

# Florida Hurricane Helene

## September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis**

400 S. Monroe St.

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

(850) 488-7146

<https://www.flgov.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/GovRonDeSantis/>

<https://twitter.com/rondesantisfl?lang=en>

On September 25, 2024, in [News Releases](#), by Staff

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis was joined by Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Executive Director Kevin Guthrie in Tampa to meet with power and utility linemen staged and ready to respond to power outages caused by Hurricane Helene, and to provide updates on state preparedness efforts before the storm's landfall.

Following Governor DeSantis' request, FEMA approved the state's pre-landfall disaster declaration request. This will provide important resources and assistance from the federal government, including personnel, equipment and supplies, as well as making available funding sources for emergency protective measures. The pre-landfall declaration request is for the 41 Florida counties included in Executive Order 24-208.

Governor DeSantis issued [Executive Order 24-209](#) on September 24, updating EO 24-208 and declaring a state of emergency for 61 counties, which allows for state officials to make critical resources available to communities ahead of any potential storm impacts.

Voluntary and mandatory evacuation orders are in effect in multiple counties statewide. Residents need to evacuate as soon as possible if they are under a mandatory evacuation order. Counties under evacuation orders can be found at [FloridaDisaster.org/EvacuationOrders](https://FloridaDisaster.org/EvacuationOrders).

Residents in need of assistance finding or going to a shelter in the Big Bend region for Hurricane Helene can call (800) 729-3413. FDEM team members will be conducting callbacks from messages received last night, as well as accepting new calls today, to facilitate shelter coordination. For additional resources and assistance, residents can call the State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) at (800) 342-3557. Assistance is available in English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole.

As of 11AM ET, the storm has strengthened into Hurricane Helene, with maximum sustained winds of 80 mph. Helene is expected to move across the eastern Gulf of Mexico and to the Florida Big Bend coast by Thursday evening. Additional strengthening is forecast, and Helene is expected to be a major hurricane when it reaches landfall.

Watches and warnings in effect include

**Hurricane Warning:** western Alachua, coastal Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Gulf, Hamilton, coastal Hernando, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, western Marion, coastal Pasco, Suwannee, Taylor and Wakulla counties

**Hurricane Watch:** inland Citrus, inland Hernando, coastal Hillsborough, coastal Manatee, inland Pasco, Pinellas, coastal Sarasota

**Tropical Storm Warning:** central and eastern Alachua, Baker, Bay, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Calhoun, Charlotte, inland Citrus, Clay, Collier, DeSoto, Duval, Flagler, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, inland Hernando, Hillsborough, Holmes, Indian River, Jackson, Lake, Lee, Miami-Dade, Monroe (including Florida Keys and Dry Tortugas), Manatee, central and eastern Marion, Martin, Nassau, Okeechobee, Orange,

Osceola, Palm Beach, inland Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, Union, Volusia, Walton, Washington

**Storm Surge Warning:** along the entire Florida Big Bend and West Coast through Southwest Florida

**Storm Surge Watch:** Coastal Bay and Gulf counties along Mexico Beach to Indian Pass

Floridians are encouraged to know their risks from hurricane hazards and prepare for potential impacts from Hurricane Helene. To learn more, residents can visit [FloridaDisaster.org/Guide](https://www.floridadisaster.org/guide).

Counties have begun their preparation efforts including measures like sandbag stations. For updates on county resources available visit [FloridaDisaster.org/Counties](https://www.floridadisaster.org/counties) for a list of all 67 county emergency management contacts.

