



Helene Disaster Leave Policy

Contents

1. Purpose	1
2. Applicability	1
3. Policy	1
4. Policy Non-Compliance	2
5. Audit	2
6. Approval and Revision History	2

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a Helene Disaster Leave Program to support employees who have exhausted their applicable leave balances and need additional leave due to the impacts of Hurricane Helene.

2. **Applicability**

This policy applies to all Buncombe County departments and employees. Where there is conflict with any department-specific policy, this document will supersede.

3. **Policy**

3.1. **Disaster Leave**

- 3.1.1. Buncombe County Government recognizes that many employees were impacted by Hurricane Helene, and, in some situations, employees who have been adversely affected may require additional leave due to depleting their available leave balances.
- 3.1.2. Eligible employees may be granted up to forty hours of paid Helene Disaster Leave, which must be used specifically for Hurricane Helene recovery-related needs.
- 3.1.3. Helene Disaster Leave may be used through June 30, 2025, and can be retroactively used by employees who used leave without pay starting October 21, 2024.
- 3.1.4. After exhausting Helene Disaster Leave and all other applicable leave, employees may use their accrued sick leave for absences due to Hurricane Helene recovery-related needs. This exception to the Leave Policy will expire on June 30, 2025.
- 3.1.5. All requests and personal information related to the Helene Disaster Leave Program will be managed by Human Resources and treated as confidential personnel information.
- 3.1.6. If a recipient separates from employment with the County, any remaining Helene Disaster Leave will be forfeited.
- 3.1.7. The Helene Disaster Leave program will end on June 30, 2025, unless extended by the Board of Commissioners.

3.2. **Eligibility Requirements**

- 3.2.1. Recipients must be employed in a County position that is eligible to accrue Annual Leave, per the County's Leave Policy.

This is a controlled document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be verified with the electronic file version prior to use. For support related to this policy and procedures, contact the Human Resources Department.

- 3.2.2. Recipients must be complete a request form and provide documentation to indicate they were adversely affected by Hurricane Helene, such as paperwork from FEMA, property insurance providers, or other appropriate sources indicating damage to their primary residence or other severe hardship caused by Hurricane Helene. Individuals are considered adversely affected if the impacts of Hurricane Helene caused severe hardship to the employee or family member that requires the employee to be absent from work.
- 3.2.3. Recipients must have exhausted their applicable accrued leave balances at the time of their request, which includes all Annual Leave, PTO, Compensatory Time, Banked Holiday, Healthy Hours Earned, Safety Critical Response Time Off, or other compensable leave.
- 3.2.4. Recipients must need additional leave specifically due to Hurricane Helene recovery-related needs.

4. Policy Non-Compliance

Employees willfully violating the terms and conditions of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

5. Audit

All policies for Buncombe County may be subject to audit or review as outlined in the Internal Auditor’s Statement.

6. Approval and Revision History

Policy Origination Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Requires Board Approval:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Board Approval Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Revision History:	Enter Dates and changes

This is a controlled document for internal use only. Any documents appearing in paper form are not controlled and should be verified with the electronic file version prior to use. For support related to this policy and procedures, contact the Human Resources Department.