

Search and Rescue Efforts Continue Along Florida Coast

Release Date: Oktober 12, 2018

WASHINGTON – FEMA continues to assist local and state first responders as search and rescue efforts continue today following Hurricane Michael’s devastating landfall Wednesday.

Additionally, FEMA deployed Disaster Assistance Survivor teams to shelters in Florida to help survivors begin their recovery process. These community outreach teams are disaster recovery specialists who will also be canvassing the impacted areas to help survivors register for assistance.

“For anyone wanting to know how they can truly help now, they need to visit NVOAD.org,” said FEMA Administrator Brock Long. “It’s the best way to know their money can go to those who most need the assistance right now.”

Since Michael’s landfall, [FEMA](#) search and rescue teams completed 27 evacuations, five assists, 654 shelter in place checks, 10 animal assists and 1,042 structural assessments in Florida. Those numbers will continue to increase throughout today and over the weekend.

Residents in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina should:

- Follow instructions from local officials. Follow guidance from local officials, and do not return home [until you are told it is safe](#).
- Expect disruptions. Be prepared for power and phone service outages, roads blocked by flood and/or debris, water and sewer outages.
- Check in with neighbors. If it is safe to do so, check on your neighbors. You may be the help they need right now.
- If donating to help survivors, cash is best. A financial contribution to a recognized disaster relief organization is the [most effective donation to make](#).



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Yesterday, President Trump granted an emergency declaration request for [Georgia](#) counties. The president also approved a major disaster declaration for [Florida](#).

Nine different states are sending support through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. More than 15 missions are active in both Florida and Georgia with more than 330 people deployed to assist. Additional missions will be issued today and throughout the weekend.

Other federal, private sector and voluntary organizations actions for response activities as of 6 a.m. today include:

American Red Cross ([ARC](#))

- More than 4,000 people stayed overnight in [ARC](#) 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 ([DOD](#))

- More than 5,000 [DOD](#) personnel are engaged in Hurricane Michael response efforts.
- DOD assets including 47 helicopters, 16 fixed wing aircraft and 240 high water vehicles are available to support search and rescue missions.

National Guard Bureau (NGB)

- [Approximately 2,448 NGB](#) personnel activated to support Hurricane Michael response efforts.
- National Guard support equipment capabilities include 15 Florida rotary wing aircraft for immediate response 16 additional aircraft are available from supporting states. Additionally, there are 27 ANG fixed and rotary wing aircraft (C-17/C-130/KC-135/HH-60) with more than 670 high wheel vehicles available in Florida with an additional 2,268 located in surrounding states.

U. S. Coast Guard (USCG)



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- [USCG](#) completed 129 assistances/rescues and one animal rescue in Florida.
- Seventeen USCG cutters are positioned to assist with search and rescue efforts.
- Three USCG Damage Assessment Teams and two Reconstruction Teams deployed to assess and repair damaged facilities.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

- [USACE](#) is engaged in seven response programs including providing [temporary emergency power](#) in Florida, offering technical assistance on debris removal, route clearance and temporary roofing. More than 100 personnel are supporting response efforts.
- The team assigned to temporary emergency power is prepared to assess and install generators as requested by the state; 55 generators are onsite with an additional 30 generators en route.
- Two Deployable Tactical Operations System Vehicle is in Florida to assist with communication capabilities and connectivity.

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

- [DOE](#) has activated its Energy Response Organization; responders deployed to the Regional Response Coordination Center, and to Florida and Georgia State Emergency Operations Centers. Additional DOE responders are on standby to deploy as needed.
- DOE is holding daily calls with the energy industry to ensure unity of effort.
- Temporary power (generators, fuel, and propane) are positioned in Alabama.
- DOE is closely monitoring the availability of fuel across the Southeast. Overall, supplies of gasoline in the region are at or above the five-year range.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS](#))

- [HHS](#) Secretary Azar declared a public health emergency in Florida. The declaration gives the HHS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services beneficiaries and their healthcare providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs.
- HHS has teams of medical personnel from the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) in Mobile, Ala. and Jacksonville, Fla., along with an Incident Management Team. More than 125 HHS personnel are deployed.



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- HHS is Staging 308 ground ambulances and 125 para-transit to support patient movement in Florida.
- Five ambulance strike teams are in Florida to assist with patient transport.
- An additional 100 personnel from the NDMS and the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps are on alert and ready to deploy, if needed.
- The HHS 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).

Corporation for National and Community Service / AmeriCorps

- All disaster response teams (that are not actively supporting Hurricane Florence) are on standby and ready to deploy.
- Six teams trained in Disaster Survivor Assistance are traveling to Florida to begin assisting survivors.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

- [DOT](#)'s Crisis Management Center is fully staffed and activated until further notice.
- DOT established a Routing Assistance Hotline to support the movement of federal, state and local personnel, equipment and goods during the [response to Hurricane Michael](#).
- DOT's Bureau of Transportation Statistics created an interactive [web mapping](#) application to provide real-time situational awareness of the storm path and its impact on user-selected transportation infrastructure.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD)

- [NPPD](#) stood up its Crisis Action Team (CAT). The CAT provides NPPD with the flexibility to rapidly expand operational focus and support affected cyber and critical infrastructure partners at the state, local, tribal and territorial government levels.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)



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

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- EPA is reviewing the status of Superfund sites and is in contact with site operators. EPA also identified priority oil and chemical facilities and sites that might require assessment after landfall.

U.S. Department of Interior (DOI)

- [DOI](#) has 225 teams on the ground.
- The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement are overseeing safety on oil rigs in the Gulf area; as assessments on more than 600 oil rig platforms occur.

U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CPB)

- The highest priority for and remains the preservation of life and safety. There will be no immigration enforcement initiatives associated with evacuations or sheltering related to Michael, except in the event of a serious public safety threat.
- CBP deployed eight helicopters and two fixed wing aircraft to Florida to support search and rescue, commodities, personnel transport, and command, control and communications.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- USDA launched a disaster assistance discovery tool through its new website that provides information about disaster assistance programs offered by the USDA.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

- The will make (DWG) funding available to help Florida assess its workforce needs.



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- DWGs temporarily expand the service capacity of dislocated worker training and employment programs at the state and local levels by providing funding assistance after large, unexpected events that cause significant job losses.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- [NOAA](#) began collecting aerial images of the Florida panhandle on Oct. 11. Images will be available on www.NOAA.gov.
- NOAA is supporting federal partners to quickly and safely survey and re-open Gulf Coast ports including the ports of Pensacola, Panama City, and Fernandina Beach in Florida.

Whole Community Response Efforts

- [The Salvation Army](#) mobilized 48 mobile feeding units with a combined service capacity of 72,000 daily meals. Additionally, the Salvation Army is supporting various shelters throughout the impacted area.
- [Operation Barbeque Relief](#) has field kitchens in Tampa and Tallahassee with a total meal capacity of 30,000 meals per day for these two field kitchens.
- [Southern Baptist Disaster Relief](#) has 12 additional kitchens in nearby states that can help feed survivors.
- Volunteers from community and faith-based organizations are offering services, including temporary sheltering across the impacted region.

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