### **State Preparedness Efforts**

- The **Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)** activated the State Emergency Operations Center to a Level 1 on Tuesday, September 24 and is leading coordination efforts for the State Emergency Response Team.
- FDEM is hosting twice-daily calls with all 67 counties to identify needs and to ensure the state is prepared to respond quickly and efficiently.
- Additionally, FDEM is coordinating with state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector partners to facilitate ongoing resource requests for counties, including requests for water, generators and support personnel.
- Over 800 missions are being facilitated by the State Emergency Response Team to assist counties in their preparation efforts. These missions accomplish vital tasks like prestaging response resources, protecting critical infrastructure facilities like hospitals and utility stations, and coordinating personnel statewide.
- There are 35,000 shelf-stable meals being staged near the anticipated area of storm impact, ready to deploy for response.
- Seven Urban search and rescue task forces are ready to deploy to as soon as weather conditions permit.
- The **Florida National Guard (FLNG)** has mobilized nearly 3,500 Soldiers and Airmen in preparation for Hurricane Helene, and is able to surge to 5,500, if needed.
- The FLNG is focused on preparing and staging forces ahead of the storm, assigning areas of responsibility, and placing liaison officers in the projected affected counties.
- The FLNG is postured to provide logistics support, law enforcement support, route clearance, search and rescue, commodity distribution, flood mitigation, aviation and other support as needed by the state.
- The **Florida State Guard (FSG)** has prepared the following:
  - 250+ Soldiers ready to deploy.
  - 10 shallow water vessel boat teams
  - 7 flat-bottom-flood rescue skiffs
  - 2 amphibious rescue vehicles
  - 12 UTV's
  - 15 Cut and toss crews
  - 7 search and rescue teams
  - 1 UH-60 Blackhawk for daytime aerial assessment and logistics missions
- The **Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)** mutual aid team is at the State Emergency Operations Center coordinating law enforcement missions. FDLE logistics teams are moving and staging assets.
- FDLE has moved all assets, including aircraft, and is ready to respond for reconnaissance and damage assessments.
- FDLE members are coordinating with our partners to immediately respond to impacted areas once it is safe.
- FDLE agents are assigned to all activated county emergency management centers.
- FDLE has prepared all back-up satellite and communications systems. Portable towers have been staged for emergency communications.
- FDLE has ten squads of agents ready to respond.
- The **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)** continues to monitor Hurricane Helene's path and has readied high-water vehicles and all other storm response resources statewide so they may be rapidly deployed to assist Floridians in need in the event of damage or flooding.

- Contingency plans and pre-storm staging areas based on forecasted landfall locations have been developed and remain flexible based on the storm's projected path.
- 53 FWC officers and two support staff are ready to deploy and respond with a variety of specialized equipment as necessary, such as:
  - 6 Airboats
  - 8 Shallow draft boats
  - ATVs/Side-by-sides
  - 54 high-water capable four-wheel drive vehicles
  - 3 aerial surveillance drones
  - 10 high-water capable swamp buggies/Fat Truck/UTVs
  - 3 SOG support trailers
  - 3 BERG self-sustainment container units
  - 3 Hygiene trailers
  - 2 Mobile command units
  - 5 Generators
  - 2 Water trailers
  - 1 Fuel trailer
- The FWC has identified multiple teams of officers from areas of the state unlikely to be severely affected by the storm to deploy to areas that may be seriously impacted.
  - These teams are mobilizing self-sustainment equipment to establish an effective base of operations immediately following the storm's passing.
  - These officers and assets are in addition to local FWC officers already assigned to any affected areas. FWC officers have the training, capacity, equipment, and experience to effectively respond to natural disasters.
- FWC Captive Wildlife Investigators have contacted captive wildlife facilities in the projected path to assist as needed.
- FWC teams are assembling chainsaws and other necessary equipment for storm debris cleanup mission.
- The **Florida Department of Corrections (FDC)** is monitoring the storm and implementing mitigation measures, including:
  - Mobilizing evacuation assets
  - Locating areas of evacuation
  - Pre-staging equipment (including generators) in advance of landfall
  - Established liaisons in our local county and municipal EOCs for storm assistance
  - Suspended inmate visitation statewide until Monday, September 30th
  - Evacuated 22 facilities and relocated 2,553 inmates into hardened housing units, with more on the way
  - Readied 7 maintenance strike teams around the state to respond to potential damage to infrastructure
  - The FDC will be posting updates publicly and in real-time at [FDC.myflorida.com/weather-updates](https://www.fdc.myflorida.com/weather-updates)
- The **Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)** offices and have finalized storm preparations to ensure the safety and security of staff and youth.
- These actions include fueling all vehicles, moving vehicles in low-lying and flood-prone areas to higher ground, testing and ensuring adequate fuel supplies for generators in the event of loss of power, and ensuring food, medicine, and emergency supplies are stocked and ready.
- The **Florida Department of State** continues to share on its social media channels various updates about information, resources and assistance available from the Executive Office of the Governor and the Division of Emergency Management.
- The **Florida Department of State, Division of Elections** has been monitoring the storm and has been providing updates and information to Supervisors of Elections about potential impacts and resources available to their offices.
- Over 1,700 **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)** team members are working directly on storm response.
- 7 Districts, Central Office, and FDOT's Turnpike Enterprise initiated statewide internal preparedness conference calls beginning Monday, September 23, which continue daily.
- FDOT Secretary issued FDOT [Emergency Order](#) on 9/23/24.
  - FDOT has lifted weight restrictions and is allowing bypass of weigh stations for emergency response vehicles, including utility vehicles staging for rapid response.
- FDOT Statewide Preparedness Efforts Include:

