

Disaster Assistance & Resources

[BEWARE of Scammers!](#)

[FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers](#)

[Applications and Legal Aid \(FEMA, etc.\)](#)

[Buncombe County Disaster Reporting](#)

[Disaster Business Recovery Workspace](#)

[Resources for Nonprofits](#)

[Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#)

[Food & Beverage Workers](#)

[Resources for Artists/Creatives](#)

[Other Legal Assistance:](#)

[Support for Small Businesses](#)

[Resources for Farmers](#)

[Resources for Veterans](#)

[Recovery - Recovering from impacts of disaster](#)

BEWARE of Scammers!

Asheville Fire Department spokesperson warns the public they are starting to see both SCAMMERS offering to help locals clean up their properties and LOOTERS. {Updates 10/2 Source WLOS News}

The North Carolina Attorney General's Office has a hotline to report scams including disaster repairs, price gouging, and fraud contractors call (877) 5-NO-SCAM toll-free within North Carolina or file a complaint online.

FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers

As of 10/16 there are eight Disaster Recovery Centers in the area, each open 7 days a week from 8am-7pm.

These assist North Carolina survivors who experienced losses from Helene. This is a one-stop shop where survivors can meet face-to-face with FEMA representatives, apply for FEMA assistance, receive referrals to local assistance in their area, apply with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for low-interest disaster loans and more.

To see a list of Helene Disaster Recovery Centers go to [the main FEMA page for Helene](#). Then scroll down to "Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) List". You can also [click this link to go to that section directly](#).

There's also [a searchable map of Disaster Recovery Centers](#) to see the ones closest to you.

Applications and Legal Aid (FEMA, etc.)

FEMA assistance are NOT loans, they are grants that you do not have to pay back. FEMA personnel are out in the community and have branded equipment and badges.

[FEMA Disaster Assistance Application](#) deadlines says 11/27

Legal aid of NC is offering disaster relief (insurance policies, recovery appeals, proving property ownership) <https://legalaidnc.org/tropical-storm-helene-disaster-assistance/>
Flyer provides tips on how to effectively apply for assistance [Legal Aid Helene Disaster Flyer - Sp and Eng.pdf - Google Drive](#) (added 10/8)

Legal Aid Helpline: Call (866)219-LANC (5262) during open hours: 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM Monday – Friday and 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM Monday & Thursday

Asheville - 10/7, 10am to 4pm. **Pisgah Legal Services**. 62 Charlotte St. In-person assistance with filling out FEMA applications. Walk-in; first come/first served. (Source: 10/4, pisgahlegal.org/fema)

Hendersonville - 10/7, 10am to 4pm. Pisgah Legal Services. 440 S. Church St. (Hendersonville) In-person assistance with filling out FEMA applications. Walk-in; first come/first served. (Source: 10/4, pisgahlegal.org/fema)

[Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#)

- www.des.nc.gov/dua
- DUA phone number: English/ 919-629-3857; Spanish/ 919-276-5698
- FEMA Fact Sheets (information about qualifying, etc): [Document Bank](#)
- 10/4 and ongoing, every day. Pisgah Legal Services. Apply online at www.pisgahlegal.org or call 828-253-0406. FEMA applications and appeals, Disaster Unemployment Benefits (Source: 10/4 pisgahlegal.org)

Buncombe County Disaster Reporting

The Buncombe County Emergency Management Agency is asking the public to document property damage from Helene. You can report using report.buncombecounty.org.

This information will be used to assist Buncombe County officials as they collect impact information and will be provided to other state/federal agencies as they assess the damage.

Disaster Business Recovery Workspace

First-come, first-served temporary workspace available at no cost for business owners, nonprofit organizations and employees displaced due to Helene. Internet access provided. Bring your own laptop. Open Oct. 16-Dec. 30, Mon-Fri, 9 am to 5 pm. Space for up to 70 users. [Follow Link for details](#)

Resources for Nonprofits

The Community Foundation has activated its [Emergency and Disaster Response Fund](#), ensuring that frontline nonprofits have the resources for early response and ongoing recovery. Support for Western North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Helene has been swift.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

What is Disaster Unemployment Assistance?

If your employment has been lost or interrupted because of a federally declared disaster, you may be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

DUA is a federal program that provides temporary payments for people who, as a direct result of a disaster:

- -No longer have the job that provided their primary source of income.
- -Are unable to reach their place of employment.
- -Cannot work because of an injury caused by the storm.
- -Were unable to begin employment or self-employment due to the storm.
- -Have become the major supplier of household income due to a storm-related death of the previous major supplier of household income.

Am I eligible for DUA?

- People, including self-employed, or business owners may be eligible for DUA if:
- -You lived, worked or were scheduled to work in an area declared a disaster area by the President of the United States.
- -You lost employment or had your employment interrupted as a direct result of the disaster; and
- -You have exhausted or are not eligible for state unemployment benefits.

-Eligibility for DUA is determined weekly. You must continue to be out of work as a direct result of the Hurricane Helene each week to get benefits.

What do I need to apply?

- -Name and address of all employers you worked with within the last 24 months.
- -County of residence.
- -County of employment.
- -Mailing address and zip code.
- -Valid telephone number.
- -Your Social Security number or your Alien Registration number.
- -Have proof of employment and income if you're self-employed, a farmer, or a commercial fisher.

How do I apply?

The Division of Employment Security announces the counties in which DUA benefits are available and deadlines for applying when there is a federal disaster in North Carolina. The fastest way to file a claim is to file online at des.nc.gov. If you need help or don't have access to a computer, you may file over the phone by calling the DUA hotline 919-629-3857.

DUA Hotline & Website

📞 English 919-629-3857 | Spanish 919-276-5698

🕒 Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday Noon - 4 p.m.

🌐 <https://www.des.nc.gov/dua>

Línea directa de DUA

📞 Inglés 919-629-3857 | Español 919-276-5698

🕒 Lunes a viernes de 8 a 19 h; sábado de 8 a 17 h; domingo de 12 a 16 h

🌐 <https://www.des.nc.gov/dua>

Food & Beverage Workers

[Southern Smoke Foundation](#)

Asheville Food and Beverage United is working on a how-to guide to applying for disaster relief for everyone (not just our workers) - keep an eye on our instagram for updates @avlfbu

Asheville Independent Restaurant Association (AIR) <https://airasheville.org/storminfo/>

From their website (added 10/9): Members: if AIR can assist you in any way during this recovery effort, please reach out to us at hello@airasheville.org. Stay safe!

AIR is hosting a meetings with Buncombe County Health Department officials:

1. Virtual: Wednesday, October 9 at 3pm via Zoom, meeting link here (this meeting will be recorded)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88527880898?pwd=0ij1mTSmxVwHRdffZUwJJg9fHJrZH4.1>

** both meetings will have Spanish language support

At these meetings, you will receive information on permit suspension notices and emergency operations plans (A very short process that Environmental Health has developed that will help you to open in a limited capacity if you are able to meet requirements). You will also be able to ask questions of Environmental Health Supervisor, Felissa Vazquez.

IMPORTANT: Permit suspension notices mean you must cease “normal” operations (i.e. food for pay) if you are without running water. It does NOT mean that you can’t give away food/meals to support your community. Here is some best practice guidance for meal giveaway (Key Steps for Donating Food <https://www.fda.gov/food/retail-food-industryregulatory-assistance-training/key-steps-donating-food-retail-food-establishments> and Safety Steps for Community Meals https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media_file/2021-02/7_Steps_Community_Meals.pdf)

**The NC Environmental Health Department has activated its staff to assist with the volume of calls. Restaurants may call or email with questions:

Phone line: 919-707-5999

Email address: EHpreparednessquestions@DHHS.nc.gov

Resources for Artists/Creatives

ArtsAVL has established a rapid response emergency fund for creatives: <https://artsavl.org/aid>

- [Relief for Asheville's RAD Artists & Employees Go Fund Me \(link to apply for funds in description\)](#)

[Emergency resources for artists and art organizations.](#) These new online assessment forms will help identify where assistance is sought, provide assistance where needed, understand critical needs, and inform recovery efforts moving forward.

