

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contacts/	Carianne Fisher	Jessica Perkins
Interviews	Executive Director, NCCADV	Director of Technical Assistance, NCCADV
Available:	cfisher@nccadv.org (919-956-9124, ext. 202)	jperkins@nccadv.org

**NCCADV Launches the SINCE Fund, a Disaster Response and Recovery Fund
for Domestic Violence Survivors**

STATEWIDE, NC – In the wake of Hurricane Helene, The North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCCADV) has established the Survivors In North Carolina Emergency Fund (the SINCE Fund) to help meet the needs of survivors impacted by disasters. The SINCE Fund will provide financial assistance and supplies to local domestic violence service providers to respond to survivors’ immediate needs following disasters and will assist them in meeting the increased need for services that often follows a disaster. The SINCE Fund will help to save lives by allowing local domestic violence agencies to respond to survivors’ needs quickly.

Hurricane Helene has destroyed or seriously damaged many communities with powerful winds, mudslides, and flooding. Some lost family members and friends. Others lost their homes and belongings and many more were left for weeks without power, water, phones, and/or internet.

Recovery is difficult for everyone, but research shows it is even harder for survivors of domestic violence. When a disaster, such as Hurricane Helene, strikes a region of our state, local Domestic Violence agencies spring to action to meet the new and unique needs of people experiencing domestic violence in their region. However, domestic violence agencies are largely dependent on grant funding tied to specific purposes, and spending money on unpredictable needs requires permission from funding sources. They also often receive this funding on a reimbursement basis. This means they must make the purchases, pay the vendors, submit the reports, and wait for reimbursement from funders – all while the needs keep coming in. This model does not work for disaster response — domestic violence agencies need to make quick decisions to keep people healthy and safe.

Whenever possible, NCCADV will work to make connections between local domestic violence agencies and resources in their areas and between local domestic violence agencies and other victim service providers in their area. However, survivors often have unique needs, and confidentiality is imperative for their safety. The SINCE Fund serves to close this gap.

The SINCE fund will complement efforts by FEMA, the state of North Carolina, and foundations to meet the needs of survivors. The SINCE Fund is unique in opportunity. Funds paid to local agencies will serve as a solution to the cash flow issues involved with reimbursement-based grant

funding, allow quick response to survivors' needs in the community, and not divert funding from other necessary programs and projects.

What You Can Do

Domestic violence crisis response is largely funded by restricted grants, or grants awarded for a very narrowly approved purpose. Programs throughout the state need your help and this need is more intense than ever in the western region of North Carolina. Please visit <https://nccadv.org/get-help> to locate providers in the west or your local domestic violence service provider to make a donation. NCCADV is also sharing social media posts with information about how to donate directly to the impacted domestic violence service providers.

To fill the SINCE Fund, NCCADV is working with partners all over the state to build a coalition of at-home supporters. Although we will welcome donations on an ongoing basis, when disaster strikes, NCCADV will sound the alarm so that our community can come together to fill the SINCE Fund to meet the special needs of survivors during that disaster.

To join the SINCE response team, visit www.nccadv.org/disaster-response.

Already Taking Action

While NCCADV was working to establish the SINCE Fund, it was already putting the first efforts into action. Immediately after Helene struck, NCCADV and other partners contacted each domestic violence agency in Western North Carolina, confirming that staff and survivors had weathered the storm, checking on the status of facilities and services and what repairs were needed, and requesting an inventory of specific supply needs for each impacted program.

By the end of the week, NCCADV staff had filled a U-Haul with \$10,000 of items specifically needed by domestic violence agencies, which were unavailable through other state and federal resources. NCCADV took the approach of buying the supplies because the impacted programs could not travel or access their banking information or any of their funds due to the loss of internet, power, and cellphone service. NCCADV took swift action to support the domestic violence service providers, who took immediate action to meet the needs of survivors in their communities.

One shelter answered the hotline calls for another program for over a week. Many shelters needed crucial basic supplies such as water and shelf-stable foods. Some shelters requested clean clothes, deodorant, over-the-counter medications, cleaning supplies, and other routine items needed for communal living environments. Others needed camping showers, hazmat suits, and wet-dry vacs. One shelter requested canning supplies because local farmers had donated their fruit to the shelter.

MEDIA INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

Carianne Fisher, Executive Director of the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence, can discuss the purpose of the fund, the impact Hurricane Helene on domestic violence service providers, and the needs the SINCE fund will address.

“Since we never know when a disaster may strike, since survivors have unique needs, since everyone knows someone who has experienced or witnessed domestic violence, since we are stronger together, NCCADV has created the SINCE fund.”

Jessica Perkins, Director of Technical Assistance of the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence, can discuss the impact Hurricane Helene on domestic violence service providers, and the needs the SINCE fund will address.

LOCAL INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

NCCADV is a coalition of member organizations around the state. We will gladly help to facilitate interviews with a domestic violence service providers in your local area.

ABOUT NCCADV

For more than 40 years, the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCCADV) has worked to confront the public health issue that is interpersonal violence. Staffed by experts, NCCADV is dedicated to eradicating violence in the home by way of supporting all survivors, regardless of race, age, SES, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, belief system, or immigration status. Staff simultaneously practice advocacy as well as enhancement of prevention and education measures. Through the organization’s partnerships with state and local government bodies, agencies providing critical services to survivors, and a growing membership base, NCCADV has positioned itself to be an informed leader in the effort to end domestic violence. Information on where to find local resources by county can be found at <https://nccadv.org/get-help>.

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