

Florida Hurricane Milton

October 7th, 2024

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis

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<https://www.flgov.com>

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

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On October 6, 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 and Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jared Perdue at the State Emergency Operations Center to provide updates on preparedness efforts for Hurricane Milton.

As of 5 p.m. ET, Hurricane Milton is located about 805 miles west-southwest of Tampa, Florida, with maximum sustained winds of 80 mph. Milton is forecast to move just north of the Yucatan Peninsula and across the southern Gulf of Mexico Monday and Tuesday and approach the west coast of Florida by Wednesday.

Governor DeSantis issued [Executive Order \(EO\) 24-215](#), amending [EO 24-214](#) and declaring a state of emergency for 51 counties.

To learn more about navigating hurricane season, residents can visit [FloridaDisaster.org/Guide](https://www.floridadisaster.org/Guide). 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)** has activated the State Emergency Operations Center to Level 1 since Tuesday, September 24, for Hurricane Helene, and is at a Level 1 for Hurricane Milton as of today, October 6, leading coordination efforts for the State Emergency Response Team.
- The State Emergency Response Team is engaged in over 450 missions to assist counties in their preparedness efforts. These missions accomplish vital tasks like staging resources to deploy for immediate response as soon as it is safe to do so, protecting critical infrastructure facilities like hospitals and utility stations, and coordinating personnel statewide.
- FDEM is establishing a 10,000-person base camp at Tropicana Field to support ongoing debris operations and post-landfall responders.
- FDEM is coordinating the deployment of fuel and EV chargers to pre-stage along evacuation routes to support evacuations.
- The **Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs (FDVA)** storm preparations are underway at all State Veterans' Nursing Homes in anticipation of Hurricane Milton's landfall.
- The **Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)** is performing maintenance on all equipment deployed during Hurricane Helene to ensure it is ready for use in Hurricane Milton.
- FDLE Regional Operations Centers in Tampa, Orlando and Fort Myers are establishing their Regional Law Enforcement Coordination Teams (RLECT).
- The **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)** 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 based on forecasted landfall locations have been developed and remain flexible based on the storm's projected path.
- In addition to local officers, approximately 75, FWC officers are ready to deploy and respond

with a variety of specialized equipment as necessary, such as:

- Airboats
- Shallow draft boats
- ATVs/Side-by-sides
- Larger platform vessels
- Four-wheel vehicles
- Specialized high water vehicles
- FWC Special Operations Group (SOG) teams will serve as reconnaissance units for the state and report on damage after the storm has made landfall.
- FWC Aviation Section has been placed on standby and has readied all appropriate aircraft for potential deployment for aerial assistance, reconnaissance, and post-storm damage assessments when needed.

Health and Human Services

- The **Florida Department of Health (DOH)** deployed over 200 emergency response vehicles on the I-4 Corridor in preparation for the storm.
- The **Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)** has initiated an event in the Health Facility Reporting System (HFRS). Health care providers in the have been requested to provide information on census, available beds, evacuation status, accepting evacuees and generator needs from counties declared under [EO-24-114](#). This information allows AHCA to assist health care providers in transferring patients if needed and ensure that health care providers in impacted areas have the necessary resources and adequate power.
 - 12 health care facilities have reported evacuations. This includes:
 - 6 assisted living facilities
 - 4 nursing home
 - 2 residential treatment centers
- The **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)** is working with Florida's ports and fuel industry partners to ensure adequate fuel supplies are available, and with Florida's agricultural partners so producers have adequate resources.
- The Florida Forest Service is staging equipment, like high-water vehicles, dump trucks, bulldozers, and front-end loaders to assist with road clearing.
- The Florida Forest Service and the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement are supporting efforts to expedite debris removal in the Tampa Bay region.
- The Department is working to connect evacuating horse owners with open public and private facilities across the state.
- The Florida State Fairgrounds has opened the Bob Thomas Equestrian Center on a first come first serve basis for horse owners that are in the direct path of Hurricane Milton. To learn more and reserve a spot, visit floridastatefair.com/equestrian.
- The **Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA)** is contacting all our Area Agencies on Aging partners to receive updates on their ongoing preparation efforts and gather the status of any unmet needs.
- The **Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)** continues to contact facilities and providers to provide updates on protective actions, check the status of clients and residents, and assess unmet needs in potentially affected areas due to Hurricane Milton.
- The **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** is preparing for Hurricane Milton and ensuring providers in potentially impacted areas have the resources they need for the storm.
- The Department has secured supplies to ensure readiness in the event the Hope Bus is needed for deployment after landfall.
- The State Mental Health Treatment Facilities have activated their disaster preparation plans and are assessing facility readiness.
- DCF has begun contacting foster families, adult protective services clients, and licensed providers in the storm's path to ensure preparedness.
- DCF is making preliminary preparations for staffing shelters, delivering emergency supplies, and directing generators to critical human services infrastructure.

Infrastructure, Roads and State Closures

- The **Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT)** Hurricane Milton statewide preparedness efforts include 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.

