

SC HURRICANE IAN (2022) DISASTER REIMBURSEMENT GRANTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



DSS has opened an application for **Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grants** to help child care providers that had out-of-pocket expenses for damages, purchases, and repairs to their child care due to Hurricane Ian (2022) or its aftermath. Costs eligible for reimbursements can include but are not limited to the repair and replacement costs related to child care structure, playground, flooring, appliances, HVAC, consumable child care supplies, food, classroom and office equipment and supplies, site clean-up services, garbage or debris removal and in some cases, wages paid to staff during program closure.

The Hurricane Ian (2022) grant application opportunity is available to licensed or registered child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, licensed -exempt providers in ABC Quality and Head Start facilities who have a CC # issued prior to September 30, 2022. Family Friend and Neighbor providers and 4K/preschool programs operated by public schools and other approved (licensed) facilities owned and operated by the school district, are **not** eligible for a Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grant. Child care facilities that have permanently closed are **not** eligible to apply for this grant.

Providers who are currently in the ABC Quality program and set up for direct deposit will have approved funds deposited into their account. If a provider previously applied for and received other grants issued by DSS, your bank account information remains on file and upon approval the Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement funds will be deposited into the same account as the previous grant. All other providers will receive grant funds via check.

Note: Eligible providers are strongly encouraged to apply for this grant opportunity.

The terms and conditions of the grant are as follows:

- Providers must certify they were operating at the time of Hurricane Ian (2022) under a DSS issued CC#
- Grant funds will only be issued to reimburse child care provider's out-of-pocket expenses for repairs, services and purchases made for damages from Hurricane Ian (2022) or its aftermath in September 2022 or its aftermath
- Providers must submit legible proof of expenditures to be considered for reimbursement
- Providers will maintain documentation supporting expenditure of grant funds which may include records of application approval, receipts, invoices, and/or any other supporting documentation indicating how funds were used. Documentation must remain on file at the facility for a period of three (3) years from the date the grant is completed as needed to satisfy a possible audit. Documentation may be requested at any time by DSS and, if requested, will need to be provided within fifteen (15) calendar days of the request.
- Providers cannot submit a request for funds for any expenses that have already been paid by another grant, insurance, or federal FEMA loan.

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Providers are encouraged to review materials posted on the www.scchildcare.org website under either the “How can we help” or “News and Announcement” sections.

For questions, please email hurricaneiangrant@dss.sc.gov

General Questions

1. Which areas of SC were most severely affected by Hurricane Ian in 2022?
 - Governor McMaster declared the entire state of South Carolina Disaster area. FEMA identified the most severely impacted areas: Berkley, Charleston, Clarendon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Jasper and Williamsburg.
2. Will there be support for Hurricane Helene?
 - Currently DSS is not aware of any supplemental funds for Hurricane Helene. It is important that providers impacted by Hurricane Helene document damages, repairs and replacement costs in the event funding does become available.
3. Some of the eligible long- and short-term results of Hurricane Ian (2022) that are listed on the SC Child Care website. What are some of the activities planned to address the long- and short-term implications of the hurricane?
 - Many short and long-term impacts are addressed by activities submitted as part of the Phase II Hurricane Ian (2022) Grant application.
 - The approved Phase II application activities will be implemented after January 2025 and will address relief, mental health (MH) supports and supply building. The key activities are:
 - Development of MH resources and supports based on trauma informed practices,
 - Enhanced business practice development for owners, operators and directors, and
 - Supply building grants for areas hardest impacted by Ian.
 - Compliance and Quality building grants
4. How will you determine the amount of reimbursement each center will receive and is there a maximum amount we can apply for?
 - This is a reimbursement grant. Providers will submit documentation of repairs or replacement purchases for actual expenses associated with Hurricane Ian (2022) or the aftermath of that storm.
 - There is no maximum amount for this reimbursement grant for expenses associated with Hurricane Ian (2022) and its aftermath. All submissions must have appropriate documentation included for review and approval.
5. We were told funds might be available for expansion, is this true?
 - DSS has prioritized Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grants. There are additional grants being proposed to support supply building for providers seeking to expand or open new locations. At this time, those grants and their eligibility requirements have not been finalized.

