



Disaster Field Operations Center East

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SBA Opens Second Business Recovery Center in Florida For Businesses Affected by Hurricane Sally, Centers Closed on Columbus Day

ATLANTA - The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced the opening of a second Business Recovery Center (BRC) in Fort Walton Beach, **Florida** on Oct. 13, to help businesses impacted by Hurricane Sally. SBA representatives at the BRC can provide information about disaster loans, answer questions and assist businesses in completing the SBA application.

“The SBA is committed to the Florida small business community’s economic recovery. We want area businesses to have a place where they can meet in person with SBA representatives and find out how a low-interest disaster loan can help them recover,” said the SBA’s Acting North Florida District Director, Laketa Henderson.

The SBA Business Recovery Center in Escambia County will be closed on Monday, Oct. 12 in observance of Columbus Day, and will resume its regular operations on Tuesday, Oct. 13.

The disaster declaration covers Bay, Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton counties in **Florida**, which are eligible for both Physical and Economic Injury Disaster Loans from the SBA. Small businesses and most private nonprofit organizations in the following adjacent counties are eligible to apply only for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans: Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson and Washington in **Florida**; and Baldwin, Covington, Escambia and Geneva in **Alabama**.

In accordance with precautions for COVID-19, the SBA established protocols to help protect the health and safety of the public. Visitors to the BRCs are encouraged to wear a face mask. The Centers are located as indicated below and will operate until further notice.

<p><u>Okaloosa County Business Recovery Center</u></p> <p>Bridgeway Center Building C 205 Shell Ave. Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548</p> <p>Opens: Tuesday, Oct. 13 Hours: Sunday-Saturday (7 days a week) 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (CST)</p>	<p><u>Escambia County Business Recovery Center</u></p> <p>East Pensacola Heights Clubhouse 3208 East Gonzalez St. Pensacola, FL 32503</p> <p>Hours: Sunday-Saturday (7 days a week) 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (CST) Closed: Monday, Oct. 12 in observance of Columbus Day</p>
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Businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. Applicants may be eligible for a loan amount increase up to 20 percent of their physical damages, as verified by the SBA, for mitigation purposes. Eligible mitigation improvements may include elevation, a safe room or storm shelter, sump pump, French drain or retaining wall to help protect property and occupants from future damage caused by a similar disaster.

For small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations, the SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any physical property damage.

Interest rates are as low as 3 percent for businesses and 2.75 percent for nonprofit organizations with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by the SBA and are based on each applicant's financial condition.

Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via the SBA's secure website at <https://DisasterLoanAssistance.sba.gov/>.

To be considered for all forms of disaster assistance, applicants should register with **FEMA** online at DisasterAssistance.gov or download the FEMA mobile app. If online or mobile access is unavailable, applicants should call the FEMA toll-free helpline at 800-621-3362. Those who use 711-Relay or Video Relay Services should call 800-621-3362.

Additional details on the location of a Business Recovery Center, requests for loan applications and information on the loan application process can be obtained by calling the SBA Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing) or by sending an e-mail to DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov.

The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is **Dec. 1, 2020**. The deadline to return economic injury applications is **July 2, 2021**.

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About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow or expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov.