

# FEMA Continues Gulf Coast Support Following Hurricane Zeta Landfall

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WASHINGTON -- Following Hurricane Zeta's Gulf Coast landfall Wednesday evening, FEMA and other federal agencies are prepared to support a locally executed, state managed and federally supported response.

FEMA prepositioned various commodities to provide support and is also actively coordinating the efforts of federal agencies as recovery and relief efforts continue for hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta.

## Federal Support Responding to Hurricane Zeta

President Trump approved [Emergency Declarations for Louisiana](#) and [Mississippi](#). The declarations authorize FEMA to provide emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance for 35 parishes in Louisiana and 13 counties in Mississippi. Additionally, FEMA is authorized to provide emergency protective measures limited to direct federal assistance to 29 parishes in Louisiana.

Major Disaster Declarations were previously approved for hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta.

FEMA is still supporting survivors throughout the Gulf Coast with more than 1,500 staff working virtually or in person throughout Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.

- In Louisiana, FEMA has awarded approximately \$185 million in grants and \$28 million in flood insurance claims to survivors from hurricanes Laura and Delta. The U.S. Small Business Administration also approved more than \$372 million in low-interest loans to Louisiana survivors.
- FEMA has awarded more than \$54 million in assistance to individuals in Alabama and has paid more than \$27 million for flood insurance claims in Alabama for Hurricane Sally. The U.S. Small Business Administration also approved more than \$61 million in low-interest loans to Alabama survivors.



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## Commodities

- FEMA has pre-staged nearly 7 million meals, nearly 8 million liters of bottled water and 45 generators near the expected areas of Hurricane Zeta impacts.
  - Blankets, tarps, blue roof sheeting and cots are staged and available to support affected states based on need and requests to FEMA.
  - A refrigerated mobile trailer with 19,000 meals is staged in Lake Charles, Louisiana.
  - Shuttle drivers and empty trailers are onsite where these commodities are staged and ready to transport these assets to fulfill state requests.

## Personnel Deployed

- Two Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs) are onsite at state Emergency Operations Centers in Clanton, Alabama and Pearl, Mississippi to support response activities and ensure there are no unmet needs.
- Two IMATs are onsite at state Emergency Operations Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to support response activities and ensure there are no unmet needs.
- Additional IMATs are available to deploy in response to Zeta, as needed.
- Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles are standing by to support with emergency communication capabilities for federal resources, if needed.
- Two Urban Search and Rescue teams were activated; one is in Ponchatoula, Louisiana and one is staged in Memphis, Tennessee until safe to travel. FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Incident Support Team was activated to Baton Rouge, Louisiana with personnel arriving as safe conditions allow.
- Two Disaster Medical Assistance Teams are on alert and will respond, if needed.
- Additional federal personnel from the Department of Transportation, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency and Defense Coordinating Element have been tasked if needed to support FEMA and the affected states and tribes.

## Key Messages

- Hurricane Zeta affected areas already impacted by other hurricanes, further increasing the threat of dangerous flooding. Flooding from a previous storm could be worsened with additional rainfall from this storm system.



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- For storm information specific to your area, including possible inland watches and warnings, please monitor forecasts from your local National Weather Service office.
- FEMA adapted its plans to the realities of [responding during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) to ensure we can serve Americans while protecting their safety and that of FEMA employees.

## **Those in Hurricane Zeta’s path: Stay Alert to Continued Risks; Heed Instructions from Local Officials**

- Although Hurricane Zeta made landfall Wednesday, there are still risks from the storm. Anyone in the forecast path of the storm should monitor their local news for updates and directions provided by their local officials and [follow evacuation orders from local officials](#).
- Heavy rainfall is expected from portions of the central Gulf Coast into the mid-Mississippi valley, Ohio Valley, southern to central Appalachians and Mid-Atlantic states today. This rainfall will lead to flash, urban, small stream and minor river flooding in those areas.
- Don’t drive or walk through flood waters. Be aware of downed power lines, standing water and other hidden hazards.
- 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 it is safe to do so, check on your neighbors. You may be the help they need right now.
- Residents impacted by the storm should continue to follow guidance from local officials.
  - State and local officials will have the most up-to-date information on evacuation orders and shelter locations.
  - Residents in Louisiana should call 2-1-1 for immediate needs.
- If you have evacuated, do not return until local officials say it’s safe to do so.
- Use caution and stay safe during recovery. Use extreme caution when operating heavy machinery, generators, or while removing debris. Never use generators indoors and keep them away from windows, doors and vents.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots when walking on, or near, debris. Wear long sleeves and gloves when handling debris.
- When clearing debris from a property, know the location of all utilities, both underground and overhead to prevent injury. Do not place items in front of,



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around or on top of buried and above ground utilities.

- Use caution around any buried utilities. Cutting vital communications assets such as fiber optic lines can cause a loss of cellular networks, including cell phone service or access to the internet. Residents in should call 8-1-1 before digging so utilities can be marked in advance.
- Remember to stay safe, whether you're a responder or survivor. [Wear a mask](#) in public settings especially when [social distancing](#) is not possible and follow [CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).
- Seven congregate shelters are open in Louisiana, nine in Mississippi and three in Alabama. Additionally, seven non-congregate shelters are on standby in Louisiana.
- The American Red Cross is prepared to shelter and support families. For assistance, call 3-1-1 or visit their [website](#).
- FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program will cover and reimburse policy holders up to \$1,000 for certain actions taken to minimize damage to your home and belongings before a flood. Make sure to save your receipts for any of these expenses. For more information and to learn about what's covered, view the fact sheet [Understanding Flood Loss Avoidance](#) or reference the [NFIP Claims Manual](#).
- FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program is ready to respond quickly to NFIP insured flood losses that arise as a result of the storm.
  - If you have a flood insurance policy and you've suffered flood damage, your first step is to call your flood insurance company to file a claim. The NFIP will pay every penny you are owed for your covered flood loss.
  - Adjusters are available to process claims quickly.
  - If you previously suffered a flood loss, you will need to document new damages and be prepared to provide receipts and documentation for any repairs you made from your prior loss.
- Due to Hurricane Zeta, drive-thru Disaster Recovery Centers in Bay, Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton counties in Florida are closed. The centers will reopen when weather conditions permit. Disaster Recovery Centers in Acadia, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Sabine, St. Landry, Vermilion and Vernon parishes in Louisiana are closed today. The centers will reopen when weather permits.
- Hurricane Laura, Sally and Delta survivors can still register for federal assistance by visiting [disasterassistance.gov](#), by calling 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585) or through the FEMA mobile app.



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## Responding During COVID-19

- FEMA will continue to work with our state, tribal and local partners as they plan for execution of evacuation and sheltering operations in a COVID-19 environment. Finding shelter is critical in times of disaster. Shelter outside of the hazard area could include staying with family or friends, seeking a hotel room or staying in a mass shelter.
- FEMA, other federal agencies and the American Red Cross have modified policies and planning and have taken actions to ensure the federal government can respond to any disaster during our continued coronavirus response efforts.
- In alignment with FEMA's [Pandemic Operational Guidance](#), FEMA is leveraging technology to deliver the agency's programs at the highest level possible, while preserving our workforce and survivors. These methods include virtual damage assessments and inspections for FEMA Individual Assistance and Public Assistance programs, as well as National Flood Insurance Program claims.
- While some aspects of program delivery may look different this year, our commitment to helping people before, during and after disaster remains our full focus and we are ready to deliver on our mission.
- In advance of hurricane and wildfire season, FEMA expanded the capacity of its National Response Coordination Center, response centers around the country and trained additional staff to be postured to respond to multiple on-going incidents.