- 889 team members working in offices, and EOCs conducting pre-storm preparations.
- 574 team members working in the field conducting pre-storm preparations.
- 228 pieces of heavy equipment being used for pre-storm preparations.
- 176 team members staged for cut and toss operations
- 90 bridge inspectors staged for deployment
- 32 team members staged for UAV (drone) deployment
- 40 large pumps staged
- 553 generators staged to assist with traffic signal power
- 4 ITS trailers staged.
- Road Ranger Service is available 24 hours in FDOT District 2 (Northeast Florida, and in Marion County in District 5 (Central Florida).
  - Road Ranger Service will be available in District 3 (Panhandle) beginning Wednesday, September 25, at 10 p.m.
- Clearing shoulders in preparation for potential Emergency Should Use (ESU).
- Currently analyzing flooding vulnerabilities for major roadways and bridges.
- Inspecting and clearing drainage systems, monitoring flood-prone and currently saturated areas, and pre-positioning pumps as appropriate.
- Work has been suspended and project sites secured on construction projects with lane closures in the counties listed below that are located on I-10, I-75, Florida Turnpike facilities or major arterials (evacuation routes):
  - Alachua, Baker, Bay, Bradford, Brevard, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Guld, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Monroe, Nassau, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla, Walton, Washington
- Securing high mast lighting, maintenance yards, active construction projects, rest areas/welcome centers, service plazas, and weigh stations.
  - Howard Frankland Bridge barges and cranes anticipated to be fully secured by Wednesday, 9/25
  - Sanibel Island Causeway construction barges anticipated to be fully secured by end of day, Tuesday, 9/24.
  - Replenishing fuel reserves, checking generator readiness, and pre-positioning assets as appropriate.
- Completing repairs on malfunctioning vehicles and equipment in preparation for deployment.
- Initiated communication with modal partners – seaports, airports, railroads, transit, and spaceports. All partners are currently in monitoring posture.
- Staging ITS trailers, as well as drone teams and equipment are being prepped and ready to deploy as needed.
- FDOT encourages drivers to download the FL511 app or visit FL511.com for road/bridge closures and potential detours that may be activated. Remember to always follow the direction of local law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- Seaports are open and preparing for storm.
  - Port of Key West is closed waterside.
  - Port Tampa Bay is open with restrictions waterside.
  - SeaPort Manatee is open with restrictions waterside.
  - Port St. Pete is open with restrictions waterside.
  - All other Seaports are open and preparing for storm.
- Airports are open and monitoring the storm.
- Railroads are open and monitoring the storm.
  - Amtrak
    - September 25th – Train 91 (Southbound Silver Star) New York to Miami via Tampa will bypass Tampa and Lakeland, Florida.
    - September 26th – Train 92 (Northbound Silver Star) Miami to New York via Tampa will bypass Tampa and Lakeland, Florida.
- Transit agencies are open and monitoring the storm.
  - Transit agencies are monitoring the storm.
  - The following transit providers have made the following schedule modifications:
    - JTA Skyway will not be operating on Thursday.

