



## Disaster Field Operations Center East

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### SBA Offers Disaster Assistance to Small Businesses in Florida Affected by Toxic Algal Blooms

**WASHINGTON** – Low-interest Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)s from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) are available to Florida small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small aquaculture businesses and private nonprofit organizations affected by toxic algal blooms beginning June 1, 2018.

SBA Administrator Linda McMahon made the loans available in response to a letter from Gov. Rick Scott on Aug. 20, requesting a disaster declaration by the SBA. The declaration covers Lee and Martin counties, and the adjacent counties of Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie in **Florida**.

“The SBA is strongly committed to providing the people of **Florida** with the most effective and customer-focused response possible to assist small businesses with federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans,” said McMahon. “Getting businesses and communities up and running after a disaster is our highest priority at SBA.”

SBA’s Customer Service Representatives will be available at the Disaster Loan Outreach Centers to answer questions about the disaster loan program and help individuals complete their applications.

The Centers are located in the following communities and are open as indicated:

<b><u>Lee County</u></b>	<b><u>Martin County</u></b>
City/County Annex Building <a href="#">1825 Hendry Street</a> Fort Myers, FL 33901 Opens Friday, Sept. 7 at 11 a.m. Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Stuart Airshow (Museum) <a href="#">1895 SE Flying Fortress Way</a> Stuart, FL 34996 Opens Friday, Sept. 7 at 11 a.m. Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“The SBA can help affected small businesses and nonprofit organizations overcome their economic losses by offering working capital loans, but the help cannot start until they submit an SBA disaster loan application to us,” said SBA’s South Florida Interim District Director Lynn Douthett.

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Eligible entities may qualify for loans up to \$2 million. The SBA offers economic injury loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. The rates on these loans are 3.61 percent for small businesses and 2.5 percent for nonprofit organizations with terms up to 30 years. Eligibility for these working capital loans are based on the size and type of business and its financial resources. These working capital loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. The loans are not intended to replace lost sales or profits.

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

Applications and program information are available by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955 (1-800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing), or by emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). Loan applications can also be downloaded at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov). Completed applications should be returned to a center or mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The filing deadline to return applications for economic injury is **June 4, 2019**.

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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](http://www.sba.gov).