- [Cultural Institutions: Rapid Damage Assessment Form](#)
- [Arts Organizations: Rapid Damage Assessment Form](#)
- [Individual Artists and Performing Groups: Rapid Damage Assessment Form](#)

Call for WNC Artists: The Flood Collection: for artists who lost originals in the flood. ALL proceeds split between participating artists (source is the creator of the collection)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeXrbWOZ0mCHXHjsz4J22XhwczFXcW4bKbIFrOVYfWli10PBg/viewform>

NCAPER - National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (added 10/12/24)

- Response Information: [Response Information | National Coalition f \(ncaper.org\)](#)
 - For artists and arts organizations seeking disaster assistance. This comprehensive resource includes essential contact details for requesting help, assessment forms for carefully documenting damages, and a valuable directory of key contacts within FEMA and related agencies. Serving as a centralized hub, it becomes a crucial one-stop destination for obtaining necessary resources and guidance in times of emergency or disaster.
 - NCAPER offers Response Calls/Zooms as a critical tool. These sessions provide a platform for affected individuals to connect, openly discuss their status and urgent needs, and engage in meaningful conversations with experienced NCAPER representatives who have faced similar situations.
 - Response Calls info: Hurricane Helene Response Calls **will begin** Tuesday, October 8, 5:00-5:45 PM ET for all affected states. Those who were impacted and those who wish to help are welcome. **Email jnewcomb@ncaper.org to receive the schedule** and Zoom login information.
 - National Dislocated Worker Grant Information
This program provides funds to nonprofits and small businesses to hire workers to assist with recovery from the disaster. The objective is to employ those who have lost work or been dislocated due to the disaster while contributing to the physical and economic recovery of the area. Artists and arts/cultural nonprofits may be able to access this program to employ artists in recovery efforts.

■ **Rapid Damage Assessment**

Three online surveys – one for arts organizations, one for individual artists and performing groups, and one for cultural institutions (libraries, archives, museums) – are now available. **Please complete the relevant survey so that the arts and culture response community, with support from the Heritage Emergency National Task Force (HENTF), can address the damage caused by the crisis you experienced by helping us understand and share with FEMA where assistance is sought, the critical needs, and inform how recovery efforts move forward.** The survey should take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete.

- **Arts Organizations: [HERE](#)**
- **Artists and Performing Groups: [HERE](#)**
- **Cultural Institutions: [HERE](#)**
- Please complete this NCAPER/HENTF survey just once. Please distribute it broadly to others in the arts community. If you have completed a survey from another source, we would appreciate you also submitting information to us.
- If you are not able to complete the survey online, please email info@ncaper.org to request a paper copy.

Other Legal Assistance:

~~10/4 and ongoing, every day. Pisgah Legal Services. Apply online at www.pisgahlegal.org or call 828-253-0406. Benefits, housing issues, consumer issues and domestic violence protections. (Source: 10/4 pisgahlegal.org)~~

Support for Small Businesses

The United States Small Business Association has opened a small business assistance center at the Chamber of Commerce. The center is focusing on providing disaster relief in the form of low interest loans for businesses, nonprofits, homeowners and renters impacted by the storm.

