



New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA)
Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program
Notice of Funding Availability

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) expects to launch an online application for the *Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program* at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, September 17th at <https://www.njeda.com/henri-ida-relief/>. Applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis.

Purpose

The *Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program* provides short-term, immediate August rent or mortgage reimbursement support to New Jersey small and medium-sized businesses and non-profits that have suffered physical damage as a result of the remnants of Hurricane Henri on August 22nd or 23rd, 2021 and/or Tropical Storm/Hurricane Ida on September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 2021.

Overview

On August 22, 2021 and lasting into the early mornings of August 23, 2021, remnants of Hurricane Henri impacted the State of New Jersey with heavy rainfall totaling nearly 10 inches. The storm prompted evacuations, road closures and water rescues throughout the State. The damage was severe in many counties across New Jersey impacting homeowners and businesses alike.

Then, on September 1, 2021, in response to Tropical Storm Ida, Governor Murphy declared a statewide State of Emergency that was effective immediately and issued Executive Order No. 259. The Executive Order recognizes that Tropical Storm Ida “constitutes an imminent hazard that threatens and presently endangers the health, safety, and resources of the residents of the State” and that “this situation may become too large in scope to be handled in its entirety by the normal county and municipal operating services in some parts of the State, and this situation may spread to other parts of the State.” Executive Order No. 259 remains in effect as long as the Governor declares the State of Emergency continues to exist.

Over a very short time period on September 1st and 2nd, the storm impacted the State with severe tornadic conditions and sustained rainfall of approximately 10 inches in some towns that led to life-threatening flooding conditions, the tragic loss of at least 27 New Jersey residents, and the loss of power. The historic flooding caused severe damage and devastation to private property, automobiles, structures, public facilities and transportation networks in parts of Bergen, Essex, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Union. The New Jersey Business Action Center received numerous calls from businesses impacted by the storm. The NJEDA issued alerts for businesses and residents to take photos and document any property damages and to retain receipts for services for insurance purposes and for any federal or state relief programs that may become available. As of September 6th, President Biden approved a declaration of major disaster for Bergen, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Passaic, and Somerset counties for areas affected by the remnants of Hurricane Ida during September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 2021.

Tropical Storm Ida caused devastation to New Jersey's downtowns and business districts throughout the State, just as many were just beginning to rebound from the severe economic hardship of COVID-19. In response to this barrage of challenges, the *Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program* is intended to provide short-term, immediate rent/mortgage reimbursement to certain New Jersey businesses that suffered physical damage as a result of Tropical Storm Ida on September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 2021.

Program Details

The *Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program* will provide grants from \$1,000 up to \$5,000 to New Jersey-based businesses and nonprofits that have up to 50 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) as reported on their last WR-30 form (Q2 2021) with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD) and have a physical commercial location in New Jersey that suffered physical damage as a result of the remnants of Hurricane Henri and/or Hurricane Ida. Currently, the program is currently funded with \$10.5 million and may increase to \$15.5 million. One-third of the first request and one-third of the subsequent request (if necessary) will be reserved for entities in a census tract that was eligible to be selected as a New Jersey Opportunity Zone, but can be released back into the general program if demand from businesses and nonprofits in these areas has been met. Furthermore, \$500,000 will be set aside for businesses and nonprofits impacted by Hurricane Henri, but can be released back into the general program pool if demand from these entities has been met. The program may be expanded if additional funds become available.

Eligibility

To be eligible under the program, applicants must:

- Provide certification of an unmet need due to damage and/or business interruption, which includes, but is not limited to, flooding, interior or exterior damage to the building structure, roof damage, and siding damage, all of which are directly related to tropical storms Henri and Ida (*loss of power alone will not be considered physical damage*);
- Provide documentation of physical damage to the applicant's physical commercial location;
- Have been in operation on August 1, 2021;
- Present a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN);
- Submit recent wage reporting form (WR30), if applicable;
- Submit evidence of an August rent/mortgage payment of at least \$1,000 as well as have a need that is greater than \$1,000;
- Be registered to do business in the State of New Jersey which can be evidenced by a valid Business Registration Certificate;
- Be in good standing with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD), the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) (if the applicant is regulated by DHS), the Department of Children and Families (DCF) (if the applicant is regulated by DCF), and the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) (if the applicant is

regulated by the ABC) at the time of application, as determined in the sole discretion of DLWD, DHS, DCF and ABC; and

- Complete an affidavit identifying all funding sources related to tropical storms Henri and Ida, including prior grants, insurance, and Small Business Administration loans and grants.

