



*International Medical Corps staff distribute hygiene kits to affected community members at the Santa Anita Park Way Relief Hub.*

Shortly before 11 a.m. January 22, the Hughes Fire broke out in Castaic Lake, adding to the count of fires that have ravaged the Los Angeles region over the past three weeks. Within 24 hours, the fire rapidly expanded to more than 10,000 acres, with just 14% containment. Nearly 50,000 people are under evacuation orders and warnings and shelters have been established for all who have been displaced. The Hughes fire is just one of the newest fires to contribute to the area's mass neighborhood displacements, school closures, major road and freeway closures, and ash and polluted air.

Across Southern California, fires, dry weather and strong winds have created extremely volatile and hazardous conditions, leaving hundreds of communities in a prolonged vulnerability to short- and long-term displacement, health and respiratory complications from ash, dust and toxic pollutants, loss of property and wages, and extreme mental stress.

As shelters work to meet the continued and increasing demand for housing for families, individuals, the elderly and those with preexisting health conditions, the needs for medical and mental health support is critical. Residents are dealing with rapid-fire changes, meeting with FEMA, insurance and other relief representatives, and are sometimes in close quarters with others amid a constant flow of people. These circumstances have increased the potential for active transmission of communicable diseases, including norovirus, COVID-19 and influenza. Though several impacted communities have now been cleared to return to their neighborhoods to survey the damage and find belongings, this marks just the beginning of what will be a very long recovery, as many neighborhoods have high levels of toxic materials in the air and in many cases, non-operational power and water systems, leaving what housing is left still uninhabitable.

Efforts towards long-term recovery have proven challenging, as new fires emerge daily and as compounding threats continue to build.

## FAST FACTS

- While the Palisades and Eaton fires continue to burn for the third week, new fires such as the Hughes fire in Castaic (which has displaced about 50,000 people) and the Sepulveda fire near the Pacific Palisades have ignited this week, prolonging the threat to communities across Southern California.
- Los Angeles continues to experience hazardous conditions, including very poor air quality, contaminated water sources and power outages, threatening access to essential resources. Shelters have reported outbreaks of norovirus, influenza and COVID-19.
- Though many residents have been cleared to return to their homes to survey the damage, health risks remain in these destroyed regions.
- There is an extensive need for mental health support as community members grapple with sudden and extreme loss and uncertainty.

## OUR RESPONSE

- International Medical Corps deployed an emergency response team to the Los Angeles area within 24 hours of the fires' outbreak.
- We are delivering direct medical services to evacuees within three regional shelters, mobile mental health services in communities and relief supplies throughout the region.
- The team has so far distributed:
  - more than 20,000 response and recovery items, including air purifiers, nebulizer compressors, bags, medicine bottles, adult diapers and children's toys
  - 654 hygiene kits, 1,386 wound-care kits and 6,360 face masks to shelters, health centers and community-based organizations.
- International Medical Corps continues to coordinate closely with local, state and regional agencies, including the Los Angeles Mayor's Office, California Department of Public Health, California Emergency Medical Services Authority, California Primary Care Association, California Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County, the Red Cross, and local organizations, shelters and health centers serving low-income and other vulnerable groups.

## International Medical Corps' Response

Headquartered in Los Angeles, International Medical Corps deployed an Emergency Response Team on January 8, within 24 hours of the fires' outbreak. We continue to work closely with national, state, county and local responders—including the American Red Cross, the California Department of Public Health, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority, the LA Mayor's office, the California Primary Care Association and the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County—to identify and meet the needs of community members.

International Medical Corps has deployed 17 medical and mental health professionals—including eight nurses, two medical providers and seven mental health professionals—to provide critical care in shelters, distribution centers and re-entry points.

Within hours of the outbreak of the Hughes Fire, the Red Cross requested that International Medical Corps embed medical teams in the newly established Hughes evacuation shelter at the College of the Canyons' Valencia Campus. Our teams are providing around-the-clock medical care until at least the weekend, and may extend providing services beyond that should the need demand it. In the Pasadena Convention Center, which houses more than 400 displaced people affected by the Eaton Fire, International Medical Corps' medical teams are working with Kaiser Permanente and AltaMed to meet all medical needs within the shelter. We are managing care within the isolation unit, serving patients with norovirus, COVID-19 or influenza. International Medical Corps also is working with the Red Cross to provide medical care in the Westwood Recreation Center, which houses people displaced by the Palisades Fire.