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- When future opportunities are finalized, DSS will issue information via emails to providers as well as post information on the www.scchildcare.org website.
- 6. Where is information posted and how can I follow up on questions not answered here?
 - Information is posted for Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grants on the www.scchildcare.org website under “How Can We Help?” Information from informational meetings, PowerPoint presentation materials, or recorded webinars are also listed under “News and Announcements” on this page.
 - If you have a question not addressed here, you can email your question to hurricaneiangrant@dss.sc.gov.
- 7. What is considered a disaster?
 - For purposes of this grant, only those costs associated with replacement, repair, or purchases due to damages from Hurricane Ian (2022) or its aftermath will be considered.
 - While there are broad categories of disaster, this funding is limited. Anytime providers experience fire, flood, wind, or weather-related damage or issues, they should contact their Child Care Licensing Specialist. Additionally, providers should maintain documentation of damage and repairs or replacement cost.

Eligibility

- 8. Does this grant only apply to ABC providers? Who qualifies to apply?
 - The Hurricane Ian (2022) grant application opportunity is available to licensed or registered child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes, licensed -exempt providers in ABC Quality and Head Start facilities who have a CC # issued prior to September 30, 2022. Family Friend and Neighbor providers and 4K/preschool programs operated by public schools and other approved (licensed) facilities owned and operated by the school district, are **not** eligible for a Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grant. Child care facilities that have permanently closed are **not** eligible to apply for this grant.
- 9. If a provider plans to close the business but damages were done to property by Ian prior to closing. Does the provider qualify?
 - If the provider is currently closed, they are not eligible for the Reimbursement Grant. If a provider is interested in reopening, additional opportunities may be available through a different grant process.
- 10. Will we have to spend the grant in a certain amount of time, if we qualify for it?
 - This grant is intended to reimburse providers for out-of-pocket expenses they have already paid. With appropriate documentation of previous out-of-pocket expenses, these funds can be used at the discretion of the child care entity.

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11. Does a center that recently opened qualify for this grant in the case that the opening was delayed due to the storm and work to building qualify?
 - Providers whose license was issued after September 30th, 2022, are not eligible for this grant.
12. What if you received your license after the hurricane? Provider was in the process of preparing the in-home daycare.
 - DSS will review eligibility for providers that were working on their license and experienced damages from Hurricane Ian (2022) on a case-by-case basis. A key factor in this review is how they communicated with DSS Licensing Staff about the impacts and extent of damages.
13. What if I have moved from the facility impacted by Hurricane Ian (2022), am I still eligible for this grant?
 - You will need to email information about your past and current CC# to hurricaneiangrant@dss.sc.gov.
 - Once it has been verified that you are an eligible provider you will be able to apply for reimbursement of costs associated with Hurricane Ian (2022).
14. What if we used the money from another grant to pay for the repairs?
 - Providers are not eligible for reimbursement if they have used insurance, FEMA loan, or another grant to pay for associated repair costs.

Timeline for the Grant

15. When do I need to apply for the Hurricane Ian (2022) Grant?
 - Eligible providers can access the online portal beginning December 16, 2024.
 - Currently, DSS Licensing has not set a closing date for this grant. It is anticipated that at a minimum, the Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grant will remain open until June 15, 2025.

