



News Release – Enhanced Support for Small Businesses Affected by Wildfires in the Northwest Territories

Yellowknife (October 06, 2023) The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), in partnership with the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), is providing additional support to small businesses that are experiencing difficulties as a result of wildfires and evacuation orders. CanNor has contributed \$1,000,000 (\$1 Million) in funding to support the GNWT in providing business relief, matching the existing budget of the GNWT’s [Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development \(SEED\)](#) Policy, which is responding to the ongoing challenges faced by businesses.

Under a Ministerial Directive for the SEED Policy, emergency funding has already been provided to many NWT businesses. In response to this new funding, and to address the wider scope of challenges businesses are facing, the Directive has been amended to increase the maximum assistance available as follows:

Yellowknife, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, Rae, Edzo, N’Dilo, Dettah and Wekweeti	\$ 10,000
Fort Smith and Sambaa K’e	15,000
Hay River and K’at’odeeche	20,000
Non-evacuated communities*	3,000

These increases mean businesses can access even more support to offset eligible costs incurred through wildfire evacuations. In addition, the Directive has expanded the list of eligible expenses and the timeframe during which eligible expenses will be taken into account. It now includes a period of up to two weeks after the evacuation order is lifted, allowing businesses to adequately prepare for restarting their operations. Businesses that had already received funding for wildfire relief under the SEED Policy can receive up to the funding limit available for their region provided they continue to meet the program criteria.

These directive amendments take effect immediately and remain in effect until March 31, 2024.

**The \$3,000 assistance for non-evacuated communities is intended to support businesses that have incurred extra costs because of evacuations in another community.*

Quote(s)

“We continue to work closely with our territorial, municipal and Indigenous partners throughout this unprecedented wildfire season to support affected businesses and

communities. Small businesses are at the heart of Northern communities, and our government will continue helping them as they recover and grow the economy of the Northwest Territories.”

- **The Honourable Dan Vandal**, Minister of Northern Affairs, PrairiesCan and CanNor, Government of Canada

“The NWT has experienced the worst wildfire season on record, with widespread evacuations, property loss, and damage to critical infrastructure. There has also been a tremendous impact on small businesses and business owners who suffered significant income loss and other unforeseen expenses. CanNor has been there with financial support for northern businesses before and we continue with our support now to help businesses rebound and recover.”

- **Michael McLeod**, Member of Parliament for Northwest Territories, Government of Canada

“The Government of the Northwest Territories and ITI remain dedicated to supporting small businesses throughout the recovery process and fostering economic growth and resilience in the region.”

- **Caroline Wawzonek**, Minister of Industry, Tourism, and Investment, Government of the Northwest Territories

Quick facts

- Applications for relief costs dating back to May 2023 are eligible, but they must be supported by receipts or equivalent proof for evaluation.
- In instances where applicants applied and received funding up to the previous limit, they will be eligible to receive funding up to the revised limit, if costs are supported by receipts or equivalent proof.

Related links

- [Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development](#)
- [GNWT Public Safety](#)

For media requests, please contact:

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