

**GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO
LA FORTALEZA
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO**

Administrative Bulletin No. OE-2022-024

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO, HON. PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, TO JOIN THE US DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT HOUSE AMERICA INITIATIVE

WHEREAS: The Government of Puerto Rico is committed to ensuring that all residents have a safe and affordable place to live.

WHEREAS: Homelessness continues to impact more than 2,000 of our residents and a lack of housing remains a barrier to the health, safety, well-being, employment and education for these individuals and families.

WHEREAS: More than 580,000 people were experiencing homelessness in America when the COVID-19 pandemic began and had to endure the COVID-19 pandemic without the safety and protection of a stable home, while the homelessness crisis has been further impacted and exacerbated during and due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WHEREAS: The most effective approach to solving homelessness is the Housing First approach, which entails identifying and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness to obtain permanent housing quickly—through housing counseling and navigation assistance, tailored levels of rental assistance and wrap-around supportive services, as needed.

WHEREAS: The American Rescue Plan provides communities with significant new resources to address homelessness, including 70,000 emergency housing vouchers and \$5 billion in grants through the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and \$350 billion in State and Local Recovery Funds through the Department of the Treasury.

WHEREAS: House America is a partnership between the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), states and communities to respond with urgency to address the crisis of homelessness.

WHEREAS: Through House America, HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge calls on state and local leaders to set and achieve ambitious goals for re-housing individuals currently experiencing homelessness and developing new supportive and affordable housing units.



WHEREAS: The Government of Puerto Rico, through the Department of Housing (Department) and the Puerto Rico Public Housing Administration (PRPHA), is committed to working with HUD and USICH to use American Rescue Plan resources and other federal, state and local resources to make progress towards ending homelessness.

WHEREAS: Pursuant to Act No. 97 of June 10, 1972, as amended, the Department is the governmental agency responsible for the formulation and implementation of Puerto Rico's public policy on housing and urban renewal.

WHEREAS: PRPHA is an agency created by Act No. 66 of August 17, 1989, as amended. PRPHA is a Public Housing Agency ("PHA") created to administer the Public Housing Program and Housing Choice Voucher Program for the purpose of providing decent, safe and sanitary housing under the "United States Housing Act of 1937", the regulations promulgated by HUD and other applicable federal or local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances.

WHEREAS: One of the principal endeavors of the Department and PRPHA is to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing. In addition, both have the responsibility to promote activities and provide services that empower the community and improve their quality of life.

WHEREFORE: I, PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, Governor of Puerto Rico, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the Government of Puerto Rico hereby declare and order the following:

SECTION 1st: **PUBLIC POLICY.** The Government of Puerto Rico hereby joins the House America Initiative and pledges to respond with urgency to homelessness in our communities by setting and achieving ambitious re-housing and housing creation goals. The Puerto Rico Department of Housing, and all appropriate government entities, shall take the necessary measures to implement and advance the House America initiative.

SECTION 2nd: **REPEAL AND EFFECTIVENESS.** This order leaves without effect any other executive order that may, in whole or in part, be inconsistent with this Executive Order, to the extent of such incompatibility. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until it is amended or repealed by a future executive order or by operation of the Law.



SECTION 3rd: **NON-CREATION OF ENFORCEABLE RIGHTS.** This Executive Order is not intended to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by any person or entity, in any matter, civil, criminal, or administrative, against the Government of Puerto Rico or its agencies, officials, employees, or any other person.

SECTION 4th: **SEVERABILITY.** The provisions of this Executive Order are independent and apart ones from the others, and if any part, section, provision, or sentence of this Executive Order were to be declared unconstitutional, null or void by a court of competent jurisdiction, the decision to that effect will not affect the validity of the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 5th: **PRIOR ORDERS SUPERSEDED.** This Executive Order shall supersede the parts of any executive order that may, in whole or in part, be inconsistent with the provisions herein, to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 6th: **PUBLICATION.** This Executive Order must be immediately filed with the Department of State and the widest publication is hereby ordered.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I issue this Executive Order under my signature and cause the Great Seal of the Government of Puerto Rico to be affixed, at La Fortaleza, San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 29th day of March of 2022.

**PEDRO R. PIERLUISI
GOVERNOR**

Enacted pursuant to Law, this 29th day of March of 2022.

**OMAR MARRERO DÍAZ
SECRETARY OF STATE**