

Federal Assistance for Hurricane Helene Exceeds \$286 Million

FEMA maintains focus on recovery for Helene survivors while preparing for impacts of Hurricane Milton.

FEMA, under the direction of the Biden-Harris Administration, continues to lead a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to assist communities impacted by Hurricane Helene. Federal assistance for survivors of Helene has now surpassed **\$286 million** with an additional **\$180 million** in mission assignments to federal partners. FEMA continues to coordinate recovery efforts while preparing for the anticipated landfall of Hurricane Milton along Florida's Gulf Coast.

Administrator Deanne Criswell is on the ground directing FEMA's response and recovery operations for the impacted states. The combined efforts of federal, state and local partners ensure that every available resource is mobilized to help those impacted by Hurricane Helene.

As FEMA maintains its focus on Helene response and recovery, the agency is also fully engaged in support of local, tribal and state response efforts ahead of Hurricane Milton. Residents in the storm's projected path are urged to stay informed and prepare now.

Hurricane Helene Response

The agency is actively working alongside state, local and tribal partners to assess damage and support those affected by Helene. Nearly **7,000** federal personnel are deployed, including FEMA staff. To date, FEMA has shipped over **16.2** million meals, more than **13.9** million liters of water, **210** generators and more than **505,000** tarps to the region. FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams are on the ground in neighborhoods across the affected states helping survivors apply for assistance and connecting them with additional state, local, federal and voluntary agency resources.

Disaster survivors in designated areas of [Georgia](#), [Florida](#), [North Carolina](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Virginia](#) can begin their recovery process by applying for federal assistance through FEMA. People with damage to their homes or personal property who live in these areas should apply for assistance, which may include upfront funds to help with essential items like food, water, baby formula and other emergency supplies.

Funds may also be available to repair storm-related damage to homes and personal property, as well as assistance to find a temporary place to stay. Homeowners and renters with damage to their home or personal property from previous disasters, whether they received FEMA funds or not, are still eligible to apply for and receive assistance for Helene.



FEMA

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There are three ways to apply for FEMA assistance:

- Online by visiting disasterassistance.gov.
- Calling the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-3362.
- Downloading and applying on the [FEMA App](#).

Voluntary Organizations

Voluntary agencies are supporting all affected states by providing critical feeding operations and support for survivors with hot and prepared meals and shelf-stable meals. Organizations are also providing personnel and resources to the hardest hit areas. The American Red Cross has hundreds of **trained disaster workers providing comfort and operating shelters**.

People can receive free services like cutting fallen trees, tarping roofs and mitigating mold with the help of Crisis Cleanup by calling **844-965-1386**. The hotline is open through Oct. 11 and can connect people with volunteers from local relief organizations, community groups and the faith-based community who may be able to assist.

Additional support and assistance provided to each state includes:

Support for North Carolina

Financial Support: FEMA has approved **more than \$40 million in housing and other types of assistance** for over **30,000 households**.

Staffing: As response efforts continue in North Carolina, **more than 1,000 FEMA staff** are on the ground, with more arriving daily. Over **1,000 Urban Search and Rescue personnel** remain in the field helping people. These teams have **rescued or supported over 3,200 survivors to date**. President Biden ordered an additional **500** active-duty troops equipped with advanced technological assets to the area to further strengthen recovery operations in Western North Carolina. This brings the total number of active-duty military personnel supporting the response to **1,500**. Experienced FEMA leaders from around the country are in the field to bolster response efforts.

Sheltering: Shelter numbers continue to decline, with **18 shelters** housing just **under 800 occupants**. Over **2,100** people who cannot return home are staying in safe and clean lodging through FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program. [Transitional Sheltering Assistance](#) is available for North Carolinians displaced by Helene. Residents in declared counties who have applied for disaster assistance may be eligible to stay temporarily in a hotel or motel paid for by FEMA while they work on their long-term housing plan. People do not need to request this assistance. FEMA will notify them of their eligibility through an automated phone call, text message, and/or email, depending upon the method of communication they selected at the time of application for disaster assistance.

Power and Cellular Restoration: As of today, more than **86%** of originally reported power outages have been restored. Cellular restoration continues to improve, with **more than 85% of cellular sites operating**. FEMA is

boosting response coordination by providing **Starlink units to ensure first responders** can communicate with each other.

Commodities: Commodity distribution, mass feeding, and hydration operations are underway in areas of western North Carolina. FEMA commodity shipments are enroute to support operations. Voluntary organizations are supporting feeding operations with bulk food and water deliveries coming via truck and aircraft. Mobile feeding operations are reaching survivors in heavily impacted areas, including three mass feeding sites in Buncombe, McDowell, and Watauga counties.

The Salvation Army has **20 mobile feeding units** supporting the massive operation and has provided emotional and spiritual care to more than **2,400** people. To date, The Salvation Army has served over **34,000** meals, **14,500** drinks, and **10,200** snacks. The American Red Cross is engaging in targeted distribution of emergency supplies in low-income communities with high levels of minor or affected residential damage.

Resources:

- Residents can visit: ncdps.gov/helene to get information and additional assistance.
- Residents can get in touch with loved ones by **calling 2-1-1** or **visiting unitedwaync.org** to add them to search and rescue efforts.

Support for Florida

Recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene continue in Florida even as the federal government is supporting the state in preparing for Hurricane Milton. FEMA has approved more than **\$129 million** for over **35,000 households**. FEMA specialists are canvassing Florida communities affected by Helene to help survivors apply for assistance. Additionally, FEMA inspectors are visiting applicants' homes to verify disaster-caused damage.

Residents in need of information or resources should call the State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) at **1-800-342-3557**. English, Spanish and Creole speakers are available to answer questions.

Residents can find additional resources and information at [Florida Division of Emergency Management's website, FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org).

Support for South Carolina

In South Carolina, FEMA has approved over **\$65 million for more than 80,000** households. FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams are on the ground in neighborhoods across the affected counties continuing to help survivors apply for FEMA assistance and connect them with additional state, local, federal and voluntary agency resources.

Residents with questions on Helene can call the state's toll-free hotline, open 24 hours a day, at **1-866-246-0133**.

Residents who are dependent on medical equipment at home and who are without power due to Helene may be eligible for a medical needs shelter. Call the state's **Department of Public Health Care Line** at **1-855-472-3432** for more information.

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Residents can find additional information at [South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website](#).

Support for Georgia

FEMA has approved over **\$48 million for more than 59,000 households**.

Resources: Residents can find resources like shelters and feeding sites at [Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency](#).

Support for Virginia

To date, FEMA has approved over **\$850,500 for over 123 households**.

Residents can find resources like shelters and feeding sites at [Virginia Department of Emergency Management's website](#).

Support for Tennessee

FEMA has approved more than **\$3.1 million for disaster assistance for 192 households**.

Residents can call **1-800-824-3463 to report a missing person**. Callers should be prepared to provide as much information as possible including names, phone numbers, vehicle identification and last known whereabouts.

Counties continue to establish donation centers. For the evolving list, visit [Tennessee Emergency Management Agency's website](#).

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov
- Tribal Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov
- Private Sector Engagement at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-Private-Sector@fema.dhs.gov

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Also, follow Administrator Deanne Criswell on X [@FEMA_Deanne](#).

FEMA Mission

Helping people before, during, and after disasters.