to any and all other rights and remedies that are available to PRDOH by law, equity, or otherwise.
- P. The PRDOH may terminate this Agreement, in whole or in part, at PRDOH's sole discretion, with or without cause, at any time. The PRDOH will terminate this Agreement by delivering to the OPC a **five (5) day** notice of termination, upon receipt of such notice, the OPC shall immediately discontinue and cease all use of the PII. Furthermore, the OPC shall immediately proceed to return the PII to PRDOH and safely dispose any copy made to it, in any form, if necessary.
- Q. The parties hereby certify that in signing this MOU they are in compliance with Act No. 1-2012, as amended, known as "Puerto Rico Government Ethics Act of 2011", in connection with the possibility of a conflict of interest.
- R. This agreement will not lead to any fiscal impact to the parties. In addition, both parties recognize that this agreement does not impose any responsibility to financially compensate the other party under any circumstances. Any disbursement of funds that is deemed necessary to implement the objectives of this Agreement, will be individually incurred by each one of the parties and will be their own responsibility to bear.
- S. Both parties are compelled to comply with Act Number 18 of October 30, 1975, as amended, which requires the registration of this MOU to the Office of the Comptroller of Puerto Rico within fifteen (15) days from the date of its execution.

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**VI. SIGNATURE**

The signatories below represent that they have the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their respective organizations.

**PRDOH**

William O. Rodríguez Rodríguez  
William O. Rodríguez Rodríguez (Jun 2, 2021 11:39 EDT)

**William O. Rodríguez Rodríguez, Esq.**  
Secretary  
606 Barbosa Ave.  
San Juan, PR 00918

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**OPC**

Edwin García Feliciano  
Edwin García Feliciano (May 28, 2021 10:12 EDT)

**Edwin García Feliciano**  
Ombudsman  
P.O. Box 41088  
San Juan, P.R. 00940-1088

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# MOU Information Sharing- OMBUDSMAN

Final Audit Report

2021-06-02

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