

# Tracking Ida Effects in Gulf Coast, Northeast

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As parts of the South continue their clean up from Ida, the storm brought considerable heavy rain and flooding threats from the Tennessee and Ohio valleys into the central and southern Appalachians and mid-Atlantic yesterday. FEMA's priorities are to support life-saving and life-sustaining actions. The agency continues to work with federal, state, local, tribal and non-governmental partners to support the needs of areas affected by Ida.

## Key Messages

- More than 1,100 FEMA employees are deployed to support Ida response and recovery efforts along the Gulf Coast. Additionally, FEMA staff are working throughout the nation to support other ongoing response efforts including flooding throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast, and wildfires in the West.
- This morning, FEMA released a new policy to better support disaster survivors. FEMA made changes to its Individual Assistance program to reduce the barriers to agency programs that aid underserved populations. Changes in this new policy include:
  - Expanded acceptance of different forms of documentation to prove ownership/occupancy for homeowners and renters.
  - Expanded financial assistance for disaster-caused disability.
  - Expanded grant funding that supports housing or other needs assistance to survivors.
- Visit [Hurricane Ida | FEMA.gov](#) for information and resources available for residents in areas that may be affected by Ida. The page is available in French, Haitian Creole, Simplified Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese.

## Federal actions to support areas affected by Hurricane Ida

- There are eight FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT) deployed to support states affected by Hurricane Ida. Five are in Louisiana, two in Mississippi, one in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. An additional IMAT is en route to Pennsylvania. Eight FEMA Corps teams have deployed to Region 6.
- The National Emergency Management Association is helping facilitate additional resources to the Gulf Coast through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. Resources from 13 states have been sent to assist with ongoing response and recovery effort.



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- Commodities, equipment, and personnel are pre-positioned to assist, as needed. This includes:
  - Disaster Survivor Assistance teams arrived in Louisiana today. They will support cooling stations in the city of New Orleans and St. John the Baptist parish.
  - Twelve Urban Search and Rescue teams have completed more than 17,500 structural evaluations in affected areas, including more than 8,900 in Louisiana.
  - More than 150 ambulance crews and 30 air ambulances are deployed and working in Louisiana. Additional ambulances and air ambulances are in Mississippi to support impacted areas.
  - FEMA staged more than 4.5 million meals, 4.7 million liters of water, more than 141,000 tarps and 191 generators.
- Mobile Emergency Response Support assets including Emergency Operations Vehicles are deployed to support Louisiana and Mississippi.
- The Defense Logistics Agency has been activated for fuel support and leasing of additional generators. High output generators are in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has activated its Operation Blue Roof program for parishes approved for Individual Assistance. Residents can sign up for the program and complete a Right of Entry form at [Blueroof.us](https://blueroof.us). Residents can call toll free 1-888-R00F-BLU (1-888-766-3258) for more information regarding this program.
- USACE debris management experts are conducting assessments in Louisiana. USACE Temporary Emergency Power Planning and Response Teams, contractor support, and the 249th Engineer Battalion's power generation team are mobilized in Mississippi and Louisiana to conduct power assessments and installations.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture approved Louisiana's request to allow Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households to use their benefits to purchase hot food and are assisting with program flexibilities needed for mass feeding operations.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services deployed a 250-bed federal medical shelter to Alexandria, Louisiana. The shelter will be staffed by Disaster Medical Assistance Teams and is scheduled to be operational by Sept. 3.
- The U.S. Coast Guard has 34 aviation search and rescue assets prepositioned. The National Guard Bureau has 177 high water vehicles and 34 rotary wing assets pre-positioned to assist with search and rescue in Louisiana, and 23 highwater vehicles and two rotary wing aircraft in Mississippi.
- The Salvation Army mobilized feeding kitchens and emergency response vehicles in Gonzales and New Orleans, Louisiana. These operations can feed up to 30,000 people a day.

- The American Red Cross (ARC), with the help of their partners, has provided more than 17,000 meals and snacks for survivors. There are more than 30 ARC and community shelters open in affected areas throughout the Gulf Coast.
- National Guard members conducted search and rescue sweeps across 31 parishes, rescuing more than 393 people and 60 pets by Wednesday and clearing 403 miles of routes clogged with debris.
  - The Louisiana National Guard's 922nd Engineer Vertical Construction Company, with the St. John the Baptist Sheriff's Office and Louisiana's Wildlife and Fisheries, evacuated about 135 people and four dogs who had been trapped by flooding in LaPlace. Guardsmen opened 17 locations to distribute food and water to people in need in nine parishes, with plans to operate 40. Another 400 Guard members were assisting law enforcement with security in New Orleans and six parishes.
- **The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced an Emergency Declaration that provides truck drivers flexibility to move critical freight to areas damaged by Ida.
  - Additionally, USDOT activated an Emergency Relief Docket for railroads so they can get temporary safety regulations waivers to help them speed up service to move goods necessary for emergency relief efforts.
- The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** published a comprehensive assessment of Hurricane Ida's impact on communications networks and is providing daily updates about their operational status. The FCC also is working directly with carriers to track implementation of the Wireless Resiliency Cooperative Framework, including disaster arrangements so that those in affected areas can roam on any network that may be available while restoration efforts are underway. In addition, the agency is coordinating with government partners to support restoration efforts and lending technical assistance in the field. FCC information related to Hurricane Ida, including daily reports and tips for communicating during an emergency, are available in multiple languages at [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov).