- *Big Bend Transit will not be operating on Thursday or Friday.*
- *Calhoun County Transit will not be operating on Thursday or Friday.*
- *Gulf ARC Transit will not be operating on Thursday or Friday. JTRANS will not be operating on Thursday or Friday.*
- *Liberty County Transit will not be operating on Thursday or Friday. (Emergency and Evacuation only)*
- *Wakulla County Transit will not be operating on Thursday or Friday.*
- *Spaceport partners are open and monitoring the storm.*
  - *The Space X flight scheduled for Thursday has been rescheduled for Saturday.*
- *The **Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA)** has alerted the home administrators of its nine State Veterans' Homes of the approach of the coming storm. They are implementing their hurricane preparation checklists.*
- *As a reminder, the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center is operational 24/7/365 for virtual care and tele-emergency care and support to Veterans enrolled for VA Health Care in Florida. 1-877-741-3400. Visit <https://department.va.gov/integrated-service-networks/visn-08> (under highlights), for more information.*
- ***Volunteer Florida**, in coordination with Volunteer Florida Partners and the Florida VOAD, are identifying actions taken, available assets, resource gaps, and staging and service locations.*
- *Volunteer Florida continues ongoing coordination with Florida Community Emergency Response Teams.*
- *Coordination calls with Volunteer Florida partners are scheduled to begin today*
- ***Florida Department of Management Services (FDMS)** are working to identify potential evacuation shelter sites for special needs and pet friendly evacuees as far east as Lake City and west as Panama City.*

### **Health and Human Services**

- *The **Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)** has established Response and pre-landfall communications and protocols with region personnel and facilities teams.*
- *APD is hosting calls with regional offices, APD-operated Facilities, Adult Day Training providers, and Group Home providers located within the 61 counties under declared state of emergency (EO 24-209); anticipating unmet needs, communicating up-to-date storm activities, office closures, and ensuring effective reporting.*
- *APD is preparing policy documentation for anticipated storm event actions: Providing regional staff with curfew letters for providers in potential counties with issued curfews.*
- *APD is identifying team members for post-storm deployment and staffing for potential local distribution centers.*
- *In collaboration with the SERT, sister agencies, and partners, APD plans to oversee the necessary Access and Functional Needs activities for this storm.*
- *The **Florida Department of Health's (DOH)** is deploying over 135 emergency response vehicles. Staging is currently in Leon, Liberty, Osceola, and Pinellas counties.*
- *The following County Health Departments are closed:*
  - *Taylor: Tuesday, September 24, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
  - *Pasco: Tuesday, September 24, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
  - *Pinellas: Tuesday, September 24, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
  - *Sarasota: Tuesday, September 24, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
  - *Charlotte: Wednesday, September 25, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
  - *Hernando: Wednesday, September 25, 2024, anticipated reopening Friday September 27, 2024*
- *The DOH provided Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clients in affected areas with an early pickup schedule for medical formula. WIC clients are being contacted regarding clinic closures as needed to ensure services are not disrupted.*
- *WIC is alerting coordinators in areas of potential impact and preparing for remote operations.*
- *The following county WIC offices are closed:*
  - *Pasco: Tuesday, September 24, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024*
  - *St. Johns: 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024*
  - *Sarasota: 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024*
  - *Manatee: Wednesday, September 25, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024*

- Marion: Thursday, September 26, 2024
- Charlotte: Wednesday, September 25, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024
- Leon: 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, through Friday, September 27, 2024
- Lee: Thursday, September 26, 2024
- Baker: September 26, 2024
- Putnam: September 26, 2024
- Lake: September 26, 2024
- DOH Children's Medical Services (CMS) Managed Care Plan conducted outreach to providers and high-risk clients, ensuring clients have access to early prescription refills and any additional needs are being met.
- DOH remains in contact with Medical Foster Care families to ensure services and needs are met.
- DOH and the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) sent information regarding early prescription refills permitted under Executive Order 24-209. This information was sent to the public, health insurers, managed care organizations, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacy chains and health care providers.
- The **Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)** has been in communication with health care facilities as they are evaluating any potential evacuation plans.
- AHCA made 551 provider calls for Hurricane Helene preparation ahead of landfall. As of 10am today there are 18 facilities (7 ALFs, 5 nursing homes, 4 hospitals, 1 ICFDD, and 1 RTF) reporting that they are evacuating.
- E-PLUS update:
  - E-PLUS staff conducted password support and refresher training for end users.
  - 2 patient searches and 1 medication search were conducted.
  - E-PLUS staff is in communication with the Florida Department of Health to send Special Needs Shelters intake data.
  - E-PLUS staff continues monitoring E-PLUS and the inbox for inquiries.

