



October 13, 2022

As recovery continues, Lee County as well as the state of Florida, have compiled workforce recovery resources for individuals as well as employers.

In our bi-weekly email below, you'll find opportunities for displaced and employment-seeking Floridians. Businesses are encouraged to hire local.

Please be sure to reference the [Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Hurricane Ian Recovery](#) website. There is a tab for Businesses as well as one for Individuals with links to a variety of resources to help you during this recovery phase.

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HURRICANE IAN RECOVERY

Resources are Being Made Available

Many Floridians in Southwest Florida have had their businesses and livelihoods impacted by the storm and are looking for work – the private sector can help them get back on their feet by hiring locally for the length of recovery, supporting the local economy for at least six months.

Governor DeSantis also highlighted workforce recovery resources that have been made available to help Floridians whose jobs and businesses were impacted by Hurricane Ian through both [CareerSource Florida](#) and [The Department of Economic Opportunity \(DEO\)](#). Available resources in impacted areas include:

- [Small Business Emergency Bridge Loans](#)
- [Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Waiver of Work Search Requirements](#)
- [Mobile CareerSource Centers across the impacted areas, including at Disaster Recovery Centers \(DRCs\)](#)
- [Business Damage Assessment Survey](#)
- [Disaster Recovery Jobs Portal](#)

CareerSource Southwest Florida has announced that they can provide fully-funded staffing assistance for humanitarian and disaster-related clean-up and restoration through National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) funds. [Click here](#) for more info on the grant and to apply.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE FROM OUR GOVERNOR](#)

PROCUREMENT RESOURCES

Lee County Procurement Information

Businesses are encouraged to register as a vendor with Lee County. By registering as a vendor, submitting a response to a solicitation, or entering into a contract, you are obligated to comply with the provisions of [Section 448.095, Fla. Stat.](#), ["Employment Eligibility."](#)

Further, by your registration as a vendor, response to a solicitation, and entering into a contract, you affirm and represent that you are registered with the E-Verify system and are using the same, and will continue to use the same as required by Section 448.095, F.S. Compliance with Section 448.095 includes, but is not limited to, utilization of the E-Verify System to verify the work authorization status of all newly hired employees, and requiring all subcontractors to provide an affidavit attesting that the subcontractor does not employ, contract with, or subcontract with, an unauthorized alien. As you explore the site, you will learn about the various processes by which Procurement Management obtains and supplies the County departments with everything they need to perform their daily operations as well as:

- [How to become a vendor with the County](#)
- [How to download projects](#)
- [Who we are and how to contact us](#)
- [Open access to archived documents](#)
- [A complete listing of current contracts](#)

Lee County promotes free and open competition. Please see the instructions below to register to become a Lee County vendor. The Procurement office can also assist with any questions you may have about the application process. Please call 239-533-8881 or visit www.leegov.com/procurement to learn more.

BECOME A LEE COUNTY VENDOR

How to Register

It's easy to become a Lee County Vendor. Here's what you need to do:

- Fill out the Vendor Pay Application
- Complete and sign the W-9 form
- Let them know if you want electronic payment (optional - ACH form required)

Once your application is received, your firm will be assigned a vendor number and you're good to go.

The vendor/bidder application does not expire. However, they do recommend that you contact them with any changes to ensure that your information is current.

[CLICK HERE TO BECOME A LEE COUNTY VENDOR](#)

PERMITTING UPDATES

Due to both public and private damage generated by Hurricane Ian, Unincorporated Lee County is temporarily altering routine construction permitting and inspections for rebuilding.

Damage Assessment:

- Unincorporated Lee County, following the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements, has the responsibility to determine "substantial damage" and "substantial improvement," and has implemented the procedures to do so.
 - **Substantial damage** is defined as damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its "before damage" condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure. *(Note: The cost of the repairs must include all costs necessary to fully repair the structure to its "before damage" condition.)*
 - **Substantial improvement** is defined as any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure (before any improvements are performed).
 - Historic structures may be exempt from these requirements if the compliance would threaten the structure's continued eligibility for historic designation.
- These laws are required by the NFIP to protect lives and investment from future flood damages. The county must enforce these laws in order for federally-backed flood insurance to be made available to Unincorporated Lee County residents and property owners.

FEMA 50% Rule:

- This is in effect and will be enforced during review.
- **Basic rule:** If the cost of improvements or the cost to repair the damage exceeds 50% of the market value of the building, it must be brought up to current floodplain management standards.
Visit www.leegov.com/dcd/flood/building/improvements or www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_p213_08232018.pdf for more information.

Permitting:

Phase II of the Disaster Recovery procedures extends permitting, review and inspection services to all record types regardless of damage, **while ensuring those with hurricane damage are given priority.**

Please review the [Phase II Disaster Recovery Permitting Requirements](#) and the [Guides and Forms webpage](#) for information about Permitting Requirements by record type.

