



International Medical Corps' MMU's new location in Englewood.

FAST FACTS

- Hurricane Ian made landfall in Florida as a Category 4 hurricane on September 28.
- More than 125 deaths in Florida have been associated with Hurricane Ian.
- More than 29,664 people in the state are still without power.
- Residents in more than 20 counties do not have clean water.
- International Medical Corps is providing healthcare services through a mobile medical unit in Englewood and a small site in Port Charlotte.

Hurricane Ian made landfall on the southwest coast of Florida as a Category 4 hurricane on Wednesday, September 28, bringing with it catastrophic flooding, storm surge and wind. Ian was the third-deadliest storm to hit the mainland United States in the past century, following Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy. According to local sheriffs, 125 deaths in Florida have so far been attributed to the storm. Search-and-rescue teams continue their work, with about 2,500 successful rescues reported to date.¹

Many homes and businesses that were left standing remain without water and power, and are not necessarily safe to even enter.² As of October 10, 29,664 Florida utility customers—most in Lee County, with some in Collier County—remain without power.³ Nearly two weeks after the storm, communities are still waiting for relief, facing uncertain futures. Residents are experiencing long lines and call-wait times for assistance at disaster centers run by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and a lack of alternative housing options.⁵ In 149 areas across 20 counties in Florida, many residents still do not have clean water.⁴

Hurricane Ian severely battered schools, with many remaining closed in such hard-hit areas as Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee and Lee Counties. Schools planning to open this week are unsure of how many children will be able to attend. The healthcare system in Florida also has been severely strained by the storm's devastation and the record numbers of patients seeking emergency medical care in local ERs. Many hospitals were evacuated and remained closed for several days, and a lack of clean water has further complicated the provision of care for hospitals already experiencing significant pressure from an influx of patients.⁵

The storm has not only created physical vulnerabilities, with thousands losing their homes, but also financial vulnerabilities, with a loss of safety nets and livelihoods. Increased financial instability, particularly for elderly populations, is emerging as a major concern among affected communities. Large numbers of retirees in the area, already living on a fixed income, lost their most important assets. In Lee County alone, 29% of the population is over 65 years old.⁶ On October 8, the State of Florida, in partnership with FEMA, announced that it was activating the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program for residents impacted by Hurricane Ian. Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Kevin Guthrie reported that this was "another step in the long line of actions" the state is pursuing as part of the recovery process.⁷

¹ <https://www.floridadisaster.org/news-media/news/20221009-governor-ron-desantis-issues-updates-on-hurricane-ian-recovery/>

² <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/hurricane-ian-estero-island-fort-myers-beach/>

³ <https://floridadisaster.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4833aec638214268b09683ce78ed2edf>

⁴ <https://www.floridadisaster.org/news-media/news/20221009-governor-ron-desantis-issues-updates-on-hurricane-ian-recovery/>

⁵ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/06/us/hurricane-ian-florida-recovery-thursday/index.html>

⁶ <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/10/10/ian-cracks-floridians-nest-eggs-00060759>

⁷ <https://www.floridadisaster.org/news-media/news/20221008-state-of-florida-announces-transitional-sheltering-program-for-residents-impacted-by-hurricane-ian/>

International National Medical Corps' Response

Since the storm's landfall, International Medical Corps has worked closely with the Florida Department of Health (FDoH) and the state's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to determine the best location for our mobile medical unit (MMU) to reach the greatest number of people affected by Hurricane Ian. On October 8, at the state's request, International Medical Corps relocated its MMU from Port Charlotte (the original location requested by the state) to the Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Center in Englewood. Our team is maintaining a small pop-up site at the original location to support referrals for patients.

The state has opened five disaster recovery centers (DRCs), in Charlotte, Collier, Lee and Sarasota counties, including the site where our MMU is located in Englewood. These DRCs "are one of the critical resources needed to swiftly respond to individuals and businesses that need help recovering from Hurricane Ian," explained Shevaun Harris, the secretary of the state's Department of Children and Families.

Since our MMU began providing services, we have treated 97 patients. Our teams also made 13 referrals to higher care, three of which were transfers to more-specialized care facilities. Approximately half of these patients had been displaced from their homes. So far, patients seeking care have been 68% females and 26% males, 9% of whom were children and youth.

In addition to our clinical work at the MMU, we have two mobile teams traveling throughout the surrounding communities, conducting outreach and wellness checks. So far, these teams have reached 153 households and completed 99 wellness checks, including providing psychological first aid. The team has also developed a partnership with a local pharmacy that can deliver prescriptions directly to people residing in the nearby Red Cross Shelter, helping to ensure that patients get access to their medications quickly and easily.



International Medical Corps staff members unload critically needed medical supplies.

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.