

## Federal Funding Released For Hurricane Victim Jobs Program

By Administrator

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Governor Cooper announced additional federal funding is available for the temporary employment program that helps North Carolinians get back to work in areas affected by Hurricane Florence.

The new funds, totaling \$3.1 million, are part of a Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant that the U.S. Department of Labor initially awarded to the N.C. Department of Commerce in late September 2018, not long after Hurricane Florence devastated the state. The Commerce Department's Workforce Solutions division requested the grant and administers the program in partnership with local Workforce Development Boards.

"North Carolina has made great progress since Hurricane Florence hit, but many areas are still recovering," N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony Copeland said. "This temporary employment program is an important tool that allows us to match people who need work with organizations that need workers."

The additional funding will address the immediate needs for workers in the hardest-hit counties: Robeson, Bladen, Hoke, Scotland and Richmond, all of which are served by the Lumber River Workforce Development Board. Funding will also be available to other eligible areas with identified continuing recovery needs.

Through the federal grant, residents of eligible counties are employed in jobs that support either clean-up and recovery from storm damage or humanitarian assistance to people in the affected areas. As of the end of June, the program has supported 516 workers. Their employers must be either nonprofits or government agencies, and they can employ participants in this program for up to 12 months. Worksites must generally be on either public property or land owned by not-for-profit agencies.

Workers who lost jobs directly due to Hurricane Florence are not the only residents who may be eligible to participate in the program. Some may be eligible after being unemployed for 13 or more weeks, or after being dislocated due to a business closure or layoff.

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