



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2025

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HOPCAT LAUNCHES EMPLOYEE & COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE FUND TO SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS & LOCAL IMPACT EFFORTS

New company-wide initiative powered by HelpLink offers direct financial relief to HopCat employees and local community members facing unexpected hardship.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (July 24, 2025) — HopCat today announced a company-wide initiative designed to support employees in times of unexpected hardship and provide financial resources to community members to align with HopCat's core values of care, connection, and hospitality.

This new fund reflects HopCat's ongoing commitment to putting people first, both inside and outside the walls of its restaurants. The Employee & Community Assistance Fund, powered by HelpLink, offers direct financial assistance to their employees facing critical life challenges such as medical emergencies, transportation instability, and family crises, while also extending support to local community members.

Early fundraising efforts have already demonstrated the potential for impact. At HopCat's newest location in Southgate, Michigan, guests and staff came together to raise over \$9,000 through a combination of soft opening ticket sales, donations and a HopCat match.

"Our goal with the Employee & Community Assistance Fund is simple but powerful – show up for our people the way they show up for our guests," said Ellen Winterburn, Vice President of Human Resources at BarFly "The energy we've seen from Southgate proves that hospitality goes beyond the plate – it's about taking care of each other."

The fund is powered by HelpLink, a Traverse City based Non-Profit, through a transparent application process. Guests can support the initiative at all HopCat locations and it's sister

restaurant, Stella's Lounge located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, through ongoing programs, donation drives, and seasonal fundraising efforts.

On Monday, July 28, 10% of all sales will be donated to the HopCat Employee & Community Assistance Fund, supporting local team members and neighbors in need.

"At HelpLink, we believe the strongest communities are built when neighbors and businesses come together to meet real needs in real time," said Abigail McKiernan, founder of HelpLink. "When you donate through HelpLink, you don't just give—you see who you're helping, what the need is, and you get to choose where your support goes. It's a powerful way to help someone in your own community overcome a real barrier—and to know your impact made a difference."

To learn more about the Employee & Community Assistance fund or donate, visit [The HopCat Blog](#).

About HopCat

At HopCat, craft quality goes beyond our unparalleled beer selection. We pride ourselves on scratch-made, award-winning food and friendly, knowledgeable service. Each HopCat location has a unique atmosphere, but you can count on a consistently exceptional experience every time. For more information on HopCat, please visit www.hopcat.com.

About HelpLink

HelpLink is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening communities by meeting real, everyday needs—quickly, quietly, and with dignity. Through its tech-enabled giving platform, HelpLink connects funding from local businesses and donors to individuals facing short-term challenges such as past due utility bills, car repairs, or access to basic essential items. The platform ensures transparency by directly covering costs rather than giving cash, and it empowers businesses to create meaningful local impact by helping those who live and work in their communities. Since 2017, HelpLink and its founding network have helped meet over 100,000 needs and continue to grow through partnerships with companies that believe in caring for people first. To learn more, please visit www.helplink.org.

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