- *Monitoring interstate traffic speeds and levels for the potential implementation of Emergency Shoulder Use (ESU) to assist with evacuations if necessary.*
- *Securing high mast lighting, maintenance yards, active construction projects, rest areas/welcome centers, service plazas, and weigh stations that had returned to normal since Hurricane Helene.*
- *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.*
- *Expanded Road Ranger Service across the impact zones.*
- *FDOT Teams continue to fully staff EOCs, RTMCs, and have crews in the field for storm preparations.*
- *Resources prepped and staged strategically (close to the projected path for quick implementation)*
 - *Cut & Toss Operations = 328 team members on standby*
 - *Over 1,015 generators*
 - *Over 350 pieces of heavy equipment and trucks*
 - *67 pumps pre-positioned*
 - *Satellite internet equipment = 58 Starlink devices*
 - *Over 1,900 team members on standby for various emergency response efforts, including, damage assessment, flooding, traffic signals outages, etc.*
 - *FDOT has 20 drone pilots on standby*
 - *8 ITS trailers staged*
 - *Over 150 bridge inspectors on standby*
- *FDOT has removed 139,718 cubic yards of debris statewide: 66,278 from state roads and 73,440 from local roads.*
- *FDOT is supporting our local communities with supplemental sand and debris removal from local roads on the barrier islands in Pinellas and Manatee counties.*
- *At the direction of Gov. DeSantis, FDOT is coordinating debris removal assignments for the Florida National Guard, Florida State Guard, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Department of Agriculture, amongst others, who have activated available state personnel and resources to clear and haul remaining debris.*
- *In preparation for Hurricane Milton, FDOT's out-of-state deployed resources have begun to transition back to Florida operations.*
- *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.*
- *The **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** is coordinating with Landfill Strike Teams to assess Disaster Debris Management Sites (DDMS) operating as a result of Hurricane Helene.*
- *For counties and local governments in need of additional debris disposal locations, especially ahead of Hurricane Milton, DEP has approved all pending DDMS site activation requests and stands ready to approve the activation of any additional pre-authorized or new DDMSs that may be needed.*
- *Currently, 193 DDMS have been authorized to operate.*
- *Hurricane Helene kicked up significant amounts of sediment and sand along the coastlines in and along its path. DEP is working with local governments to manage the excess sand and continue removal efforts.*
- *For sand that has accumulated on private properties, residents should return it to the beach if it appears clean, smells fresh and is free of debris. If the sand contains debris, residents should contact their local government to find the nearest disposal site. DEP has worked with counties to establish temporary staging areas to properly screen the sand before it is returned to the beach.*
- *DEP is working with Florida's Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (FlaWARN), the Florida Rural Water Association and other response agencies to ensure preparations are underway to support drinking and wastewater facilities ahead of the anticipated heavy rains.*

- Florida's water management districts are engaging local governments and drainage operators throughout the state and are available to provide technical and other support, including deploying temporary pumps to alleviate localized flooding. As part of standard operations, DEP and Florida's water management districts continue to monitor water systems and river levels as the storm develops.
- Currently, no Florida State Parks are closed because of this anticipated storm. For updates on state parks affected by Hurricane Helene or Hurricane Milton, please visit: [FloridaStateParks.org/StormUpdates](https://www.floridastateparks.org/StormUpdates).
- The **Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)** is staging high-water rescue vehicles in preparation for landfall.
- FHP is mobilizing 74 Quick Response Force (QRF) Troopers to stage in preparation for the incoming storm.
- FHP is assisting with traffic control in St. Petersburg, around Taylor County, and outside Tropicana Field for debris cleanup crews.
- FHP is assisting with security at the Pinellas County Landfill.
- FHP is providing security at multiple fuel sites across the state.
- FHP is assisting with community patrols in Taylor County.
- FHP air support and drone assets are staged and prepared to deploy when needed.
- The **Florida Department of Corrections (FDC)** is actively preparing mitigation measures by deploying evacuation assets and identifying areas of evacuation. Updates will be made available to the public at www.fdc.myflorida.com/weather-updates.
- The **Florida Department of Education (DOE)** is actively monitoring Hurricane Milton and is working with school districts as they begin preparation efforts. The Department is also in close contact with districts that have been impacted by Hurricane Helene and will assist them with addressing critical needs ahead of the storm. Updates on school closures can be found at [FLDOE.org/storminfo](https://fldoe.org/storminfo).

Resources for Employees, Businesses and Consumers

- The **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)** is staging assets and personnel across 13 offices statewide and is prepared to surge resources to areas impacted by Hurricane Helene that receive a second impact from Hurricane Milton.
- Updates on business closures and business resources are consistently being updated at [FloridaDisaster.biz](https://www.floridadisaster.biz).
- FloridaCommerce 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.
- FloridaCommerce is hosting daily private sector coordination calls. Briefings will be provided by Emergency Support Functions and private sector partners. For call information email ESF18@em.myflorida.com.
- **VISIT FLORIDA** Emergency Accommodation Modules on Expedia, Priceline and Booking.com will remain available to provide real-time hotel availability and lodging resources for impacted Floridians and visitors.
- The Florida Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC) has pulled their Helene Mobile Assistance Centers from the field and will redeploy once storm conditions have passed.

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

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

Even as storm-weary Floridians are still struggling to deal with the devastating aftermath of Helene, Hurricane Milton has developed in the Gulf of Mexico and is expected to rapidly intensify as it approaches the Florida Peninsula. Milton could become a major hurricane before making landfall mid-week. The South Florida Red Cross is closely monitoring the storm and is working with partners and local emergency management officials in advance of Milton.

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.redcross.org/red-rover) 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.