### **Infrastructure, Roads and State Closures**

- The **Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)** is pre-staging assets for immediate response post-landfall, such as command centers, high-water rescue vehicles, aviation assets, etc.
- FHP is in communications with local, county and state stakeholders to provide assistance in preparation for storm events.
- FHP is supporting evacuation efforts throughout the state and coordinating with law enforcement personnel and the Florida Department of Transportation.
- FHP is proactively patrolling interstate systems to ensure appropriate traffic flow while supporting evacuation efforts.
- FHP has personnel assigned to the State Emergency Operations Center.
- FHP will have representation at all affected County Emergency Operation Centers as needed.
- FHP is prepared to cancel days off and adjust personnel schedules and assignments as needed.
- FHP is assisting the Florida Department of Corrections with escorting 26 buses relocating inmates from Franklin Correctional Institution to Northwest Florida Reception Center in Washington County.
- FHP is assisting with evacuations in Taylor County and in Cedar Key in Levy County.
- **Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV)** issued Emergency Order 24-05, in support of Executive Order 24-209 which: waives specific requirements for commercial motor vehicles providing emergency relief; and waives the replacement fees for driver's license and identification credentials, vehicle registrations and titles, vessel registrations and titles and temporary parking permits for impacted individuals.
- The **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** is preparing for Hurricane Helene and has secured supplies should the Hope Bus need to be deployed.
- DCF is working with the Community-Based Care Lead Agencies to contact foster families and group home providers to ensure preparedness.
- The State Mental Health Treatment Facilities have activated their disaster preparation plans, have completed their needs assessments, and are prepared for disaster response.
- DCF has contacted adult protective services clients to assess any needs and to ensure they have a plan in place.
- DCF has contacted Continuums of Care, licensed child care facilities, and licensed Substance Use Disorder treatment facilities to ensure they are prepared.
- The Managing Entities are communicating with their network service providers, local Emergency Management teams, and their staff to ensure preparedness.
- The **Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA)** contacted all our Area Agencies on Aging partners and

received the following updates:

- **Advantage Aging Solutions (PSA 2)**
  - Staff have initiated call-downs to clients to assess their needs.
  - Gulf, Franklin, and Liberty Counties: Service providers will be closed starting Wednesday, September 25 at 12:00 p.m.
  - Taylor County: The county is assisting seniors with transportation to shelters outside the county, and those choosing to stay have been provided with additional meals and water.
- **Elder Options (PSA 3)**
  - ElderCare of Alachua County: Their special needs shelter will open on Wednesday, September 25 at 12:00 p.m. Meal sites and services will be closed on Thursday, September 26.
  - Citrus County Support Services: Citrus County will close all county buildings Wednesday, September 25 at 12:00 p.m. They will remain closed, along with all meal sites, on Thursday, September 26.
  - Columbia County Senior Services: Columbia County Senior Services will suspend operations on Thursday, September 26, including meal sites.
  - Marion Senior Services: Offices and meal sites will be closed on Thursday, September 26.
  - You Thrive Florida (Hernando, Lake, Sumter): Offices and meal sites will be closed on Thursday, September 26 and Friday, September 27.
- **ElderSource (PSA 4)**
  - Senior Centers in Baker County are closed today through the end of the week, and clients have been provided with shelf-stable meals.
  - Senior Resource Alliance (PSA 7)
  - Providers are distributing additional meals in preparation for the storm.
- The **Florida Department of Education (FDOE)** has been in contact with all school districts that may be impacted by Hurricane Helene. For the latest information on school closures, visit [FLDOE.org/storminfo](http://FLDOE.org/storminfo).
- Following the issuance of the Governor's [Executive Order 24-209](#), the **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** issued an Emergency Final Order allowing for the activation of disaster debris management sites to store and process storm generated solid waste and debris.
- DEP's Emergency Final Order also removes barriers for expediting necessary repair, replacement and restoration of structures, including coastal structures, equipment, surface water management systems, works and other systems that may be damaged by the storm.
- DEP has pre-authorized 871 Disaster Debris Management Sites for the counties included in the Governor's Executive Order to temporarily stage debris that may result from the storm. These sites are a critical component of expediting clean-up and reducing environmental and public health impacts post-storm.
- All significant hazardous waste facilities and both phosphate and non-phosphate mines in potentially affected counties have been notified to ensure all pre-storm preparations are being made.
- DEP published a storm updates webpage to keep state park visitors updated of closures: [FloridaStateParks.org/StormUpdates](http://FloridaStateParks.org/StormUpdates). Visitors with existing camping and cabin reservations at closed parks have been notified of their reservation status.

