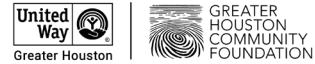


# NEWS RELEASE



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## Greater Houston Disaster Alliance Invests \$3.15 Million in Grants to Nonprofits Serving Low-Income, Vulnerable Households Impacted by Hurricane Beryl

*First round of grants to support access to emergency financial assistance and home repairs*

**HOUSTON, TX** (July 31, 2024) – The Greater Houston Disaster Alliance is investing \$3.15 million in grants from its Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund to help area neighbors who are struggling to recover from the July 8 storm. This first round of grants will support low-to-moderate income households with flexible emergency financial assistance to help defray the costs of crucial disaster recovery related expenses; provide navigation support for people accessing additional recovery services, such as [FEMA](#) and [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) assistance; and provide targeted home repair assistance for the most severely impacted who face financial challenges covering repair costs.

Eligible households impacted by the storm seeking financial assistance will be able to access resources beginning July 31, 2024. Information on home repair assistance providers and how to apply will be released on August 7, 2024.

The fund's investments come as Houston transitions from emergency response and relief to early recovery, and will play a crucial role in delivering essential resources to the most severely affected and vulnerable populations. As of the latest data available, more than 26,000 Beryl-related surveys had been submitted through Texas iSTAT and Connective, and the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE has received more than 29,000 Beryl-related calls, highlighting the immense need for help both in the immediate aftermath of the storm and in the recovery phase. This first round of grants will provide much needed resources to low-income, vulnerable households and complement additional public and private funds currently available.

To move quickly and efficiently in getting aid to those in need, grants are distributed through a trusted network of nonprofit partners based on the capability of each to provide needed services and geographical reach to the most impacted, low-income communities in the City of Houston and Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller counties. Nonprofits receiving grants to provide flexible emergency financial assistance and resource navigation include **BakerRipley, Boat People SOS – Houston, Catholic Charities, Chinese Community Center, Community Assistance Center, Easter Seals of Greater Houston, Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services (ECHOS), Family Houston, Hope Disaster Recovery, Alexander Jewish Family Service, My Brother's Keeper Outreach Center, Sewa International, Volunteers of America, Wesley Community Center and West Street Recovery**. A system coordination grant was provided to **Connective** to facilitate the distribution of resources from grant recipients to help seekers residing in Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller counties. Connective will provide a platform for grantees to offer low-barrier, flexible emergency financial assistance to both new and existing clients, as well as a web-based centralized application for those seeking home repair services that will be available next week.

Impacted households that meet the criteria for assistance are eligible for flexible emergency financial assistance up to \$1,500, which will be distributed through direct payments to cover disaster relief and recovery expenses including but not limited to temporary housing, relocation, minor home repair managed by the household, food/furniture replacement or lost wages.

## **How to Get Help: Flexible Emergency Financial Assistance**

- Starting July 31, individuals affected by Hurricane Beryl can access available resources through nonprofit organizations that have received grants to provide assistance.
- Help seekers from Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller Counties should call the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, a free, confidential helpline operating 24 hours a day. A helpline specialist will gather information on the caller's specific situation and needs and provide direct contact information for local organizations that can best address those needs.
- When connected with a nonprofit partner, a basic assessment will be conducted to identify primary needs that determine the amount of flexible emergency financial assistance provided.
- Additionally, eligible households will be connected with a navigator to help guide them through available federal relief programs, such as FEMA and SBA, as well as other public and private programs for temporary housing, food, medical care and other support services.

## **Eligibility Criteria for Financial Assistance**

- Households impacted by Hurricane Beryl on July 8, 2024 and its aftermath;
- Reside in the City of Houston, Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery or Waller counties;
- Are low-to-moderate income, defined as 80% or under [Area Median Income \(AMI\)](#);
- Reside in a zip code disproportionately impacted by the storm, or are very low-income, defined as 50% or under AMI;
- Are uninsured or under-insured homeowners or renters.

