

Workshop to Offer Guidance on How to Open Business Claims for the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire

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SANTA FE, NM – Business owners impacted by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and subsequent flooding can receive tips at an Oct. 23 workshop on how to open a claim, learn more about what qualifies for compensation and begin the claims process on the spot.

The Advocate team at the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office is partnering with the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Small Business Administration to offer guidance to affected businesses on the best way to start a claim before the Dec. 20, 2024, deadline.

The workshop will be 2 p.m. – 7 p.m., Oct. 23 at Highlands University's Student Union Building, third floor, in Las Vegas, N.M. There will be information booths and presentations on what's required for businesses to receive compensation and what resources are available to impacted businesses. To-date the Claims Office has paid more than \$214 million to business owners and is bringing the Claims Office's business team to the community to continue to share vital information to owners as they navigate the claims process. Claims Office business team members will be onsite to assist those who want to file a Notice of Loss (NOL), which is the first step in starting a claim.

"Businesses are the backbone of communities and provide jobs and essential services, which is why the Advocate Team is committed to helping eligible businesses start their claims before the deadline," said Paula Gutierrez, the Claims Office Advocate Branch Chief. "This workshop is one way to maximize the resources that are available to business owners to address their needs, as they navigate the claims process before the Dec. 20, 2024, deadline."

Business owners who aim to submit an NOL at the workshop should bring the following:



- Tax returns and profit/loss statements for 2021 and 2022
- Articles of incorporation or organization
- Completed W-9
- Copy of the IRS letter with your name and Employer Identification Number
- Inventory and equipment list before and after the fire and flooding.
- Photos of damaged property
- A document showing estimated cost of damage or losses; that could be an invoice, receipt or purchase order of repairs and costs to replace equipment and inventory.

The workshop will offer instruction on business impacts that qualify for compensation, such as increased costs, temporary interruption or closure, loss of natural resources, canceled contracts and staff who were paid after operations shut down.

Representatives from the Small Business Administration New Mexico District Office, the New Mexico Minority Business Development Agency, New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program (Los Alamos National Laboratory), New Mexico Occupational Health & Safety Bureau and the City of Las Vegas Community Development Department will be onsite to share resources and answer questions.

The Claims Office is committed to meeting the needs of people impacted by the fire and subsequent flooding by providing full compensation available under the law as expeditiously as possible. So far, it has paid more than \$1.4 billion to claimants.

As we continue to approach the Dec. 20, 2024, deadline, we continue to observe an increase in claim submissions, that may result in temporary longer wait times that often prevent same-day issuance of Letters of Determination for claims. We are actively working to reduce wait times and shorten processing times of claims.

Claims Office compensation is not taxable. Receiving payment from the Claims Office will not affect eligibility for government assistance programs. Contact a tax professional for specific tax-related questions. Questions and concerns can also be addressed by calling your claim navigator or the Helpline at **505-995-7133**.

For information and updates regarding the Claims Office, please visit the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office website at fema.gov/hermits-peak. For



information in Spanish, visit fema.gov/es/hermits-peak. You can also follow our Facebook page and turn notifications on to stay up to date about the claims process, upcoming deadlines and other program announcements at facebook.com/HermitsPeakCalfCanyonClaimsOffice.



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