



Emergency medical volunteers are providing door-to-door services for residents affected by the storm in Houma, where International Medical Corps has partnered with the United Way of South Louisiana to provide critically needed supplies and equipment to support volunteer medical teams.

FAST FACTS

- Hurricane Ida, a Category 4 hurricane so intense that it tied as the fifth-strongest storm ever to hit the US mainland, slammed into the Gulf Coast on August 29, with Louisiana as the hardest-hit state.
- Needs are ongoing, and include shelter, assistance for healthcare facilities—including pharmaceuticals, supplies and equipment—and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) items for residents.
- Many small coastal areas remain without electricity and have little to no access to medical support.

On August 29, Hurricane Ida—a deadly and destructive Category 4 storm—made landfall near Port Fourchon in Louisiana’s Lafourche Parish, located on the Gulf of Mexico. Ida is the second most damaging hurricane on record to strike the state, ranking only behind Hurricane Katrina, and is tied for the strongest landfall in the state, with maximum wind speeds of 150 miles per hour. Throughout its path of destruction in Louisiana, more than a million people were left without power. The damage to the power grid was so severe that it took weeks to repair—particularly in hard-hit areas like Houma in Terrebonne Parish, where residents were without electricity for more than a month. Widespread heavy infrastructural damage also left more than 642,000 residents without access to clean water, according to the Louisiana Department of Health.¹

As the state continues to recover, housing remains the biggest challenge facing those affected by the devastating storm. In Lafourche and Terrebonne Parish, approximately 75% of structures have been recorded as damaged or destroyed.² As of October 18, some 13,000 residents in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parish remain displaced. Lack of available housing, renovation supplies and labor has forced residents to improvise, with residents living in tents and makeshift structures for months after the storm ripped through homes across southeast Louisiana.

Making matters worse, the storm occurred just as the state was experiencing its fourth COVID-19 surge. Hospitals and healthcare facilities across the state were near full capacity. Intensive care units (ICUs) in Louisiana were about 88% full and nearly half were all COVID-19 patients according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In the wake of the hurricane, healthcare facilities across southeast Louisiana sustained damage, including three major hospitals in Terrebonne Parish and one facility in Lafourche Parish that lost its roof.³ Amid the failures of the electrical grid, facilities that remained open were relying on generator power and in some cases relying on water from onsite wells.

Though the state has experienced a decline in COVID-19 cases, there also has been an overall decline in the number of COVID-19 tests administered—leading officials to predict that the number of cases may be an undercount. Vaccinations against the virus have also slowed in recent weeks, and nearly half of the state’s population remains unvaccinated. In the

¹ https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Center-EH/drinkingwater/_Storm_BWA/WaterOutage_HurricaneIda_20210907_1000.pdf

² <https://www.houmatoday.com/story/news/2021/10/18/houma-thibodaux-area-residents-affected-hurricane-ida-have-received-160-million-so-far-fema/8461454002/>

³ https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/hurricane-ida-damages-louisiana-hospitals/2021/08/30/df90e5be-09c6-11ec-aea1-42a8138f132a_story.html

heavily affected areas of the state, that percentage is lower still: in Terrebonne Parish, only 34% of residents have been fully immunized, and in Lafourche, just 39% have received both doses.

International Medical Corps Response

On September 8, International Medical Corps deployed a team to Houma to meet with local non-governmental organizations, first responders and residents affected by the storm. The team worked alongside local responders to resupply a partner organization's mobile medical basecamp, and provided supplies and technical guidance for securing and weatherproofing the expanding operation. Houma—the largest city in Terrebonne Parish—is located approximately 58 miles south of New Orleans. The city is home to more than 33,000 people, and approximately 23% of the population lives at or below the poverty line.⁴ Residents in this area rely heavily on their own networks to obtain supplies and donations while sharing resources with their neighbors.



International Medical Corps has provided supplies and equipment to support clinical and relief operations in Houma. In September, our team deployed an emergency medical field unit to a basecamp in Legion Park.

Given the damage to local healthcare facilities, local groups are deploying physicians and nurses to go door to door, to address emerging medical needs. International Medical Corps has partnered with the United Way of South Louisiana in Houma to procure and distribute critically needed supplies, including WASH items (such as toothpaste, deodorant, diapers and baby wipes), wound-care kits, basic first-aid supplies, pharmaceuticals, face masks and solar lanterns to support door-to-door medical visits. These visits are particularly beneficial for marginalized communities, including the elderly and undocumented. To date, our team has delivered 57 wound-care kits, more than 750 reusable face masks, 28 generators and power stations, more than 1,500 WASH items and some 500 bottles of pharmaceuticals.



International Medical Corps is providing lodging and support to medical teams providing care to affected residents in Houma, Louisiana.

In addition to providing medical supplies and WASH items, our team deployed an emergency medical field unit to the basecamp at Legion Park to provide temporary lodging for medical teams providing care to affected residents of Houma. The field unit is providing shelter for teams of 6 to 14 volunteers each night. Moving forward, our team will continue to collaborate with the United Way of South Louisiana and local partners to provide supplies and equipment to meet the immediate and emerging health needs of the Houma community.

⁴ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/houmacitylouisiana>