

DHS provides Hennepin County and the city of Minneapolis \$200,000 for tornado recovery

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The Minnesota Department of Human Services is providing Hennepin County and the city of Minneapolis \$200,000 to assist those impacted by the tornado that struck North Minneapolis May 22. The grant, voted on and approved last Tuesday by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners, will be administered by the Hennepin County Department of Human Services and Public Health, in partnership with the city of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, as well as Hennepin County's NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center.

The funding will go toward providing emergency mental health services for those affected by the tornado and will include maximizing community capacity to promote resiliency and maintain wellness; ongoing identification of behavioral health and related needs, especially related to at-risk populations, such as children, youth and seniors; and engagement of community organizations and coordination with government jurisdictions.

"One of the most powerful lessons of the tornado is that residents of North Minneapolis are strong, resilient people — but even the strongest people need help," said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. In order for North Minneapolis to be a healthy, recovering community, we need everyone involved," Mayor Rybak continued.

Partnerships will be developed with a number of other agencies and organizations, including: Minneapolis Public Schools, the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, the Minneapolis Department of Park and Recreation, Hennepin County Libraries, health care providers and clinics in the affected area, the Red Cross, local churches and community organizations.

"We believe this grant will allow our partners to provide emotional support to help residents move forward," said Hennepin County Commissioner Mark Stenglein.

The funding comes from DHS' Adult Mental Health Division's 2010-2011 Crisis Housing Fund and will pay for costs incurred from May 22, 2011, through Dec. 31, 2011. The state funding became available after the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) denied Gov. Mark Dayton's request for individual disaster assistance. The funding, if it had been approved, would have allowed the state to request crisis counseling funding, in addition to other funding, for Minneapolis.