



The Haywood County Small Business Recovery Grant Program

Hurricane Helene Response

Flood-impacted businesses in Haywood County can apply for up to \$25,000 in grant funds thanks to a program available through the Haywood Advancement Foundation and the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority.

The Haywood County Small Business Recovery Grant Program: Hurricane Helene Response, is designed to support small businesses in Haywood County that were impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Initial funding of \$100,000 from both Haywood Advancement and Haywood County Tourism Authority jump started the grant program.

“The goal is to provide financial assistance to help businesses recover, rebuild, and remain operational following the damages caused by the storm,” said, David Francis, Haywood Chamber President and Managing Director of Haywood Advancement. “Our hope is to retain and maintain a diverse small business economy that has long-been the backbone of our county.”

Eligible businesses can receive up to \$25,000 to cover rebuilding, recovery, and operational losses attributable to Hurricane Helene. Business losses due to reduced tourism are also eligible.

To qualify, businesses must:

- Be a for-profit business with 25 or fewer employees that operates within Haywood County.

- Use funds for working capital to maintain or restart operations; repairs to owned or leased buildings; to replace inventory lost or damaged during the storm, to cover lease or mortgage payments on business property;

to buy or repair equipment or to cover payroll shortages due to temporary closures;

- Must be in good financial standing.

The application process requires documentation of damage, disclosure of any insurance coverage and claims documentation and a narrative on how funds were spent, as well as photos. Grant funds must be spent within six months of receipt. The program opened on Wednesday, November 6, 2024 and will last until available funds are awarded.

To apply for or donate to the program, visit haywoodadvancement.org or contact David Francis at dfrancis@haywoodchamber.com or 828/456.3021

Because donations for the program are still coming in, there is no firm estimate on how much assistance will be available. So far, \$350,000 has been pledged to the program.

Major donors to date include:

- David and Annie Colquitt, Cataloochee Ranch/The Swag
- Haywood County Tourism Development Authority
- NC Commerce
- United Way of Waynesville

“I can’t give enough thanks to the donors, Corrina Ruffieux, executive director of Haywood County Tourism Development Authority and the TDA board for their support. Their contributions are the very definition of what makes Haywood County Strong,” said Francis, “Every business that doesn’t bounce back after Hurricane Helene makes Haywood County more vulnerable as we meet the challenges left in the path of Hurricane Helene.”

The program is being handled through the Haywood Advancement Foundation; a nonprofit corporation established in 1990 to oversee economic development and support the community of Haywood County.