1. Work not requiring a permit:

- Removal of debris from on or inside a structure
 - Minor demolition to prevent injury or prevent further damage to buildings
 - Structural shoring and bracing
 - Replacement of broken glass within existing framing for windows and doors
 - Repair/Replacement of soffit and gutters
 - Roof Shingle replacement of one square of shingles (10-foot by 10-foot area, or less)
 - Minor non-structural repairs made to the exterior of structures
 - Repair of minor water leaks that do not involve structural, mechanical or electrical systems
 - Previously permitted fences destroyed due to the storm may be re-installed, like for like, in the exact same location
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2. Minor Damage

- Permits for minor damage, consisting of roof covering, screen enclosures, wood decks, doors, windows and other non-structural components may be obtained upon the submission of an itemized list from the contractor or owner-builder stating the items to be repaired, with an accurate cost estimate of the repairs. It will be the responsibility of the owner-builder or contractor to request the required inspections from the Lee County Inspections Office at 239-533-8997 or use an approved architect or engineer to perform the inspections and provide inspection reports to the Lee County Building Inspections Office.

3. Major damage

- Permits for minimal structural components such as damaged glass rooms, trusses on single family houses, cladding (roof and wall sheathing) and non-structural components, including mechanical (air conditioning), electrical and insulation, may be issued to a contractor or owner-builder upon submission of an itemized list signed and sealed by an approved architect or engineer.
- Considered Substantial Damage per FEMA guidelines, requiring a more complex permit review process described here: www.leegov.com/dcd/flood/building/improvements.

4. Major structural damage

- Permits for collapsed roofing systems, destroyed walls, foundation damage, damage to beams and other major structural components, will only be issued upon submission of detailed construction drawings prepared and sealed by an approved architect or engineer.
- Considered Substantial Damage per FEMA guidelines, requiring a more complex permit review process described here: www.leegov.com/dcd/flood/building/improvements.

Expired permits/permits due to expire:

- Existing permitting records (all record types) that have an expiration date of Sept. 26 through Oct. 31, 2022, will be auto-extended, with a new expiration date of Nov. 1, 2022 and is subject to further extension.

Inspections:

- All inspection requests are being accepted at this time, with **priority being given to hurricane-related repairs.**
- It will be the responsibility of the contractor or owner-builder to request the required inspections, based on the approved scope of work. The use of an approved private provider inspection firm to perform the necessary inspections and provide inspection reports to the Lee County Building Inspections Office is acceptable. Email inspections@leegov.com.
- [Inspections can be scheduled via eConnect/ACA or by phone at 239-533-8997.](#)
- ***Inspections must be scheduled by 5 p.m. for next business day inspections. Lee County is temporarily suspending same-day inspection scheduling.***

Tips for rebuilding:

- Homeowners may perform their own repairs per [state statute 489.103](#).
- Anyone hired to do repairs for the homeowner must be a properly licensed contractor. The homeowner should visit the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation website at www.myfloridalicense.com or contact the Lee County Contractor Licensing Office at ContractorLicensing@leegov.com, to assure the contractor is properly licensed to perform the work being requested.
- Getting a permit for permanent repairs will help prevent post-storm scams and price-gouging. Your community's permitting process can help ensure that repairmen are licensed and performing repairs to code. Note: Procedures designed to facilitate permitting during the aftermath of a major catastrophic event. Changes may occur, depending on circumstances.

The Lee County Department of Community Development (DCD) will return its permitting operations to its office located at the Public Works Building, 1500 Monroe St., Fort Myers, on Monday, Oct. 17.

Post-Hurricane Ian, DCD temporarily relocated to the first floor of County Administration, 2115 Second St., Fort Myers. That operation will be open today, Thursday, Oct. 13, and Friday, Oct. 14, until it closes at 4 p.m. Friday. Permits will not be available during the weekend, Oct. 16-17, to allow DCD to relocate their office, which has now been repaired.

Starting Monday, Oct. 17, DCD's normal permitting business hours are being expanded to assist its customers. The hours of operation will be Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays (starting Oct. 22) from 8 a.m. to noon.

BUSINESS OPEN MAP

To view information on open businesses in your area, please visit www.leegov.com/hurricane/storm/open. Businesses featured on the map fall under the following categories:

- Supermarkets and other grocery stores
- Gas stations and convenience stores
- Other general merchandise stores
- Pharmacies and drug stores
- Banks and credit unions
- Child day care services
- Veterinary services
- Automotive parts and accessories stores
- Automotive repair and maintenance
- Used merchandise stores

Search for an address to find open businesses near you. If you don't know the address, use one of these search methods:

- Click the search box and type in an address or choose **Use current location**
- Click within the map

If a business is missing or has incorrect information, [please click here to let us know via this short survey](#).