“Many families are still struggling in the wake of Hurricane Beryl's impact, facing financial challenges due to lost income or costly home repairs,” said Stephen Maislin, president and CEO, Greater Houston Community Foundation. “As time is of the essence, I'm grateful for our Disaster Recovery Council for moving quickly to get these much-needed grants to our nonprofit community. This first round of grants will provide critical support to those in need, helping them recover from the immediate crisis and rebuild for the future.”

The [Disaster Recovery Council](#), made up of volunteer leaders from the business and philanthropic community, leads grantmaking efforts for the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance. To better understand community needs and help guide funding considerations, a rapid data analysis was conducted by the Disaster Alliance using a variety of data sources to help identify the low-to-moderate income zip codes that were disproportionately impacted by Hurricane Beryl. Based on this analysis, 25 zip codes were identified across the City of Houston and Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller Counties as disproportionately impacted.

Based on the available data, Maislin noted that the losses created by this disaster among the most financially vulnerable households are far greater than the available aid. The goal of the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance is to provide essential support to as many area households as possible as quickly as possible. He urged those impacted who have not applied for FEMA or SBA aid to do so right away.

To date, the Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund has raised more than \$5 million from generous organizations and individuals. Recent commitments and contributions include Calpine Corporation (\$250,000), NRG Energy (\$250,000), Quanta (\$250,000), Susan A. & Thomas S. Smith Foundation (\$200,000), Dovetail Foundation (\$100,000), and The Powell Foundation (\$100,000). Additional gifts to the fund previously announced include three lead \$1 million gifts from Sarofim Foundation, H-E-B and CenterPoint Energy Foundation.

“When disaster strikes, it takes all of us working together in a collaborative and coordinated manner to support the most vulnerable in our region with the help they need to recover,” said Amanda McMillian, president and CEO, United Way of Greater Houston. “The impact of Hurricane Beryl has created significant need in our community, and while we know no single recovery fund can address all the needs, we hope this first round of grants can help those most severely impacted by the storm.”

To give to the Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund, visit [www.disasteralliance.org/beryl](http://www.disasteralliance.org/beryl).

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### **About United Way of Greater Houston**

United Way of Greater Houston connects people to possibility. We unite donors, volunteers and community partners in support of a focused plan to remove barriers on the path to financial stability for families and individuals. Programs focused on financial stability, early childhood and youth development, and physical and behavioral health care help our neighbors land on their feet and stay there. These programs are supported by a foundation of basic needs assistance and help for those escaping violence. For families and individuals who are ready, our individualized approach includes Navigators to guide them as they access multiple services on their unique journey to financial stability. United Way also connects our neighbors with help, hope and critical resources 24/7/365 through the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE. A focus on equity is integral to United Way's work and program investments are evaluated on how diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is incorporated into policies, practices and service delivery. Our community investments are backed by research, ensured by good stewardship and deliver results. For more information, visit [www.unitedwayhouston.org](http://www.unitedwayhouston.org).

### **About Greater Houston Community Foundation**

Since 1995, Greater Houston Community Foundation has helped Houston thrive by convening philanthropic resources and knowledge to drive philanthropy in our community, distributing over \$2.2 billion in grants recommended by its donors since inception. The organization supports high profile community and donor initiatives with the most comprehensive philanthropic resources, expertise, and innovative platforms. Greater Houston Community Foundation is widely considered to be the go-to partner for high-profile philanthropic partnerships in the Greater Houston area, including major disaster relief initiatives, such as the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund as well as Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Greater Houston Community Foundation leads collaborations that support the wellbeing and vitality of Houston, including [Understanding Houston](#), a regional indicator initiative with strategic research partner Rice Kinder Institute. The Foundation provides individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and advisors with the ability to expand their philanthropic impact. For more information, please visit, [www.ghcf.org](http://www.ghcf.org).