



Volunteer medical workers being trained on processes and procedures for delivering care in the mobile medical unit in Port Charlotte.

FAST FACTS

- Hurricane Ian, a Category 4 hurricane, made landfall in Florida on Wednesday, September 28.
- 120 deaths associated with Hurricane Ian have been reported in Florida.
- More than 210,770 people in the state are still without power.
- 1,700 remain in emergency shelters.
- 10,416 out of the 20,650 households that sheltered in place during the storm have reported they are safe.
- International Medical Corps is providing healthcare services through a mobile medical unit in Port Charlotte.

On Wednesday, September 28, Hurricane Ian made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane in Florida. The storm completely obliterated communities in its path, deeply affecting the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. At least 120 people in the state have been confirmed dead, and thousands of people have been rescued, but as search-and-rescue efforts continue these numbers may rise in the coming days and weeks.¹

As of October 6, more than 210,770 Florida utility customers remain without power, with Lee County, Charlotte County and Sarasota County reporting the most power outages.² 1,700 people remain temporarily housed in the 27 emergency shelters open across 12 counties. 20,650 households reported that they had sheltered in place during the storm, with only 10,416 households so far reporting that they are safe. The number of people who lost their homes to the storm is still unknown, but the state is preparing to consolidate shelters in each county. Transitional housing for those who have lost their homes could potentially be provided in trailers and hotels—but water and power need to be restored to these facilities before they can shelter residents.³

Healthcare facilities in the storm's path were severely impacted—many are not yet fully functional, as they continue to lack adequate power and water. Roadways and critical infrastructure across the state were significantly damaged, further hampering efforts by medically vulnerable people to seek care in affected areas.⁴ As of October 4, 88% of state roadways were successfully cleared, but the work to ensure safe travel in the state continues.⁵

The Department of Health and Human Services has declared a Public Health Emergency in Florida, providing additional teams and funding to support healthcare and social service needs in the state.⁶ On October 5, President Biden met with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis to coordinate efforts for federal, state and local response to Hurricane Ian. After surveying the aftermath of Hurricane Ian by helicopter and by foot, and meeting with local officials, small-business owners and local residents, President Biden pledged the federal government's support for as long as necessary.⁷

The storm has left homes and entire communities uninhabitable, wiping out entire livelihoods and denying residents alternative housing options. With population increases and the destruction of homes, the price of rent will undoubtedly increase, leaving many without affordable housing options. Residents are also still waiting to learn if their homeowner's

¹ <https://www.wpbf.com/article/ian-hurricane-florida-update/41494484#>

² <https://floridadisaster.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4833aec638214268b09683ce78ed2edf>

³ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/weather/hurricane/article266740236.html>

⁴ <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/hurricane-ian-impacts-health-care-access-across-florida>

⁵ <https://www.floridadisaster.org/news-media/news/20221004-florida-response-to-hurricane-ian-continues/>

⁶ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/10/05/fact-sheet-the-biden-administration-continues-to-support-hurricane-ian-response-efforts/>

⁷ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/10/05/biden-desantis-hurricane-florida/>

insurance will cover damage to their homes and if flood-insurance claims filed with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will result in temporary housing. Many individuals and families are waiting to be able to fully assess the damage to their homes and possessions, determine what insurance coverage they will be eligible for and move into housing. Those who are retired, unemployed, medically vulnerable or lower-income will face the most devastation.⁸

International National Medical Corps' Response

At the request of the Florida Department of Health (FDoH), International Medical Corps successfully deployed a mobile medical unit (MMU) to Port Charlotte, with initial patient consultations having started on Wednesday, October 5. The MMU is fully staffed with volunteer doctors and nurses, along with International Medical Corps' emergency response team members, ready to provide outpatient services to up to 100 patients a day. To expand access to services, our teams are collaborating with the FDoH to explore setting up a vaccine clinic next to the MMU that would offer tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (TDAP) and flu vaccinations. The numbers of patients seeking care in the area will likely continue to increase, as search-and-rescue efforts are ongoing on Sanibel Island, Pine Island and in Fort Myers.



International Medical Corps staff members clear the site used for the MMU.

International Medical Corps' teams are assessing opportunities to increase the availability and accessibility of mental health services for local residents. As response efforts develop, International Medical Corps will continue to work closely with the FDoH to determine ways to contribute to the expansion of healthcare services to affected communities—including the possibility of establishing additional service locations.

To complement our healthcare services, our teams are in the process of providing essential supplies and materials to support response efforts that will be delivered over the coming days. This includes generators, tarps, pallets of water, jerry cans, battery-powered nebulizers, hygiene kits and COVID-19 test kits, which our teams will distribute to local partners. We continue to coordinate with the FDoH, the state Emergency Operations Center, and our Federally Qualified Healthcare Center partners to ensure that our efforts meet changing needs in the wake of Hurricane Ian.

International Medical Corps in Florida

International Medical Corps has provided emergency health services in Florida since 2017, after Hurricane Irma struck the southern portion of the state. After Hurricane Michael made landfall in Florida as a Category 5 hurricane in 2018, International Medical Corps collaborated with the Florida Department of Health to deploy multiple teams of doctors and nurses to medical facilities and special-needs shelters to provide primary healthcare to people affected by the storm. We also deployed a health facility in the Panhandle, helping to keep healthcare services operational while existing facilities were rebuilt.

In responding to Hurricane Ian, we are leveraging decades of experience responding to natural disasters around the world. For example, in the US and Caribbean, International Medical Corps has experience providing hurricane response in the Carolinas after Hurricane Florence; in Puerto Rico following Hurricanes Irma, Maria and Fiona; in Louisiana after Hurricane Ida; in Haiti after Hurricane Matthew; in the Bahamas following Hurricane Dorian; and in Dominica following Hurricane Maria.

⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/10/03/hurricane-ian-housing/>