

RESPONSE FUND IMPACT UPDATE

In December 2025, Snohomish County experienced historic flooding that devastated homes and displaced families across the region. For many residents, especially immigrant and undocumented families in communities like the Three Rivers Mobile Home Park, the disaster was compounded by barriers that standard relief programs could not bridge: language, citizenship status, and a deep fear of engaging with government systems at a time of heightened uncertainty.

Federal and County relief programs provided some funding, but grantees reported that the processes were cumbersome, and coverage amounts fell well short of what families needed. It was clear that a more flexible, community-centered response was required.

How Your Gifts Were Put to Work

Our Response Fund grants empowered local nonprofits to act with speed and flexibility that traditional relief systems simply could not match. Rather than navigating lengthy eligibility reviews, grantees were able to purchase what families needed directly: new washers and dryers, water heaters, stoves, and heaters for households that had lost everything.

The most powerful example of what these funds made possible was a regional coalition that formed across multiple grantee organizations. By pooling their grants and partnering with a local travel trailer dealer, they purchased and gifted travel trailers to families who had lost their homes, moving them out of cramped hotel rooms and into stable, permanent housing. For one family of five, the coalition went further still, using grant dollars to connect water, provide a washer and dryer, and install stabilizing jacks to ensure the gift would not arrive with unexpected costs the family could not afford.

Equally important was the work of reaching families who might otherwise have been left out entirely. Bilingual, bicultural staff with shared lived experience served as trusted messengers, staying with residents from the initial town hall meeting and evacuation through emergency housing placement and ongoing follow-up services. Snohomish County officials specifically engaged these community partners knowing that residents would be reluctant to cooperate with a government entity, and their trust proved essential to the response's success.

The Difference It Made

Across grantee organizations, Response Fund dollars directly supported more affected families, individuals, seniors and veterans with essential household items immediately and without barriers. This meant returning to normal as quickly as possible for these vulnerable community members: children are back in school; parents kept their jobs; families are successfully navigating FEMA applications with trusted community support by their side.

The work also demonstrated something larger: that the right approach, built on trust, relationships, and community presence, can reach the people that mainstream systems miss. Grantees are already bringing these lessons forward, working with Snohomish County Emergency Management and regional partners to integrate what they learned into future disaster preparedness and response planning.

Every grantee who responded asked us to pass along their deepest gratitude to the donors who made this work possible. **Your generosity through the Response Fund gave our community's nonprofit partners the resources and flexibility to respond where it mattered most, and to stand alongside families as they rebuild their lives.**