

FEMA Leads Massive Whole Community Response Effort for Hurricane Michael Survivors

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WASHINGTON – [Thousands of first responders and volunteers continue working together to save lives, restore power and help survivors affected by Hurricane Michael.](#)

More than 16,000 federal employees, including over 8,000 military personnel have been deployed to support Hurricane Michael response efforts.

Since Michael's landfall, search and rescue teams from FEMA, the U.S. Coast Guard, National Guard and others, working alongside state responders and volunteers, have completed 110 evacuations, 4,193 rescues/assists, 15,287 shelter in place checks, and 128 animal assists. Structural assessments were completed on 16,827 structures in Florida.

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams are in Florida helping survivors register for assistance. [More than 28,000 individuals and households registered for disaster assistance and are being referred to federal, state or voluntary agencies for assistance.](#)

Sunday, President Trump [issued a major disaster declaration for Georgia](#), making federal assistance available to individuals and households, and authorizing debris removal and emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance.

Sixteen different states are sending support through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. More than 25 missions are active in both Florida and Georgia with more than 430 people deployed to assist.

More than 35,000 utility workers from 26 states, are working to restore power. Customer outages are declining; as customers are restored, companies are reallocating resources strategically. Efforts in the hardest hit areas may be



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prolonged due to access constraints and the level of damage.

In Florida, FEMA provided 715,000 meals and 1.5 million liters of water per day. FEMA transferred more than 350,000 meals to Georgia for feeding operations.

The federal government is supporting more than 30 distribution sites to provide meals, water and other items in areas where stores are not open, or supplies are limited. Florida residents can find information about food and water locations by visiting [FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org). Georgia residents can learn more at the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency's [website](#). These points of distribution are further supported by voluntary and faith-based field kitchens and mobile feeding units.

Residents in Alabama, Florida and Georgia should:

- **Stay safe.** Return home only [if you are told it is safe](#) by local officials. As you clear debris please look carefully around the debris for any visible cables. If you see any cables, wait for professional help. Power cables can kill easily.
- **Be strong.** Focus on your specific needs and take care of one another. Shelters are providing information, charging stations, and connection to assistance from federal, state, and voluntary agencies. They also have communications support so you can contact loved ones and let them know you're safe.
- **Start cleaning up.** Photograph/video damages before you start cleaning up. Contact your insurance company [to file a claim](#).

For those outside the impacted area, **never forget – Cash Is Best!** It's critical that the right resources get where they're needed most. A financial contribution to one of the over 80 voluntary and faith-based organizations operating in the impacted area will speed recovery and help survivors.

The Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has made the Disaster Distress Helpline available to assist residents in the impacted area in coping with the stress caused by Hurricane Michael. To connect with a trained crisis counselor, call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 (for Spanish, press 2 or text Hablanos to 66746).

Other federal, private sector and voluntary organizations response actions include:



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FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Teams

- Three rescues, 110 evacuations, 61 assists, 15,287 shelter in place checks, 1,055 animal assists, and 16,827 structural assessments completed in Florida.

American Red Cross

- More than 1,600 people stayed overnight in shelters in Florida and Georgia.
- As people are now in shelters, survivors can use the American Red Cross's [Safe and Well](#) site to check in and find missing individuals.

U.S. Department of Defense

- More than 5,000 personnel are engaged in Hurricane Michael response efforts.
- Department assets including 32 helicopters, six fixed wing aircraft, 17 swift water vehicles and up to 160 high water vehicles are available to support search and rescue missions.

National Guard Bureau

- More than 4,000 [National Guard](#) troops in Florida and Georgia have been assigned to over 50 missions that include search & rescue, engineering, route clearance and POD support at 30 locations. Troops are also providing support at 12 shelter locations.
- A Guard heavy engineering unit has cleared 107 city blocks in the affected area.

U. S. Coast Guard

- [U.S. Coast Guard](#) working with [U.S. Customs and Border Patrol](#), completed 355 assistances/rescues and one animal rescue in Florida.
- Three USCG Damage Assessment Teams and two Reconstruction Teams are assessing and repairing damaged facilities.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- [The Corps](#) is engaged in seven response programs including providing [temporary emergency power](#) in Florida, offering technical assistance on debris removal, route clearance and temporary roofing.



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- The Corps deployed 90 personnel to support response efforts.
- Twenty route clearance teams are clearing roads in Florida.
- Two Deployable Tactical Operations System Vehicle are in Florida to assist with communication capabilities and connectivity.
- The Corps is actively monitoring and managing dams within the area impacted by Hurricane Michael to make as much water storage available as possible.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Eight [Health and Human Services](#) Disaster Medical Assistance Teams are caring for patients at four emergency departments in Florida.
- A U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps behavioral health team is providing crisis counseling for hospital staff, emergency responders and community members in severely impacted areas.

U.S. Department of Transportation

- DOT created an interactive [web mapping](#) application on transportation infrastructure.

Federal Communications Commission

- The [FCC](#) is providing emergency assistance to communications providers and has created a [dedicated webpage](#) for information about Michael, including tips for communicating during an emergency.

U.S. Department of Interior

- [Interior](#) has 225 personnel on the ground conducting debris clearance and infrastructure damage assessments.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

- USDA launched a disaster assistance discovery tool through its new website [Farmers.gov](#) that provides information about disaster assistance programs offered by the USDA.

U.S. Department of Labor



- [National Dislocated Worker Grant](#) (DWG) funding is available to help Florida assess its workforce needs due to significant job losses caused by Hurricane Michael. This funding assists the state and local governments to expand service capacity of dislocated worker training and employment programs.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

- NOAA law enforcement continues supporting urban search and rescue missions.
- Aerial images of the Florida panhandle are available on www.NOAA.gov.

Whole Community Response Efforts: The federal government is just one part of the team; FEMA is leading a partnership with faith-based, voluntary, and non-governmental agencies and the private sector to reach every survivor who needs help.

- [The Salvation Army](#) mobilized 48 mobile feeding units with a combined service capacity of 72,000 daily meals.
- [Operation Barbeque Relief](#) has field kitchens in Florida with a total meal capacity of 30,000 meals per day.
- In Florida, [Southern Baptist Disaster Relief](#) opened a disaster kitchen which can produce up to 20,000 meals per day. Three more kitchens with an additional 40,000 meals per day capacity are expected to open today.
- In Georgia, Southern Baptists Disaster Relief is opening one kitchen today with a capacity of 15,000 meals per day.
- [Airbnb](#) announced 900 homes have opened to host displaced survivors for free, including 200 in Florida. Airbnb expanded Open Homes program across Florida and adjacent states.
- More than 6,000 volunteers have registered with [Volunteer Florida](#) to assist Hurricane Michael survivors.

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FEMA's mission is to help people before, during and after disasters.

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