### **Resources for Employees, Businesses and Consumer**

- The **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)** has partnered with the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association to encourage more than 71,000 Florida-licensed lodging establishments to relax pet policies and waive pet fees for evacuees.
- Through this effort, anti-price gouging information and emergency accommodations resources have also been provided.
- DBPR has proactively communicated with more than 137,000 restaurant and lodging licensees to provide storm preparation and food safety resources.
- DBPR encourages Florida's licensed contractors who provide post-storm construction-related services to register with its Florida Disaster Contractors Network at [DCNOnline.org](http://DCNOnline.org).
- **FloridaCommerce** is communicating and coordinating with more than 200 private sector partners across the state, encouraging them to review their emergency plans for their businesses and prepare their employees in advance of the weather event.
- FloridaCommerce has activated the private sector hotline at 850-815-4925, open daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Inquiries may also be emailed to [ESF18@em.myflorida.com](mailto:ESF18@em.myflorida.com).
- Updates on business closures and business resources are consistently being updated at [FloridaDisaster.biz/CurrentDisasterUpdates](http://FloridaDisaster.biz/CurrentDisasterUpdates).

- *FloridaCommerce and CareerSource Florida continue to host calls with the 21 Local Workforce Development Boards and 38 Community Action Agencies across the state to prepare teams to assist local employees and employers after the weather event. To find your local career center, visit [careersourceflorida.com](https://careersourceflorida.com).*
- **VISIT FLORIDA** has activated Emergency Accommodation Modules on Expedia and Priceline to provide real-time hotel availability and lodging resources for impacted Floridians and visitors.
- Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort has crafted special offers for Evacuees and First Responders in need of accommodations in the event of an evacuation. Please see the linked pages below for more information.
  - [Evacuees](#)
  - [First Responders](#)
- The **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)** is coordinating with Florida's ports and fuel industry partners to ensure adequate fuel supplies are available across Florida, as well as with Florida's agricultural partners to ensure producers have adequate resources and support.
- The Florida Forest Service is staging equipment, like high-water vehicles, to support recovery operations.
- The Commissioner of Agriculture, Wilton Simpson, has approved an [Emergency Order](#) temporarily suspending the intrastate movement requirements for the transportation of animals. In addition, the following states have waived their interstate import requirements for Florida pets, horses and livestock leaving the state: Alabama, Georgia (does not include livestock), Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.
- The Florida Forest Service has announced State Forest closures. An updated list can be found [here](#).
- The **Office of Financial Regulation (OFR)** issued a proclamation to financial institutions and securities professionals.
- The **Department of Revenue (FDOR)** has issued Emergency Order 24-001: Taxing Authority Millage and Budget Hearings to assist local taxing authorities with altering their plans for annual budget hearings because of Helene. Department of Revenue bulletin PTO 20-07 provides further instructions for local taxing authorities during declared emergencies.
- For previous updates see below:  
[9/24/2024](#)

Follow FDEM on [X](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) for updates and visit [FloridaDisaster.org/Updates](https://FloridaDisaster.org/Updates) for information relating to Hurricane Helene.

## **Additional Resources and Contacts**

### **Florida Division of Emergency Management**

2555 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399  
(850) 815-4000

<https://www.floridadisaster.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/FLSERT>

<https://twitter.com/flsert>

To view local county emergency management contacts, please access the following link: <https://www.floridadisaster.org/sert/emergency-ordinances-declarations-and-orders>

To sign up for emergency alerts in your area, please access the following link: <https://apps.floridadisaster.org/alertflorida>

To access information about currently open shelters within Florida, access the following link: <https://www.floridadisaster.org/shelter-status>



## **The American Red Cross**

<https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/central-florida.html>

<https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/north-florida.html>

<https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/south-florida.html>

People in the path of [#HurricaneHelene](#) should have their hurricane plan in place and closely monitor the situation throughout the week - including FL, AL, GA, SC and NC.

Red Cross is monitoring Helene closely and working with our partners to shelter and support people who could be impacted by this storm. In addition to our pre-positioned supplies, the Red Cross has disaster teams and more relief supplies on the way to the region to support people impacted by Helene.

