

What is it? The High Country WDB has received funds (\$100,000) from the NC Department of Commerce to help local businesses that were negatively impacted by Hurricane Helene and incurred related expenses to continue operation and employment of personnel to prevent or minimize the duration of layoffs/unemployment caused by Hurricane Helene. Individual requests should not exceed \$10,000.

What businesses are eligible? Businesses or Community Based Organizations located in Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, and Yancey counties that have been in operation for at least two (2) years; have current Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes; are in good standing with the IRS with no current tax liens; have a W-9 form; and have a demonstrated need for layoff aversion support.

What are allowable uses? Funds must be used to mitigate layoffs, prevent closures, and/or reimburse costs that assisted in preventing a layoff or closure. Additionally, funds may be used to support business expenses that assisted employees returning to work after a layoff or closure. Funds may also support business coaching, consulting, and conducting risk assessments. Requests must be reasonable, necessary, and directly related to the purpose of the Hurricane Helene Business Edge fund.

Funds may **NOT** be used for the following: products or services covered by insurance; hazard pay; rent; employee wages/benefits; supportive services such as childcare, transportation costs, lodging expenses, or meals; equipment that contributes to the capital assets (single items over \$5,000) of a business; or improvements or upgrades that contribute to the capital assets of a business; or capitalization of business (for example, purchasing supplies or materials that will go into the final product sold or provided by the business).

What is needed to apply? Eligible businesses/CBOs should submit completed applications to the HCWDB. At a minimum, a completed application includes the following: 1) the amount of funds requested and a brief itemized description of all costs; 2) the number of employees affected and jobs saved through funding; 3) the average salary of the affected employees; 4) a brief profile of the business including name, address, and contact information; 5) a brief narrative describing the layoff aversion plan and need for funds or a description of the services needed to develop a viable plan; and 6) all supporting documentation.

What is the application approval/denial process? Applications should be submitted by completing the online application at: [Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Information](#). Please review the "Application Guide" first to preview the questions required in the online application.

Within two (2) business days of receiving an application, the HCWDB will inform applicants, via email, that the application has been received, and if applicable, will request any additional documentation needed. Once all required documentation is submitted, the application will be processed, and a determination will be made as soon as possible.

If awarded, a grant agreement must be completed, and funds will be provided by reimbursement process (by check from High Country Council of Governments) and disbursed after proof of payment of related expenses has been provided. If your application includes quotes for future expenses, receipts/paid invoices will be required for final reimbursement. Recipients of these federal funds may be subject to local, state, and federal monitoring/auditing and used in announcements or success stories related to this grant.

Due to limited funding, awards may be made in less than the full amount requested or unable to be supported.

Who should I contact? Information can be found at www.highcountrywdb.com.

For additional information, please contact:

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