Visit sba.gov for more information or visit SBA representatives in person at the Asheville Chamber of Commerce (36 Montford Ave). Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

- [Post Helene Support for Small Businesses](#) –includes SBA Loan, Employee Assistance, Insurance help and more
- If you are a WNC based produce business that sells online–join this database to help support you through your business:
<https://airtable.com/appnsmntWdARtEfhn/pagonlpvztM2ZRFHd/form>
- Thanks to Mountain BizWorks there is a new relief loan program for small businesses. The WNC Strong: Helene Business Recovery Fund was created to provide rapid recovery loans to small businesses suffering economic losses related to the impacts of Tropical Storm Helene. The fund is administered by Mountain BizWorks and made possible with support from The

Golden LEAF Foundation, and an expanding list of other partners. The WNC Strong: Helene Business Recovery Fund helps small businesses close the gap between when the disaster strikes and when federal loans, insurance payouts, and other disaster relief funds are approved, or businesses have time to recover and get back to business. <https://www.mountainbizworks.org/helene/fund/>

- **Always Asheville Fund:** Explore Asheville is working diligently to stand up an application process to help get resources into the community as quickly as possible. To be notified when the Always Asheville Fund application is released, please [sign up here](#).

Resources for Farmers

- The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services hotline is active. This hotline is to connect farmers with resources that can assist with damage and other agricultural emergencies related to the storm. The toll-free number is 1-866-645-9403. A live operator will be available on the hotline from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- The United States Department of Agriculture is beginning to put together a list of resources for farmers and other agricultural industry members. If your agriculture operation has been impacted by Hurricane Helene, you can review [this link, farmer.gov](#) for emergency and disaster assistance programs.

Resources for Veterans

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs launched a new web page with disaster relief resources, providing a single place for veterans and their caregivers to access VA resources on health care, housing, benefits payments, insurance, and more.
 - You can access the web site via [this link](#).
- If you or a veteran you know needs immediate housing assistance after Hurricane Helene, please call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at (877) 424-3838.
 - The call center is open 24/7.
- If you have a VA-backed home loan and are unable to make your mortgage payments, please contact your mortgage servicer.
 - You can also call the VA at (877) 827-3702, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
 - Home loan servicers are allowed to put a 90-day pause on foreclosures and encouraged to waive late charges for VA-guaranteed home loans after a disaster.
- Legionnaires, Sons of the American Legion members and Legion Posts that have been displaced from their primary residence due to damage sustained during Hurricane Helene may be eligible for financial assistance through the American Legion.
 - Legionnaires and Sons of the American Legion members may be eligible for up to \$3,000.
 - Legion Posts may be eligible for up to \$10,000.
 - To learn more or to request assistance, please use [this link](#).
 - Applications must be submitted within 90 days of the disaster: Dec. 26, 2024.
- The Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville and Master Sergeant Jerry K. Crump VA Clinic in Forest City are open for essential and emergency services.

- Veterans can:
 - Visit the Asheville VA Hospital pharmacy for medication refills or:
 - Call the Regional Clinical Contact Center at (855) 679-0074 and press 1 for pharmacy representatives.
- Local pharmacies in the VA's community care network will also fill written prescriptions, or prescriptions as they appear on an active VA prescription bottle that is not older than six months and has available refills, to provide a 30-day supply.
- Hickory and Franklin outpatient VA clinics are now operating regularly.
 - Due to the damage and personal losses caused by Hurricane Helene to the staff of the VA, it will take some time to bring staffing to full capacity.
 - Please be patient as the VA works to rebuild their workforce.
- The Asheville VA Medical Center has successfully contacted over 91 percent of veterans most at risk for injury or poor outcomes due to the storm.
- The Asheville VA Medical Center's water supply is stable due to a schedule of eight 6,000-gallon tanker trucks bringing in water. To make sure the VA water supply remains stable, an emergency contract for well water and a disinfection service that will be operational as a backup water source in about two to three weeks have both been procured.

Recovery - Recovering from impacts of disaster

After The Flood: How to inspect, purge, and disinfect your well.

[Complete Guide to Preventing Mold & Healing After Flood Damage - Document \(A4\)](#)
 ([canva.com](#)) courtesy of KimberlyRush.com

Guide offers information about mold removal/prevention post hurricane, a list of Water Damage/Mold Remediation Professionals in Western NC, therapists. and also tips for holistic/complementary care for post-disaster recovery.