It's critical to listen to the advice of local authorities and evacuate immediately if asked to do so. Know the difference between a watch and a warning. A watch means conditions are likely and to stay alert — a warning means act now.

Tune into your local radio, NOAA radio or news channel for the latest updates.

Prepare now: create an evacuation plan, build an emergency kit and be informed. Learn more [redcross.org/prepare](https://www.redcross.org/prepare)

Make sure to include your pets as part of your plan. The Red Cross is unable to welcome pets into our shelters for everyone's safety. If you are evacuating with pets, please consider visiting [RedRover.org](https://www.RedRover.org) to view their resource list of pet-friendly evacuation shelters and tips.

Download the free Red Cross Emergency app for real-time alerts, open shelter locations and safety advice on hurricanes and other emergencies. Download the app by searching "American Red Cross" in your app store or by going to [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps).

**FIND A SHELTER:** Anyone who needs a safe place to go can find information for open Red Cross shelters on [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org), Emergency app or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767).

We encourage people who plan to stay in a Red Cross shelter to bring prescription medications, extra clothing, pillows, blankets, hygiene supplies, other comfort items and important documents. Don't forget to bring any special items for children, such as diapers, formula and toys, or for family members who have unique needs.

For the latest news, follow these pages:

@RedCrossCentralFL

@RedCrossNorthFL

@SFLRedCross

@RedCrossAL

@RedCrossGeorgia

@RedCrossSC

@RedCrossENC

@RedCrossGreaterCarolinas

**Open Shelters:** For updates on shelter availability, please visit:

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery-services/find-an-open-shelter.html>

### **Florida Department of Transportation**

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399  
(866) 374-3368

<https://www.fdot.gov>

<https://www.fdot.gov/agencyresources/facebook.shtm>

<https://www.fdot.gov/agencyresources/twitter.shtm>

For information about current road conditions and closures, please visit:

<https://fl511.com>

### **United Way/211 Information and Referrals Lines**

These information and referral lines may know of additional resources currently providing assistance, such as food pantries, clothing closets, emergency shelters, and agencies offering financial assistance. Please dial 2-1-1 and provide your zip code and demographic information in order to receive referrals. Information can also be obtained at <https://www.211.org>.

### **United Way of Florida**

From all local numbers, dial 2-1-1. To find your local United Way please visit:

<https://www.uwof.org/find-your-local-united-way>

### **NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR NATURAL DISASTERS:**

#### **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)**

500 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20472  
(800) 621-3362

<http://www.fema.gov>

Please visit the website and click on “*Disaster Declarations*”. If a disaster is declared, please call to apply for assistance by phone, or visit <http://www.fema.gov/apply-assistance> to apply online.

#### **DISASTERASSISTANCE.GOV**

<https://www.disasterassistance.gov>

Offers information about local resources for disasters, including: FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), Red Cross, food, shelter, state emergency management agencies, and hospital locators.

To determine if individual disaster assistance is available through FEMA, please visit the website and enter the address.

To locate your local state emergency management agency for disaster information and updates, please visit <http://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies>

## **AMERICAN RED CROSS NATIONAL**

National Headquarters  
2025 East Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 303-4498 or (800) 733-2767  
<http://www.redcross.org>

Please call or visit the website to locate your local chapter and open shelters.

## **NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**

Weather alerts by state are available at <http://www.weather.gov/alerts>.

## **THE WEATHER CHANNEL**

Local forecasts and severe weather alerts, available at <http://www.weather.com>.

## **NATIONAL TRAFFIC AND ROAD CLOSURE INFORMATION**

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/trafficinfo>

## **SAFE TRAVEL USA**

<http://www.safetravelusa.com>

## **FREE HELP LINE**

ComPsych, a leading health and behavioral health services company, is our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and offers a free emotional-support help line.

The toll-free number, 800-272-7255, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is free of charge and open to all Impellam employees - BarPellam, Bartech Staffing, Corporate Employment Resources, Guidant Global, Lorien and SRG. Specially trained ComPsych mental health specialists help people manage their stress and anxiety so they can continue to address their everyday needs. Callers may also receive referrals to community resources to help them with specific concerns, including financial and legal matters.

Along with the toll-free help line, emotional-support resources and information are available online at [GuidanceResources.com](http://GuidanceResources.com).