



NAVIGATING DISASTER

FOR BOULDER COUNTY

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Boulder County and Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM) signed a contract on July 1 to provide Recovery Navigation services for residents impacted by the Marshall Fire and Straight-Line Wind Event.
- Office space was generously donated by the City of Louisville, with the anticipation of a larger space to be leased by Marshall ROC (Restoring Our Community) sometime in October.
- Recovery Navigation services began on July 25, 2022, with partial staff (2 fulltime and one parttime). Additional staff has been and continues to be added (as of Aug. 31, 2022, there were 4 full-time, 1 part-time, and 1 supervisor on staff, with an additional part-time employee starting on Sept. 12, 2022).
- Prior to the opening of Recovery Navigation services, Mile High United Way 2-1-1 made outreach calls to impacted residents to identify short term needs and provide connection to available resources.
- During the first few weeks of operation, Navigators simultaneously returned calls and attended training sessions. Training sessions were coordinated by LFSRM in partnership with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and included introductions to local recovery agencies, local service agencies, including:
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)
 - Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
 - Community Foundation Boulder County
 - United Policyholders
 - UMCOR Disaster Case Management
- The approach when returning calls was thorough screening, which allowed fire survivors to share as they wanted and helped Navigators better prepare for their initial meeting.
- Appointments have taken a minimum of 1 hour, allowing fire survivors to share their stories and Navigators to identify needs, share resources, and review recovery goals.
- Clients have stated that we “put them at ease” and helped “normalize” feelings, and most have seemed appreciative of the time spent.
- A high number of the initial appointments were fire survivors interested in learning about funding sources for rebuilding and families living in temporary housing paid by insurance. These clients were not able to identify ‘needs’, and thus, Unmet Needs Funding was not requested in the early weeks.
- As of Aug. 31, 2022, 20 grant applications had been received, with 9 awaiting final approval.

AUGUST TOTALS

1057	Emails/voicemails/web forms
469	Unique households
191	2-1-1 Outreach (from the unique households number above)
214	Contact – outbound by Navigators
105	Appointments
40	Future scheduled appointments
20	Initial applications submitted for Rebuilding Funds



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BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

- Although the office space is in a terrific location, the number of conference rooms and private spaces limit the number of appointments that can be held at any one time.
- Employees are still in the process of learning, which requires additional oversight by the Program Director during client meetings.
- Training is not yet complete and more training sessions on more topics need to occur before staff will be ready to manage cases without significant support (from the Program Director).
- Developing procedures with partners has been on-going.
- The initial process for accessing Unmet Needs funding was inefficient and has since been adjusted.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Due to the high volume of individuals requesting services, typical screening and intake has been thorough, but slow. A streamlined screening process that helps staff identify urgent and immediate needs has been implemented.
- Residents have expressed a sense of urgency to apply for reconstruction funding, but few are at a point to be able to apply for that funding (which requires a building permit application be submitted). Clear messaging about process and requirements might alleviate anxiety causing many to reach out multiple times.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- LFSRM has created a pre-screening form that will be emailed to individuals to be filled out online. This will provide a quick initial contact with those individuals who have not yet received a call back and will help to speed up the intake process while allowing for better triage of urgent needs.
- UMCOR added staff (1 full-time, 1 part-time) to the office in August and is assisting with screening calls and intakes, as well as training (these staff are included in the staffing numbers on the first page).
- LFSRM is in the process of hiring additional staff (2 fulltime) and will schedule more training sessions.

