FEMA, Federal Partners Unite to Jumpstart Hurricane Idalia Recovery Efforts

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WASHINGTON **--** More than a dozen federal agencies and departments have been mobilized across the Biden-Harris Administration to assist state, county, nonprofit and private sector partners to help people in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina jumpstart their recovery after Hurricane Idalia.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell visited Florida on Thursday to assess the damage in the affected areas. FEMA has deployed more than 300 personnel to the region, part of a federal force of more than 1,500 across four states. President Joe Biden said Thursday that he plans to travel to Florida Saturday morning.

“I'm here today to join the governor and see first-hand the impacts on the communities so we can determine what level of assistance and what other programs we'll need to bring in to help support those people that were in the storm's path,” Criswell said Thursday.

“We are going to make sure that we always have the resources here from the federal family to support the current efforts, but also the ongoing recovery efforts that may be needed in these communities that were impacted by Hurricane Idalia,” Criswell said.

Prior to the hurricane’s landfall, FEMA staged commodities and critical supplies, including more than 1.3 million meals and 1.6 million liters of water available pending requests from states. Additional meals, water, tarps and toddler kits are in transit.

The entire federal family is working hard to address the needs of residents affected by the hurricane. More information is available on the Idalia web page at USA.gov.

- The **U.S. Coast Guard** is performing post-storm recovery efforts and ensuring that ports are safe to reopen. **Urban Search and Rescue** teams from across the country have been deployed.
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** deployed teams and resources to assist the states with infrastructure, power assessment and temporary roofing requirements as needed.
- The **Department of Health and Human Services** declared a public health emergency for the state of Florida on Wednesday to help health care providers and suppliers meet emergency health needs of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. National Disaster Medical System teams have also been deployed to support medical needs in affected areas.
- The **U.S. Department of Transportation** is working with states to make sure air, roads, rail and maritime transportation is safe and operable.
- **The U.S. Department of Agriculture** has taken actions to help people receive the food assistance they need under numerous federal programs, provided food safety guidance, and risk management and disaster assistance options for agricultural producers.
- The **Environmental Protection Agency** issued an emergency fuel waiver on Wednesday to address fuel supply shortages.
- The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** has shared numerous storm forecasts, maps and other resources to keep people informed and safe.
- The **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** is urging anyone experiencing emotional distress related the disaster to call or text the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990.
- The **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** Veterans Crisis Line is supporting veterans in crisis. Call 988, then Press 1; text message (838255); or chat online . Those receiving care through the VA can get VA mental health services and/or engage with a mental health specialist at a local VA facility.
- The **U.S. Department of Energy** has deployed responders to coordinate closely with industry, interagency and state partners to support storm response.
- The **Department of Interior** Fish and Wildlife Service teams have cleared roads and downed trees at its facilities. Bureau of Land Management officers are supporting search and rescue teams in Florida.
- The **Federal Communications Commission** is monitoring the areas impacted by Hurricane Idalia and offers guidance for communicating during and after the emergency.

In addition to federal efforts, affected states have been sharing local information and resources to help residents stay safe and find immediate assistance.

FEMA's volunteer partners have also been providing vital support to affected areas:

- More than 400 **American Red Cross** disaster workers deployed to provide comfort, support and relief to survivors. An additional 200 workers are traveling to the affected areas to support sheltering and relief efforts.
- **The Salvation Army** is providing meals and distributing supplies through mobile feeding units in affected areas, with more units on the way.