

FEMA, Federal Partners Continue Supporting Hurricane Ian Response

Release Date: September 29, 2022

WASHINGTON -- President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. approved Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis's request for a major disaster declaration this morning. The declaration authorizes FEMA to provide individual assistance for survivors in nine counties -- Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Hardee, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. It also provides 100% federal funding for debris removal and emergency, life-saving measures for 30 days in those counties. FEMA continues to monitor Ian's path, as a second landfall could happen on the coast of Georgia and South Carolina.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell will brief President Biden today on federal response efforts at FEMA's National Response Coordination Center. Criswell will travel to Florida Friday to personally see response efforts and ensure recovery resources are available to survivors. The federal government coordinated and prepositioned supplies, and more than 1,300 responders ahead of Ian's landfall to ensure resources could get where they need to be as quickly as possible. Federal responders are working alongside nearly 5,000 Florida National Guard members and other state response and emergency managers.

The federal government deployed a Search and Rescue Coordination Group comprised of FEMA Urban Search and Rescue teams, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Department of Defense, Customs Border and Protection and the state of Florida to help coordinate rescue efforts with local officials.

The National Hurricane Center downgraded Ian to a tropical storm, but extreme dangers persist, including life-threatening storm surge through Friday along the coasts of northeast Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. Additionally, widespread flooding with major-to-record river flooding will continue through the end of the week in northern Florida and southeastern Georgia and South Carolina.



FEMA

Page 1 of 4

Individuals should stay alert to continuing risks from Ian. Areas far inland will continue to experience dangerous weather conditions. Please be safe and listen to local emergency management officials.

Safety Considerations for Residents

- **Stay off the roads.** Emergency workers may be assisting people in flooded areas or cleaning up debris. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way. If you evacuated do not return home until local officials tell you the area is safe.
- **Prepare for power outages.** Residents in Georgia and South Carolina should plan now for potential power outages. Plan for batteries and other alternative power sources to meet your needs when the power goes out. Use a generator safely. Keep it outside and away from doors, windows or vents.
- **Avoid downed power or utility lines.** They may be live with deadly voltage. Stay away and report them immediately to your power or utility company.
- **Stay out of floodwater.** Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as human and livestock waste, contaminants that can lead to illness, sharp debris or wild or stray animals. Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters.

State, Federal Response Actions

- More than 32,000 mutual assistance power crew personnel will begin assessing damages and making repairs today. Additional crews are on standby in areas preparing for Ian's landfall in Georgia and South Carolina.
- Nearly 200 shelters are open in Florida, serving more than 10,000 people. Florida Department of Emergency Management deployed several hundred shelter support staff to assist counties that opened their special needs hurricane shelters.
- FEMA teams already delivered 1.1 million meals and 1.5 million liters of water to areas of Florida. Other water and food supplies will be delivered pending safe conditions post-storm impact. FEMA is securing an additional 6 million liters of water and 5.5 million meals.
- The U.S. Coast Guard is using helicopters and fixed wing aircraft for immediate search and rescue response. The Department of Defense has more than 1,200



highwater vehicles and 25 watercrafts supporting search and rescue operations.

- FEMA activated a medical support contract for ambulances and paratransit seats. All 300 requested National Disaster Medical System assets arrived in Florida, including 400 ambulances, 15 bariatric paratransit ambulances and four rotary aircraft to evacuate medically vulnerable individuals in nursing homes and other medical facilities as needed.
- More than 2,000 federal employees are supporting the response throughout the Southeast. FEMA has more than 3,200 reservist personnel available to deploy to support. Additionally, more than 7,500 Surge Capacity Force members are rostered to deploy if needed. The agency is establishing a personnel mobilization center to expedite forward movement when needed.
- Incident Management Teams are at the State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee, with additional teams in Miami and Atlanta. Mobile Emergency Response Support teams are also in Tallahassee and Orlando, as well as Montgomery, Alabama and Thomasville, Georgia to support any state coordination needs.
- Four Mobile Communications Operation Vehicles are staged at Maxwell Air Force Base with an additional unit in Orlando. Two Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles and one Mobile Emergency Response Support team are in Florida.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared a Public Health Emergency and deployed a 38-person disaster medical assistance team to Miami, and two other teams to Robins Air Force Base in Georgia. HHS also deployed health and medical task force teams and four pharmacists to Atlanta.
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Routine non-criminal immigration enforcement operations will not be conducted at evacuation sites, or assistance centers such as shelters or food banks. Additionally officers will be vigilant against any effort by criminals to exploit disruptions caused by the storm.

Resources for Evacuees and Survivors

- Florida survivors who live in Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Hardee, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties can apply for federal assistance at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, by calling 800-621-FEMA (3362) or by using the [FEMA App](#). Survivors using a relay service, such as a video relay service, captioned telephone service or others, can give the FEMA operator the number



FEMA

Page 3 of 4

for that service.

- Volunteer agencies are preparing to perform feeding operations including the American Red Cross, Florida Baptist, Salvation Army, Feeding Florida, Farm Share, Midwest Food Bank, Operation BBQ Relief, Mercy Chefs and World Central Kitchen. FEMA and its partners have capacity to serve tens of thousands of meals per day.
- Medically dependent residents of Florida who need electricity to operate medical equipment, transport services to evacuated due to a medical condition or need help getting medication during a disaster can register for assistance at FloridaDisaster.org/SNR.
- Visit [Hurricane Ian | FEMA.gov](https://HurricaneIvan.FEMA.gov) for information and resources available for Florida residents affected by the storm. The page will be available in Creole, Simplified Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese.



FEMA

Page 4 of 4