

Federal Assistance for Hurricane Helene Exceeds \$344 Million as FEMA Expands Dual Response Efforts as Hurricane Milton Forecast to Make Landfall This Evening

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WASHINGTON – FEMA, under the direction of the Biden-Harris Administration, continues to lead a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to assist communities impacted by Hurricane Helene. As of October 9, federal disaster assistance for survivors has surpassed **\$344 million** and has reached 375,000 households.

More than **8,000** federal workers from all parts of the country are supporting the response efforts in six states and three Tribal Nations for both Hurricanes Helene and Milton. As the agency prepares for Hurricane Milton's impacts to Florida, these assets remain in partnership with state, tribal and local partners to support of Hurricane Milton recovery efforts to ensure every available resource is mobilized.

Hurricane Helene Response

The agency is actively working alongside state, local and tribal partners to assess damage and support those affected by Helene. To date, FEMA has shipped over **17 million meals**, nearly **14 million liters of water** and **210 generators**.

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams are on the ground meeting with survivors in neighborhoods across the affected states to help them apply for assistance and connect them with additional state, local, federal and voluntary agency resources.



Disaster survivors in designated areas of [Georgia](#), [Florida](#), [North Carolina](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Virginia](#) can begin their recovery process by applying for federal assistance through FEMA. People with damage to their homes or personal property who live in these areas should apply for assistance, which may include upfront funds to help with essential items like food, water, baby formula and other emergency supplies.

Funds may also be available to repair storm-related damage to homes and personal property, as well as assistance to find a temporary place to stay. Homeowners and renters with damage to their home or personal property from previous disasters—whether they received FEMA funds or not—are still eligible to apply for and receive assistance for Helene.

Those with access to power and cellular service can apply for FEMA assistance in one of three ways:

- Online by visiting disasterassistance.gov.
- Calling the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362.
- Downloading and applying on the [FEMA App](#).

FEMA reminds survivors who applied for assistance that a letter from FEMA saying they're ineligible for assistance may not be a final decision. If you believe your application was not approved in error, or if you have additional information that could strengthen your claim, you may appeal the decision. To learn more, visit www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/fema-answers-appeals-process-qa.

Voluntary Organizations

Voluntary agencies are supporting all affected states by providing critical feeding operations and support for survivors with hot and prepared meals and shelf-stable meals. Organizations are also providing personnel and resources to the hardest hit areas. The American Red Cross has hundreds of **trained disaster workers providing comfort and operating shelters**.

Survivors can receive free services like cutting fallen trees, tarping roofs and mitigating mold with the help of Crisis Cleanup by calling **844-965-1386**. The hotline is open through Oct. 11 and can connect survivors with volunteers from local relief organizations, community groups and the faith-based community who



may be able to assist.

Additional support and assistance provided to each state includes:

Support for Florida

Recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene continue in Florida even as the federal government is supporting the state in preparing for Hurricane Milton's landfall on the Gulf Coast. FEMA has approved approximately **\$142 million** for nearly **49,000 households** impacted by Hurricane Helene. FEMA specialists are canvassing Florida communities affected by Helene to help survivors apply for assistance. Additionally, FEMA inspectors are visiting applicants' homes to verify disaster-caused damage.

There are more than 90 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods and 10 Disaster Recovery Centers are open where they may speak to state and federal personnel to help with their recovery. Survivors may find their closest center by visiting [FEMA.gov/DRC](https://www.fema.gov/DRC).

Residents in need of information or resources should call the State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) at **800-342-3557**. English, Spanish and Creole speakers are available to answer questions.

Residents can find additional resources and information at [Florida Division of Emergency Management's website, FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadivisionofemergencymanagement.com).

Support for Georgia

FEMA has approved over **\$59 million for nearly 76,000 households**.

There are more than 120 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods and one Disaster Recovery Center is open where they may speak to state and federal personnel to help with their recovery. Survivors may find their closest center by visiting [FEMA.gov/DRC](https://www.fema.gov/DRC).

