



HUD Highlights Discover Puerto Rico in Guide for CDBG-DR Recipients

The agency underscores the use of the allocated funds and the achievements of destination marketing for the Island

San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 18, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) highlighted Discover Puerto Rico's work unleashing demand in travel to the Island using Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds.

The [Economic Revitalization Guide for CDBG-DR Grantees](#), published on the HUD Exchange platform, reports that, with an investment of \$16 million, Discover Puerto Rico's advertising efforts launched in March 2021 generated over 300,000 hotel bookings, \$321 million in lodging revenue, and stays 45% longer than the previous average.

This and other efforts made it possible that, by February 2022, while employment levels in the leisure and hospitality sectors in the United States were 9% below pre-pandemic levels, in Puerto Rico, they marked an increase of 4% increase compared to 2019.

"This recognition reinforces the excellent work being done within our organization and underscores the spectacular yields from the efficient use of funds. Our ability to achieve remarkable outcomes results from our collaborative effort, in-depth market research, thoughtful executions, and good fiscal discipline," said Fernando Rodríguez, Chief Financial Officer of Discover Puerto Rico.

This allocation of funds is part of the CDBG-DR funds administered at the state level by the Department of Housing. It is one of the efforts to reactivate the Puerto Rican economy after Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. Puerto Rico received a waiver from the U.S. government to be able to use the funds for destination marketing, an economic activity that CDBG-DR funds do not usually cover. The waiver was based on the terrain lost in the tourism field, not only due to the passage of the hurricanes but also due to Zika virus outbreak of 2015, the 2020 earthquakes, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

These funds, in part, also helped Puerto Rico expand its presence into new markets where new direct air service was launched.

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