Documentation

16. What are examples of acceptable documentation of expenses?
 - Documentation must provide a clear overview of costs associated to Hurricane Ian or its aftermath. Copies of invoices, estimates, or orders must be accompanied by evidence to prove the provider paid for services, repairs, materials and/or supply purchases. Expenses will be considered for costs beginning September 20th, 2022 in preparation of the Hurricane. Submitted expenses will only be considered for reimbursement that can be linked to Hurricane Ian or its aftermath.
 - Invoices or bills from contractors indicating appropriate dates with evidence of payment (cancelled checks, bank or credit card statements)
 - Cancelled checks, bank statement with vendor name and accompanying explanation of purchase and vendor invoices

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- Canceled checks must include the date, and image of the front and back of the check
 - Detailed letter from a licensed contractor with description of work, cost and clear evidence the bill has been paid
 - Legible copies of receipts. Cash receipts must include additional evidence supporting the payment such as the invoice, and photos and description
 - Loan documents with description of what the loan was used for
17. This hurricane was so long ago, what if we don't have photos/documentation of any damage only lost revenue proof.
- **Only expenses with documentation can be reimbursed.** Some suggestions for possible documentation are: 2022, 2023, or 2024 business records or tax files; contractor or vendor correspondence and invoices, bank or credit card statements, cancelled checks, store receipts, bills/invoices.
 - Documentation must be legible/clear.
18. If you already submitted photos of damages, do you need to resubmit?
- Documentation that supports the amount requested for reimbursement must be submitted with the application. In addition to the approved documents, providers can submit or resubmit photographs to support their application request.
19. If we don't have photos that were taken in 2022, can we still qualify for revery funds?
- Currently, DSS is not requiring photos. Documentation of out-of-pocket expenses related to the hurricane, or the aftermath are required.
20. Can I submit a cashier's check with the company name on it?
- Yes, a copy of a cashier's check would be acceptable documentation along with a description related to the damages and invoices if a contractor was used. The check must have additional documentation submitted for what the funds were used to repair, replace or remove.
21. Can a contractor or vendor submit a letter?
- A letter from a contractor will be considered as acceptable, if that licensed contractor can provide a copy of the invoice where it detailed the items fixed and amounts. A blanket letter regarding work, service or purchase is not acceptable documentation. Evidence of payment is also required.

Payment

22. What is the maximum grant amount that can be requested for reimbursement?
- This grant is intended to be a reimbursement for expenses related to Hurricane Ian (2022) and its aftermath. At this time, there is no ceiling for expenses to be submitted. With appropriate documentation, all requests will be considered. Excessive requests may require follow up in the approval process by DSS Licensing or the Fire Marshall to verify the connection to the Hurricane Ian (2022) event.
23. What is the average time it takes to process an application?

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- Processing time will vary according to the provider's situation and documentation. Best case scenario would be within 30 days. More time may be needed to complete all verification requirements.
24. We will only receive money for what we spent and lost, correct?
- Yes, that is correct.

Allowable Expenses

25. What does the Reimbursement Grant cover and how can the funds be used?
- Providers will submit documentation of **repairs or replacement purchases for actual expenses associated with Hurricane Ian (2022) or the aftermath of that storm**. This grant is intended to reimburse providers for expenses they have already paid.
 - Some examples of allowable cost include:
 - Repairs to the exterior of the building, including roofing, windows, siding, playground equipment and ground covering.
 - Removal of debris downed or dangerous trees, damaged equipment, materials or supplies.
 - Replacement of child care equipment, materials or supplies. This includes classroom, office, shade structure, appliances, perishable food, or paper goods ruined by Hurricane Ian (2022).
 - Replacement or cleaning of carpeting or flooring.
 - Cleaning or replacement of walls or carpeting due to contamination or mold.
 - This is only a sample of possible items for reimbursement. If you have questions, contact hurricaneiangrant@dss.sc.gov .
 - With appropriate documentation of expenses, these funds can be used at the discretion of the child care entity.
26. Is this just for damage or loss of income?
- This reimbursement is for reimbursements for damages. Programs can also submit for wages provided to employees during a temporary closure.
27. Can the funds be used to repay a loan received to aid in repairs?
- Yes.
28. Can I apply for funds if my child care is located within a rental property?
- If the repairs were made to be compliant with SC Health and Safety Standards and have already been paid for by the provider, yes, those expenses can be reimbursed. If the repairs were made by the property owner, those expenses cannot be reimbursed.
29. Did work on my home or facility have to be completed by a licensed contractor?
- Yes, any structural work on a child care facility must be completed by a licensed contractor.
30. Can we use it for things that haven't gotten fixed yet?

