

[Nonprofit sues FEMA for records on disputed Sandy settlements](#)

Newsday

A nonprofit organization that helps disaster victims file insurance claims has sued the Federal Emergency Management Agency, saying it ignored requests for documents related to disputed settlements from superstorm Sandy.

United Policy Holders filed the federal lawsuit on Wednesday, accusing FEMA of violating the Freedom of Information Act by not releasing details about appeals filed by homeowners to the National Flood Insurance Program after the 2012 storm.

“We want to see how they are handling these appeals,” said Amy Bach, the San Francisco-based group executive director. “Right now it’s completely opaque.”

A FEMA spokesman declined to comment Thursday.

United Policy Holders is based in San Francisco and helped thousands of homeowners in New York and New Jersey file claims after Sandy. In September, the group filed a request to FEMA under the Freedom of Information Act, asking how many appeals were filed and how many were successful.

FEMA acknowledged receiving the request, but five months later has still not released the records, according to the suit, filed in Washington.

The complaint from United Policy Holders comes as lawyers are in talks with FEMA to settle roughly 1,800 lawsuits filed by homeowners after their flood-insurance appeals were denied. The negotiations include talks to reform the flood-insurance program, including how it handles appeals.

Bach said her group’s suit is part of that push to ensure the program is a reliable safety net.