

FROM THE OFFICE OF  
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## **Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Over \$7.1 Million Available to Floridians Impacted by Southwest Florida Tornadoes**

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** - Today, Governor Ron DeSantis and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) joined local Community Action Agencies in Charlotte and Lee counties to announce the availability of more than \$7.1 million in funding and resources to assist income-qualified individuals and families recovering from the impacts of recent tornadoes in Southwest Florida. DEO has also deployed individuals to Charlotte and Lee counties to assist homeowners in need. In addition to this funding, Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) launched a donation portal to provide immediate relief for disaster survivors impacted by the tornadoes. The donation portal is available at [FloridaDisaster.org/Assistance](https://FloridaDisaster.org/Assistance).

"Victims of these tornadoes in Southwest Florida deserve assistance to kickstart their recovery process," said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. "Despite the Biden Administration's failure to help Floridians in need, I will continue working with state agencies to find ways that we can assist our residents who have been devastated by these tornadoes."

"Our thoughts are with all the families who are having to rebuild their homes and lives following the recent tornadoes in Southwest Florida," said **DEO Secretary Dane Eagle**. "As a Southwest Florida native, this tragedy is particularly impactful to me. Governor DeSantis continues to prioritize the needs of all Floridians, and the Department stands ready to assist in the recovery efforts of those in need."

Available funding for Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is disbursed to local Community Action Agencies by DEO. DEO is working with the Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in Charlotte and Lee counties to provide CSBG and LIHEAP assistance to help impacted individuals and families meet their immediate needs.

“As our partners in the community work to address the needs of those impacted by the tornado on January 16, Lee County is proud of our partnership with the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO),” said **Roger Mercado, Jr., Director of Lee County Human and Veteran Services**. “As the designated Community Action Agency for Lee County, the programs and services offered by Lee County Human and Veteran Services will be leveraged to address some of the unmet needs of our residents.”

“The Community Action Agency, Charlotte County government and its many partners stand ready to assist the victims of the January 16th tornado as they navigate the lengthy process of recovery,” said **Carrie Walsh, Director of Charlotte County Human Services Department**.

**Available Resources:**

- DEO is deploying team members to assist Charlotte and Lee county residents in their recovery efforts.
- \$1,610,686 in CSBG funding is available to assist eligible income-qualified households in Charlotte and Lee counties with attaining the skills, knowledge and motivation necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. Services may include the following:
  - Emergency health
  - Food
  - Housing
  - Debris Removal
  - Repair electrical wiring or gas lines
  - Personal documentation (*Driver’s License, ID Cards*)
  - Medical Supplies
  - Day Care
  - Transportation Assistance
  - Housing Counseling
  - Financial Management Assistance
  - Nutrition Programs
  - Community Gardening Projects
  - Food Banks
  - Job Counseling
  - Placement and Training Services
  - Homeless Prevention Programs

- \$5,515,917 in the LIHEAP is available to assist income-qualified families in Charlotte and Lee County with home heating and cooling costs. Services may include the following:
  - Home heating and cooling costs
  - Utility relocation setup and deposits
  - Disaster related temporary housing
  - HVAC Replacement
  - Generator Purchase
  - Electrical Power Cable Connection
- If you believe you may be eligible, you may contact the CAA serving the county in which you live to learn more about assistance programs.
  - **Charlotte County** residents may visit the [Charlotte County Human Services Department](#), 1050 Loveland Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33980, PH: [941-833-6500](#).
  - **Lee County** residents may contact [Lee County Human and Veteran Services](#), 2440 Thompson St., Fort Myers, FL 33901, PH: 239-533-7930.

For more information about the Community Services Block Grant Program, [click here](#). Information about the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is also available [here](#). For additional information on resources available in both Charlotte and Lee Counties, [click here](#).

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