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- No, this grant is intended for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for damages replacement or repairs.
- 31. What if you still have roof leaking and shingles needs to be in place?
 - This grant is not intended for repairs that have not yet been made at the time of application.
- 32. If you didn't have any damage or a big damage, you still get paid?
 - If the provider did not have any out-of-pocket expenses for damages associated with Hurricane Ian (2022), or loss of revenue from closures due to Ian, then they are not eligible for this grant.
- 33. Are these Disaster Recovery funds available to cover permanent and semi-permanent building damage?
 - Yes, if damage was due to Hurricane Ian (2022), or its aftermath, and repairs have been made at the time of application. If a provider is seeking funds for future projects that originated or became worse due to Hurricane Ian (2022), those funds for future repairs are not eligible.

Loss of Revenue and Associated Child Care Salary Expenses

- 34. What do you mean when you say, “loss of revenue”?
 - For purposes of the Hurricane Ian (2022) Reimbursement Grant, “loss of revenue” refers to the income providers did not charge families during temporary program closures related to Hurricane Ian (2022) **coupled with** the continued payment to staff in the form of wages while the child care program was temporarily closed. To claim loss of revenue during a closure, a providers must have communicated their closure to DSS at the time of the event or immediately afterward and must provide payroll records as proof of payment.
 - Programs can submit documentation of temporary closure and salary costs (as reported on payroll records) paid to staff during that same period. Salary reimbursement will be considered an eligible reimbursement cost.
- 35. What costs can I submit for loss of revenue?
 - Providers can submit for the actual amount of payroll (as reported on payroll records) they expended during temporary closures due to Hurricane Ian (2022).
- 36. How do I know if I am eligible/ineligible for loss of revenue for Hurricane Ian (2022)?
 - When a disaster occurs, providers have two options to communicate closures or other impacts to DSS Licensing: (1) Report to their Regional Office to their CCL Specialist and (2) Report through the disaster line.
 - To claim loss of revenue and be reimbursed for associated staff salary payments during a closure, a providers must have communicated their closure to DSS at the time of the event or immediately afterward and submit payroll records as proof of payment to staff.

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- For providers claiming impacts due to closures, DSS will verify closures through their event tracking system.
 - A provider would be ineligible if:
 - If a provider did not report their closures or lack payroll records, they are ineligible to submit for reimbursement under this category.
 - If providers continued to collect tuition or enrollment payments for the time they were closed, they are ineligible to submit for loss of revenue payments.
 - If a provider did not continue to pay their staff during the closure for Hurricane Ian (2022), they are ineligible to submit for loss of revenue.
 - Providers are eligible if:
 - They communicated their closure to DSS at the time of the event or immediately afterward
 - They did not charge families tuition or enrollment fees during the closure, or provided families with a credit for the time they were closed
 - Providers continued to pay their child care staff during the temporary closure and have payroll records.
37. If I meet the eligibility for loss of revenue, how do I submit documentation of payment of staff salaries during my temporary closure if parent fees were waived?
- When adding documentation to the DSS Hurricane Ian (2022) Grant in the Providers Portal, select the Category “Other” and indicate payroll in your attachment heading.
 - Providers must submit proof of closure. When a disaster occurs, providers have two options to communicate closures or other impacts to DSS Licensing: (1) Report to their Regional Office to their CCL Specialist and (2) Report through the disaster line.
 - Providers must submit copies of payroll statements for the time providers paid staff aligning with the closure dates. Providers can submit information from payroll companies if they are using one, information from business records, or copies of payment records for the number of staff supported during the closure.

Taxes

38. Do we have to keep records and file taxes related to grant income?
- Yes, providers must maintain records and will receive a 1099.