

Contribute

2016 Flood victims waiting nearly 3 years could see their grants terminated by next Wednesday, July 31, 2019.



Please note that you **MUST** execute your grant agreement by Wednesday, July 31, 2019 or the grant offered will be **RESCINDED** and you will no longer be able to participate in the Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program.

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State of Louisiana OCD-DRU announces via Email, Phone call and Postal Mail to homeowners that their grants will be rescinded if they do not close on the grant award by July 31, 2019.

With less than one week from the program termination date 7-31-2019 homeowners are seeking answers and assistance from anyone outside of the Restore Louisiana Homeowners Assistance Program.

One homeowner facing the deadline asked in a public group if anyone knew where she could borrow \$12,000 to pay her recapture amount demanded by the state of Louisiana so she could keep her \$50,000+ grant award.

Others have similar stories, asking churches to sponsor their repairs with a promise that the property would transfer to the not-for-profit / church when the home is no longer needed by the homeowner.

Desperate times calls for desperate measures, and these homeowners are looking for someone to come to their aid and stop the deadline imposed by the State of Louisiana Office of Community Development - Disaster Recovery Unit under the watchful eye of Director Patrick Forbes.

The announcements went out to an estimated 1,565 homeowners that combined have nearly \$58 million in grants at risk.

The letters, emails and phone calls started June 12, 2019 after 4:00PM.

"Dear Homeowner,

You are receiving this notification because you have not closed on your grant award offered by Restore Louisiana.

Please note that you MUST execute your grant agreement by Wednesday, July 31, 2019 or the grant offered will be rescinded and you will no longer be able to participate in the Restore Louisiana Homeowner Assistance Program."

This letter sent out by the State of Louisiana to homeowners that have not closed on their grants but have been awarded a grant and qualify for the grant.

This letter did not offer any information about asking for extensions or how to appeal. State Director Patrick Forbes stated in a phone call conversation with me that Construction Technical Advisers (CTA), Case Workers and Case Managers were all aware of how to offer homeowners additional time. I found this not to be the case. I have not found a single homeowner that received the deadline letter that was aware of the right to appeal and the method to file your appeal for additional time.

The news media has been informed about this deadline and one congressman made a post about this deadline. There is no policy within the HUD CDBG-DR that states homeowners have a time frame to close on the grant or be terminated from the grant program. This is all policy created by the OCD-DRU policy team and legal team.

To ask for an extension at this point would be asking for a small miracle. The homeowner would need to contact their CTA or Case Manager and ask them to file for an Exceptions Board Review. The Homeowner would have to present evidence on their own behalf that given an extension of time, the homeowner would be able to close on the grant award. The state will only consider 30 day extensions and only for those that can show cause for the extensions.

With \$58 million in jeopardy to 1,565 family homes, this deadline becomes a clear and present danger to all disaster victims nationally by establishing a precedent other grantees may adopt as common place practice.

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