



LORD MAYOR'S DISTRESS RELIEF FUND

About Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund

- The Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund (the Fund) is Western Australia's official State emergency fund.
- The Fund was established in 1961, following the disastrous Dwellingup fires where 123 people were left homeless.
- The Fund was established in conjunction with the State Government to provide financial assistance to individuals for the alleviation and relief of distress, suffering and personal hardships, brought about by any disaster or emergency within Western Australia declared by the Western Australian Government or for which the LMDRF Board considers assistance is warranted.
- The perpetual fund is incorporated under the Charitable Collections Act and has Australian Taxation Office tax deductibility status. The LMDRF is administered by an independent Board which consists of up to 15 members.
- The City of Perth has donated administrative and other support services to the LMDRF since its inception. The City of Perth seeks no reimbursement for the costs associated with providing support to the LMDRF. This means 100 per cent of donations raised through appeals goes directly to those in need.
- The LMDRF was established in 1961 and has raised significant funds to assist those impacted by many disasters, including more recently the Yarloop/Warooka Fires (2016), Esperance Fires (2015), Dwellingup Fires (2007), Toodyay Fire Appeal (2010), two appeals for the Gascoyne and Mid-West Floods and the Perth Hills Fire (2011), Parkerville Fire Appeal (2014), Esperance Fires Appeal (2015).
- For more information go to www.appealswa.org.au or www.facebook.com/Distress.Relief.Fund

The objectives of the LMDRF are

- to provide a permanent fund for the alleviation and relief of distress, suffering, hardship and misfortune to individuals brought about by any disaster or emergency of a general application which has been declared as such by the Western Australian

government through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services of Western Australia (DFES);

- to provide relief and aid as determined by the Board of the Fund from time to time to individuals undergoing such distress, suffering, hardship or misfortune brought about by any event mentioned above; and

- to provide assistance to individuals for the alleviation and relief of distress, suffering, hardship or misfortune following a minor localised disaster.

About Wooroloo Fires

- An out of control fire started in Wooroloo on February 1 and raged across Perth's north-eastern suburbs, destroying homes and threatening lives.
- The LMDRF launched an appeal for the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire on February 3.
- The Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal has now closed to public donations. 100 per cent of the funds raised will go to eligible individuals impacted by the bushfire.
- The LMDRF is now raising donations for the current appeal for **Tropical Cyclone Seroja**. 100 per cent of funds raised for Tropical Cyclone Seroja will go directly to eligible individuals impacted by the Cyclone.

How can donations be made to Tropical Cyclone Seroja?

Destruction and property damage across WA's mid-west caused by Tropical Cyclone Seroja has led to the activation of the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund (LMDRF) – the second time this year.

Homes have been destroyed and more than 20,000 residents were left without power after the cyclone made landfall as a category three storm at about 8pm on Sunday 11 April, bringing wind gusts of up to 170 kilometres per hour.

The Fund has been activated to raise and coordinate monetary donations to financially support the community affected by Tropical Cyclone Seroja.

Donations to the Tropical Cyclone Seroja Appeal can be made:

- via EFT: BSB: 306-188, Account: 0347404
- over the counter at any Bankwest branch or agency to the dedicated appeal account BSB: 306-188, Account: 0347404
- on the phone via credit card on 9461 3886 during normal business hours
- by mail to LMDRF, Tropical Cyclone Seroja Appeal, City of Perth, GPO Box C120, Perth WA 6839
- by credit card at www.appealswa.org.au

All questions related to donations for the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal

Can I still donate?

The Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal has now closed to public donations. Fundraising activities are still running until the 30 June.

Can we donate clothes, items for animals and food?

Local governments, the Department of Communities and the Australian Red Cross are not actively seeking any physical donations at this time and are encouraging financial donations through the LMDRF.

Any food donations should be directed to SecondBite, Foodbank or OzHarvest so distribution can be coordinated. These organisations will then lead a coordinated response for food donations.

How can I volunteer or offer accommodation assistance?