## Additional resources for disaster survivors

- If you evacuated from Louisiana to Mississippi, please wait until your local and state officials say it is safe to return home.
- **Be patient.** Recovery will take many months or more. Individuals who experienced damage and power loss should use extreme caution during the recovery phase. If you have insurance, start documenting your damage and reporting your loss immediately to your agent.
- If you have flood insurance, report your loss immediately to your insurance agent or carrier. Be sure to ask them about advance payments. If you need help finding your insurance agent or carrier, call the National Flood Insurance Program at 877-336-2627.
  - Policyholders with [three-year Group Flood Insurance policies](#) can call the NFIP Direct at 800-638-6620. Select your language and then choose option 2 for the Special Direct Facility.

- If your flood insurance policy just expired, call your agent. You may still be able to renew in full and then file a claim for losses due to Hurricane Ida. Several NFIP policies in Louisiana have expired but are currently within the 30-day renewal window.
- If you are able to safely return to your home, before you discard anything, take as many photos and videos as possible of your flood damaged home and personal property, including floodwater lines on the outside of the structure. For appliances and electronics, take a photograph of the make, model and serial number.
- Learn more about [starting your recovery](#) with the National Flood Insurance Program at [FEMA.gov](#).
- Residents in Mississippi who have immediate post-disaster needs should call Mississippi Emergency Management Agency hotline at 1-888-574-3583. Additional resources are available at [MEMA \(msema.org\)](#).
- Louisiana residents can visit [NOLA Ready](#) for assistance information. Anyone in the affected area who needs a safe place to stay should call 211, visit [redcross.org](#), call 1-800-red cross (800-733-2767) or download the free Red Cross emergency app for shelter locations. You can also text “LASHELTER” to 898-211, text “NOLAREADY” to 77295 or text “IDA” to 67283.
- FEMA Civil Rights Advisors deployed to Louisiana and Mississippi to assist regional staff. FEMA is reviewing data to ensure that underserved communities are prioritized in response and recovery efforts.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration activated its Disaster Distress helpline. This toll-free, multilingual, crisis support service is available 24/7 via telephone or text at 1-800-985-5990 for disaster survivors in Mississippi and Louisiana experiencing emotional distress.
  - Spanish-speakers can call or text the hotline and press “2” for bilingual support. Callers can also connect with counselors in over 100 other languages via 3rd-party interpretation services by indicating their preferred language to the responding counselor, who will connect to a live interpreter.
  - Deaf or Hard of Hearing American Sign Language users can contact the DDH through a direct videophone option via any videophone-enabled device and dialing 1-800-985-5990, or by selecting the “ASL Now” option on the DDH website at [disasterdistress.samhsa.gov](#).
- FEMA previously issued [Ensuring Civil Rights in Multiple Disasters During COVID-19](#) to support offer best practices for partners and communities facing a disproportionate rate of COVID-19 illness and death during response and recovery efforts during multiple disasters.

## How to help survivors and communities impacted by Hurricane Ida

- **Be patient.** Recovery will take many months or more. People can help by donating to or volunteering with the voluntary or charitable organization of their choice, many of which are already in areas impacted by Ida and supporting survivors. Learn how to best [help those in need](#).

- **Do not self-deploy.** Seeing images of disaster may compel you to head to the impacted area. Until a need has been identified and the community affected by Hurricane Ida has requested support, volunteers should not enter the area.
- **Cash is the best donation.** When people support voluntary organizations with financial contributions, it helps ensure a steady flow of important services to the people in need after a disaster. To find a reputable organization, visit the National Voluntary Organizations Active in a Disaster [Hurricane Ida](#) page.
- **Do not send or bring unsolicited donations.** In the early stages of the response phase, unsolicited donations create storage and sorting challenges when focus is needed on response and recovery.

## Stay safe from post-storm hazards

- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
  - **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- **Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.** A generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- **Put your health and safety first:** be careful in areas with storm damage or flooding. If you evacuated, return only when officials say it is safe to do so. Areas without power may experience heat advisories, which can lead to illness or a threat to life.
- **Be aware of heat-related illnesses.** Areas without power may experience heat advisories, which can lead to illness or a threat to life. Learn to recognize the [signs of heat illness](#).
  - Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated beverages such as water or juice. Keep your pets hydrated by providing plenty of fresh water for your pets and provide a shady area.
  - Check on family, friends, and neighbors. Visit adults at risk at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- **Be careful when cleaning up.** Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning mold or other debris. People with asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression disorders should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.
- **Avoid downed power or utility lines;** they may be live with deadly voltage. Stay far away and report them immediately to your power company.

- **Check on friends and family:** If you are able, please check on your neighbors, friends, and family because some may need more help than others.

## Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA's Office of External Affairs:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at [FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov)
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at [FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov)
- Tribal Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at [FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov)
- Private Sector Engagement at (202) 646-3444 or at [nbeoc@max.gov](mailto:nbeoc@max.gov)

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Also, follow Administrator Deanne Criswell on Twitter [@FEMA\\_Deanne](https://twitter.com/FEMA_Deanne).

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Helping people before, during, and after disasters.