

Florida Hurricane Recovery

Nov. 1, 2024

Key Messages

- FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) crews are working in Florida neighborhoods helping people apply for FEMA assistance after Hurricanes Milton and Helene. DSA specialists carry federal photo identification and never ask for, or accept, money.
- After the recent hurricanes, local community officials are required to inspect disaster-damaged structures to complete substantial damage assessments in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) to meet the requirements of the Florida Building Code and community floodplain regulations.
- FEMA does not make substantial damage determinations; determinations are made by a community's building official or floodplain manager.
- A mobile Disaster Recovery Center is now open in Charlotte County at the Tringali Community Center to provide one-on-one help to Floridians affected by the hurricanes.
- The Disaster Recovery Centers in Dixie, Gilchrist, Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie and Suwannee counties will temporarily close for election polling at the sites.
- To date, FEMA has approved a total of more than **\$818.7 million** to help Floridians with losses from Milton, Helene and Debby, including:
 - **\$320.1 million** approved for Hurricane Milton
 - **\$452.9 million** approved for Hurricane Helene
 - **\$45.7 million** approved for Hurricane Debby
- **13,303** Households for a total of more than **32,523** people are checked in to Transitional Sheltering Assistance hotels and motels.



FEMA

FAQ of the Day: What does a FEMA inspector look for?

- After you apply for disaster assistance, FEMA may schedule a home inspection. The inspector checks structural soundness, functionality of electrical, plumbing, and heating systems, and whether the home is safe to live in.
- The inspector doesn't decide your eligibility but verifies your information (name, address, etc.) and notes any disaster-caused damage. Inspectors never ask for bank details or charge a fee. Sometimes, homes have damage but are still safe to live in. For more information on FEMA home inspections, visit [Home Inspections | FEMA.gov](#).

Operation Blue Roof

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is installing fiber-reinforced sheeting to cover damaged roofs until arrangements can be made for permanent repairs to damaged homes across affected Florida communities. The service is free, and the sign-up period has been extended to **Nov. 14**. Florida Residents affected by Hurricane Milton can sign-up at www.bluroof.gov, by calling 888-ROOF-BLU (888-766-3258), or by visiting a Right-of-Entry collection center throughout the affected areas.

Salvaging Your Damaged Treasures

- Preservation specialists from the [Heritage Emergency National Task Force](#), co-sponsored by FEMA and the Smithsonian Institution, are in the Manatee and Sarasota Disaster Recovery Centers through Nov. 1 to offer advice about salvaging damaged items such as photos, artwork, textiles and other items.

Disaster Recovery Centers

- Disaster Recovery Centers are open in Charlotte, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Franklin, Gilchrist, Hernando, Indian River, Madison, Manatee, Martin, Orange, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota and Taylor counties. To find center locations go to fema.gov/drc or text "DRC" and a Zip Code to 43362. All centers are accessible to people with disabilities or access and functional needs and are equipped with assistive technology. Some centers may close temporarily for election polling. Announcements will be made. Survivors do **not** need to visit a center to apply for assistance. Survivors are encouraged to apply online at DisasterAssistance.gov or by downloading the [FEMA App](#). FEMA does not distribute cash at Disaster Recovery Centers.

Transitional Sheltering Assistance

- FEMA has activated Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) for Floridians displaced by Hurricane Helene or Hurricane Milton in 52 counties and for tribal members of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians. Residents in these counties who have applied for disaster assistance may be eligible to stay temporarily in a hotel or motel paid for by FEMA. Applicants do not need to request TSA. FEMA will notify them of their eligibility through an automated phone call, text message, and/or email. Survivors who have been approved for TSA can find hotel options here: [Transitional Sheltering Assistance \(TSA\)](#)

Serious Needs Assistance

- **Serious Needs Assistance** is money to pay for emergency supplies like water, food, first aid, breast-feeding supplies, infant formula, diapers, personal hygiene items, or fuel for transportation. Serious Needs Assistance is available for survivors who apply during the first 30 days after a disaster is declared. If you don't agree with FEMA's decision, you can appeal by showing why you need FEMA assistance. The decision letter you get from FEMA will have more information about the types of documents you should send. Learn more about [Serious Needs Assistance](#).

U.S. Small Business Administration

- **The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** offers low-interest disaster loans for homeowners, renters, businesses and nonprofit organizations to cover losses not fully compensated by insurance and other sources. Apply online at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster). Disaster loan information and application forms can also be obtained by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955. Three SBA Business Recovery Centers are open. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov.

How to Apply for FEMA Assistance

- If you sustained damage or loss from Hurricanes Milton, Helene or Debby, [FEMA may be able to help](#). You may be eligible for financial assistance for displacement, serious needs, temporary lodging, basic home repairs, personal property losses and other uninsured disaster-related expenses.
 - ✓ Quickest way to apply is online at DisasterAssistance.gov.
 - ✓ Or use the [FEMA App](#) for mobile devices.
 - ✓ You can also call the FEMA helpline at **800-621-3362**.
- If you choose to apply by phone, please understand calls to FEMA's helpline are experiencing delays because of the increased volume due to multiple recent disasters.
- 2024 Application deadlines: **Hurricane Debby Nov. 12; Hurricane Helene Nov. 27; Hurricane Milton Dec. 11.**

Additional Resources

- **FDEM Statewide Debris Dashboard:** [Debris Survey Results \(Milton\)](#).
- **Clean & Sanitize:** FEMA may be able to provide up to \$300 in one-time financial assistance to help with cleanup. [Clean and Sanitize Assistance | FEMA.gov](#).
- **Multi-Agency Resource Centers:** Florida Division of Emergency Management and local communities are establishing these centers to assist residents with storm recovery. FEMA specialists are available at most centers.
- **FEMA & Citizenship:** You or a member of your household [must be U.S. citizen, non-U.S. citizen national or qualified non-citizen](#) to apply for FEMA assistance.

- **Be Alert to Fraud:** Con artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud or identity theft after disasters. [Be Alert to Fraud After Florida Hurricanes | FEMA.gov](#)
- **FEMA Rumor Response:** Know what's true and what isn't. [Hurricane Rumor Response | FEMA.gov](#)
- [Mental health resources for Floridians](#)
- **For help with cleanup:** Call 833-GET HOPE
- [Tips for Mold Cleanup](#)
- **Florida Division of Emergency Management Updates:** floridadisaster.org/disaster-updates/storm-updates/
- **Disaster Legal Hotline:** 833-514-2940
- **Crisis Cleanup:** 844-965-1386 available through Nov. 1.