Resources: Residents can find resources like shelters and feeding sites at [Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency](https://www.georgiaemergency.com).



FEMA

Support for North Carolina

Financial Support: FEMA has approved **approximately \$60 million in housing and other types of assistance** for nearly **52,000 households**.

Staffing: As response efforts continue in North Carolina, **more than 1,000 FEMA staff** are on the ground, with more arriving daily. Nearly **400 Urban Search and Rescue personnel** remain in the field helping people. These teams have **rescued or supported over 3,200 survivors to date**. There are over **1,200** Department of Defense personnel supporting the response. Experienced FEMA leaders from around the country are in the field to bolster response efforts.

Sheltering: Shelter numbers continue to decline, with **17 shelters** housing just **more than 700 occupants**. Over **2,600** people who cannot return home are staying in safe and clean lodging through FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program. [Transitional Sheltering Assistance](#) is available for North Carolinians displaced by Helene. Residents in declared counties who have applied for disaster assistance may be eligible to stay temporarily in a hotel or motel paid for by FEMA while they work on their long-term housing plan. People do not need to request this assistance. FEMA will notify them of their eligibility through an automated phone call, text message and/or email, depending upon the method of communication they selected at the time of application for disaster assistance.

Power and Cellular Restoration: As of today, power was restored to more than more than **90%** of originally reported power outages have been restored as a result of approximately **8,000** crew on the ground. Cellular restoration continues to improve, with **more than 90% of cellular sites operating**. FEMA is boosting response coordination by providing **40 Starlink units to ensure first responders** can communicate with each other.

Commodities: Commodity distribution, mass feeding, and hydration operations are underway in areas of western North Carolina. FEMA commodity shipments are enroute to support operations. Voluntary organizations are supporting feeding operations with bulk food and water deliveries coming via truck and aircraft. Mobile feeding operations are reaching survivors in heavily impacted areas, including three mass feeding sites in Buncombe, McDowell and Watauga counties.



The Salvation Army has **20 mobile feeding units** supporting the massive operation and has provided emotional and spiritual care to survivors. To date, the American Red Cross is engaging in targeted distribution of emergency supplies in low-income communities with high levels of minor or affected residential damage.

Resources:

- Residents can visit: ncdps.gov/helene to get information and additional assistance.
- Residents can get in touch with loved ones by **calling 2-1-1** or **visiting unitedwaync.org** to add them to search and rescue efforts.
- There are more than 300 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods to connect with survivors without cell coverage or power.

Support for South Carolina

In South Carolina, FEMA has approved over **\$77 million for nearly 97,000** households. FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams are on the ground in neighborhoods across the affected counties continuing to help survivors apply for FEMA assistance and connect them with additional state, local, federal and voluntary agency resources.

There are nearly 50 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods to connect with survivors without cell coverage or power.

Residents with questions on Helene can call the state's toll-free hotline, open 24 hours a day, at **866-246-0133**.

Residents who are dependent on medical equipment at home and who are without power due to Helene may be eligible for a medical needs shelter. Call the state's **Department of Public Health Care Line** at **855-472-3432** for more information.

Residents can find additional information at [South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website](#).

Support for Tennessee



FEMA

FEMA has approved more than **\$5.1 million for disaster assistance for over 900 households.**

Residents can call **800-824-3463 to report a missing person.** Callers should be prepared to provide as much information as possible including names, phone numbers, vehicle identification and last known whereabouts.

There are more than 20 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods to connect with survivors without cell coverage or power.

Counties continue to establish donation centers. For the evolving list, visit [Tennessee Emergency Management Agency's website.](#)

Support for Virginia

To date, FEMA has approved over **\$1.3 million for over 700 households.**

There are about 30 Disaster Survivor Assistance members going into neighborhoods to connect with survivors without cell coverage or power.

