IndiePet's IndieCares Grant Program (Updated June 16, 2025)

Purpose The IndieCares Grant Program is established to provide timely, fair, and equitable financial assistance to independent pet retailers whose businesses have been negatively impacted by natural disasters. This policy outlines the eligibility requirements, application criteria, and responsibilities of grant recipients.

Grants provided by the IndiePet IndieCares program are based on available funds and include:

Micro Grants: up to $1,000 (does not preclude application for larger emergency grant)

Emergency Grants: $1,000 or more. (May require a more detailed application process to qualify.)

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Qualified Natural Disaster. The disaster must be officially declared at the local, state, or federal level. Examples include, but may not be limited to: hurricanes, wildfires, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, and severe winter storms.

Qualified Business. Business is an independent pet retail brick & mortar business in regular operation prior to disaster event.

- Priority given to businesses with less than $5M annual revenue and fewer than 50 employees.
- If multiple locations of an individual business are affected, application may be made for each affected location.

Business Impact Threshold. Significant disruption or loss of regular business operations due to disaster event.

- Physical damage to retail location requires closure of 48 hours or more.
- Mandatory evacuation ordered by authorities requires closure of 48 hours or more.
- Inventory loss due to disaster-related causes.
- Extended utility outages (power, water, internet) disrupt regular business operations.

APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Applications must be completed in full, signed and include required documentation. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Required documentation may include: Proof of physical or operational damage and financial loss or hardship that may be required include photos, proof of insurance, insurance claim denial, FEMA/local disaster report, or financial records.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

Grant agreement. Each recipient of a grant must sign a *Grant Agreement* indicating their understanding of the allowable use of funds. (See section on *Use of Funds*)

Impact report. A brief report (1 page or equivalent) is required within 60 days of receiving funds describing how the funds were used and the recovery status of the business.

Eligible uses of funds include:

- Rent and utilities.
- Employee payroll.
- Inventory replacement.
- Temporary relocation or restoration of business operations.

Ineligible uses:

- Personal expenses unrelated to the affected business.
- Debt payments unrelated to the disaster impact.

ADMINISTRATION

Evaluation of grant application. Each application will be reviewed and evaluated by the IndieCares Grant Committee who will make a determination of grant eligibility based on the following:

Extent of Disaster Impact. Severity or degree of physical or operational damage. Duration of business closure.

Financial Hardship. Demonstrated financial strain not fully covered by insurance or other sources.

Available funds. The availability of funds may be used as consideration when evaluating grant applications.

Disbursement. Funds for approved grants will be disbursed via direct deposit on a rolling basis as needs arise and funds are available.