If you want to volunteer your time to help with the bushfires, or offer accommodation, please contact the affected Local Government Authority.

Can I set up a donation page on behalf of LMDRF?

The Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal is now closed.

Requests to fundraise on behalf of the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund for the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire are no longer open.

Fundraisers already authorised to fundraise on behalf of the LMDRF can still continue – funds need to be remitted by 30 June.

The appeal has now closed, can I still submit an application for financial assistance if I was impacted by the fire?

Yes. All eligible individuals are encouraged to continue submitting their applications.

All questions related to applications for the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal

Who is eligible to receive financial assistance?

Everyone impacted within the designated Wooroloo and Hills bushfire zone and has suffered loss of property is encouraged to apply for assistance through the LMDRF.

The below applies for individuals:

1. The applicant must be an individual who is an owner or occupier and has had property destroyed or damaged as a direct result of the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire as defined by the area declared as a disaster by the [Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#).
2. Multiple applications for the same address and category can be received if it has been confirmed there were multiple dwellings at that address and the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund's Board is satisfied by reasonable means that separate households existed.
3. In the event multiple households live in one dwelling, only one application will be received.
4. The applicant must submit a claim to their relevant local government authority's local recovery committee.

Applications are available for download from the City of Swan, the Shire of Mundaring and the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Funds websites:

www.swan.wa.gov.au/bushfire2021

www.mundaring.wa.gov.au

www.appealswa.org.au

Application forms are also available from the affected local government offices.

How is financial assistance paid and what can it be used for?

All financial assistance is in the form of a grant which will be deposited to your nominated bank account.

The amount of the grant is dependent on which category for assistance you qualify for.

It is not a loan, it is for you to use however you need in order to support your specific needs; whether immediate or to contribute towards any rebuild.

We recommend speaking with a financial counsellor to assist determine the best way to utilise the grant based on your individual and unique needs.

How do eligible individuals apply for assistance?

Assistance is available to residents of the Shire of Mundaring and City of Swan who suffered personal hardship due to the loss or damage to their primary residence, property, furniture or personal effects as a result of the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire.

Applications are available for download from the City of Swan and the Shire of Mundaring and the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Funds websites:

www.swan.wa.gov.au/bushfire2021

www.mundaring.wa.gov.au

www.appealswa.org.au

Application forms are also available from your local government offices.

A Local Recovery Committee for the Shire of Mundaring and the City of Swan has been established from representatives of the local government authority.

The Local Recovery Committees will receive and assess claims and make recommendations to the Board of the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund on an appropriate level of assistance for individual claims.

Please be aware that the final decision regarding the extent of assistance for each claim rests with the Board of the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund.

I am a joint owner of a property with my ex-partner. We are now separated. Can we put in separate applications?

No. We can only accept one application per property owner. Therefore, as joint property owners, a joint application needs to be submitted. The Fund can however split financial assistance and pay to two separate bank accounts.

I own two or more houses on one property; can I make more than one claim?

We can accept one application per property owner. If multiple dwellings have been confirmed on one property, please ensure all loss is recorded on your application form to assist with the assessment process.

I rent a house that was destroyed and the owner has already put in an application. Can I put in an application for the same property?

Yes, as an occupier you are eligible to apply for assistance. Please ensure your personal house contents are listed on the form, including any other items you own and were destroyed or damaged such as shed contents, play equipment or pot plants etc.

What do I record under property loss?

If you have lost your whole house and all contents, there is no requirement to list each individual item lost. Please state house 100 per cent destroyed and contents 100 per cent destroyed. Where there is partial loss or damage to property, please state the loss as accurately as possible.

In total, how many applications have been received?

254.

How long does it take, generally, once the application assessment has reached the LMDRF and how can people check on the status of their application from this point onwards?

Once finalised and validated claims are lodged by the local government to the Fund, financial assistance will be released within seven days from Board approval.

All questions related to disbursement for the Wooroloo and Hills Bushfire Appeal

How will the money be spent or distributed? Where do the funds go?