Additional requirements may apply, including: eligible applicants shall employ no more than 50 FTEs; have an August rent/mortgage payment of at least \$1,000 and an unmet need (damages or revenue loss) that is greater than \$1,000; must have sustained physical damage to their commercial location as a result of the remnants of tropical storms Henri and Ida; must have a physical commercial location in the State of New Jersey (e.g., an office, a physical point of sales, a warehouse, manufacturing facility, etc.).

To determine the number of FTEs for the purpose of calculating eligibility, the NJEDA will utilize the New Jersey WR-30 filings with the DLWD. The most recently filed WR-30 filing will be reviewed (Q2 2021). Implied FTE calculations will be rounded to the nearest FTE (e.g., 2.49 FTEs would be counted as 2 FTEs for the program, whereas 2.50 FTEs would be counted as 3 FTEs). While the calculation of FTEs is based on weeks worked and wages as reported on the WR-30 filing.

The CEO/equivalent officer must self-certify that the business/non-profit was in operation on August 1, 2021; and sustained physical damage as a result of the remnants of tropical storms Henri and Ida.

The eligible applicant must satisfy the Division of Taxation/Department of Treasury's requirement to ensure that there are no tax debts due to the State. This may be accomplished through a certification from the applicant that it does not owe any taxes and will be subject to repayment if the certification is not correct.

An applicant shall submit only one application per EIN; accordingly, businesses with multiple locations but only one EIN will be limited to one application.

Additional eligibility requirements will apply to ensure that federal funds, if available, can be used for this program or to reimburse the Authority for use of its funds for this program. This may include, but is not limited to:

- An acknowledgement and agreement that grant proceeds be can only be used for eligible uses;
- A restriction on duplication of benefits that could exclude potential applicants that have already received emergency Ida assistance, and
- A requirement that the applicant demonstrate that it has had physical damage as a result of remnants of Hurricane Henri and/or Hurricane Ida.

Landlords and home-based businesses are not eligible for grant funding through this program.

Finally, prohibited businesses include, but are not limited to: gambling or gaming activities; the conduct or purveyance of "adult" (i.e., pornographic, lewd, prurient, obscene or otherwise similarly disreputable) activities, services, products or materials (including nude or semi-nude performances or the sale of sexual aids or devices); any auction or bankruptcy or fire or "lost-

our-lease” or “going-out-of-business” or similar sales; sales by transient merchants, Christmas tree sales or other outdoor storage; any activity constituting a nuisance; or any illegal purposes.

Eligible Uses

Under the *Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program*, funding shall be used to pay for August rent/mortgage only, cannot exceed \$5,000, and will be disbursed solely as reimbursement. If the grant amount is greater than the need, the amount of the award will be capped at the amount of need. Need will be determined based on estimated damages, as certified by the applicant, and loss based on shuttered business operations, also certified by the applicant. As this grant is solely for August rent/mortgage, funding cannot be used for any other purpose, including, but not limited to, capital expenses, such as remediation or construction.

Grant Amounts

The minimum grant amount is \$1,000 with a maximum award of \$5,000, capped at the lesser of applicant’s unmet need or rent/mortgage payment.

Application Process

Online applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, based upon the date in which the Authority receives a completed application submission. The NJEDA may create a pre-registration process to expedite the approval process.

Fees

Due to financial hardship, no fees will be collected by the Authority for this program.

Additional Information

Comprehensive information about the Henri/Ida Business Assistance Grant Program is available at <https://www.njeda.com/henri-ida-relief/>.