The Fund is working with the affected local governments and the State Recovery Coordinator to ensure money is disbursed directly to those who need it.

All administration costs are absorbed by the City of Perth so 100 percent of funds raised will go directly to those in need. While we can't replace what people have lost, we can help ease the financial burden.

Will residents have to wait long for their financial assistance payments?

How is the total pool of funding going to be divided up and allocated?

To date the following allocations have been made in consultation with the impacted Local Governments and the State Recovery Group:

Rapid Response Grant

Owner/occupiers or occupiers who have had total loss of their home and contents.

(Amount: \$25,000)

Categories for assistance to individuals in the declared area.

For Owners / Owner Occupiers of properties impacted by the bushfire there are three levels of LMDRF grant assistance available as follows:

Level One shall apply in those instances where the place of residence and contents have been totally destroyed

(Amount: \$25,000 – excludes Rapid Response Grant)

Level Two shall apply in those instances where the place of residence has sustained structural damage and contents have been damaged (e.g. verandah, gutters/downpipes, outdoor decking)

(Amount: Up to \$10,000)

Level Three shall apply in those instances where there has been other property damage / loss that is personal property (e.g. sheds, fencing, water tanks, power poles, telecommunications, pumps, machinery, tools, other equipment). NOTE FOR LG USE: Priority is to be given to applicants who have damage / loss of fencing, water tanks and sheds.

(Amount: Up to \$10,000)

For Occupiers (those renting) of properties impacted by the bushfire there are two levels of LMDRF grant assistance available as follows:

Level Four shall apply in those instances where the house contents have been totally destroyed as a consequence of the house being totally destroyed;
(Amount: TBD – excludes Rapid Response Grant)

Level Five shall apply in those instances where there has been partial damage/loss of house contents (e.g. contents of shed, tools, machinery, other equipment) .
(Amount: Up to \$10,000)

Grant for BAL Assessment Fees

An amount of up to \$2,000 to assist with additional costs associated with BAL approvals, when individuals are ready to rebuild.

Next steps

To address immediate needs identified when meeting with LGA's, the Board has requested all applications for other property loss which identify loss/damage to fencing, sheds and water tanks be dealt with by LGAs as the priority.

The Board will be making an announcement shortly on further assistance.

Why has the LMDRF knocked back X applicant?

If an applicant is wanting an update, it is best they check with their local government for clarification in the first instance.

What is the current status of disbursements?

The Fund has made disbursement of a total of \$4,744,000 being:

- A Rapid Relief Grant of \$25,000 to 78 owner/occupiers and occupiers followed by a second tranche of \$25,000 to 67 owners.
- Grants of \$10,000 for partial and other property loss of up to \$10,000 to 116 people.

The Fund is still receiving applications from local governments for all levels.

What are the funding amounts people can receive for each of these levels/categories?

The final set amounts are not predetermined until the total magnitude of applications is known or made clear.

Regarding totally destroyed categories, I understand that owners are getting \$50k, but tenants are only getting \$25k – what is the rationale?

The purpose for the second \$25,000 to owner/occupiers who have lost everything is in recognition they have not only lost their primary residence (as have tenants), they have lost major personal assets which may require immediate action to make safe or to help facilitate a quick recovery.

We would like more clarity on the criteria for partial damage. Will residents receive a lump sum or will applications be assessed on a case by case basis?

All applications are assessed against the criteria however there have been a small handful of applications which have unique circumstance; these have been worked through with the relevant Local Government on a case by case basis.

Disbursements will be provided as a lump sum in the first instance. As applications are received by the Fund further analysis will be undertaken on the level of loss within each category and it may be decided to split categories further to allocate different grant amounts.

Applying for a BAL assessment and the \$2k grant, how will people apply? Do they need to apply separately? What if they have already made an application for the LMDRF?

The LMDRF has approved \$172k to be put aside to provide up to \$2,000.

The process for applying for this is being worked through with the relevant LGAs.