International Medical Corps' mental health team is actively administering community-based mental health care to individuals, families, health workers and first responders at various community gatherings, churches, distribution points, shelters and re-entry points near both the Pacific Palisades and Eaton fires. We are coordinating closely with mental health agencies, Cal Fire, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to facilitate resources and staffing, to meet the urgent and widespread need for mental health support. Our teams are providing crisis counseling, psychological first aid and emotional support, and have [compiled a resource list](#) of free mental-health phone applications, hotlines and other services for families and individuals to use as they gather in these spaces.

International Medical Corps is also distributing urgently needed relief and response supplies. The team delivered more than 20,000 hygiene, medical and recovery items—including air purifiers, nebulizer compressors, bags, medicine bottles, adult diapers and children's toys—to the Pasadena Convention Center. Additionally, teams have distributed more than 6,360 KN95 or N95 face masks to residents, shelter staff and first responders to shelters and partners.

We also have distributed 1,386 first aid and wound-care kits and 654 individual hygiene kits directly to community members affected by all three fires and partners such as the USC Street Medicine team, health centers, other local organizations and government agencies. Additionally, we have provided communication equipment and internet connectivity to shelters to support internet connectivity for residents, staff and first responders—a critical resource, as displaced people contact FEMA, work, landlords and more. International Medical Corps teams are continuing to facilitate and distribute thousands of additional supplies to federally qualified health center partner and local organizations.

To support immediate relief and ongoing recovery, International Medical Corps is directly supporting various community health centers (which provide services to low-income and other vulnerable community members) as they serve patients requiring continued care and those who are suffering from symptoms related to the smoke and increased toxicity in the air. In addition to supporting the procurement of additional medications and recovery supplies, we are providing funds to offset patient copays to help low-income populations, providing housing allowances for frontline healthcare staff and filling other urgently needed gaps for health staff and patients who have been affected.

## International Medical Corps in the US and Territories

International Medical Corps has been an emergency responder in the United States and Caribbean since 2005, when we partnered with local community clinics overwhelmed by Hurricane Katrina. In



*The remains of a house in Pacific Palisades.*



*International Medical Corps volunteer nurses are working with nurses from Kaiser to provide care to residents in the Pasadena Convention Center.*



the US, International Medical Corps works with national, state and local partners and agencies to deploy emergency response teams in response to disasters and address the significant challenges that face domestic healthcare services.

In the last seven years, International Medical Corps has engaged and supported a partner network of more than 275 hospitals, clinics, health and health-related facilities, and non-profit organizations across 18 states and territories in the United States, delivering health resources, services and training to more than 6 million patients and providers. International Medical Corps has collaborated since 2020 with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Services, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and local partner organizations.

In 2020 and 2021, International Medical Corps implemented a robust response to the COVID-19 outbreak nationwide. In the greater Los Angeles area, we deployed emergency medical field units and equipment to seven LA-area safety-net hospitals, delivered training and personal protective equipment to 51 LA-area long-term eldercare facilities and 176 LA-area health workers, managed a vaccination site at Kedren Community Health Center in south LA that delivered 140,000 vaccinations, and distributed 305 pieces of medical equipment and more than 2 million pieces of personal protective equipment to LA-area hospitals, health facilities and emergency medical services. In 2021, International Medical Corps conducted a multi-component project in California’s Central Valley to build the capacity of vulnerable populations in wildfire-impacted communities to better withstand and recover from wildfires.

### Response to LA Wildfires

<b>9</b> sites supported	<b>17</b> medical and MHPSS professionals deployed
<b>654</b> hygiene kits distributed	<b>1,386</b> first-aid and wound-care kits
<b>6,360</b> masks distributed	<b>17,048</b> hygiene products distributed
<b>8,067</b> medical supplies distributed	<b>737</b> other relief and recovery supplies distributed
<b>83</b> MHPSS consultations	<b>169</b> participants in MHPSS outreach
<b>9,393</b> direct beneficiaries	<b>54,227</b> indirect beneficiaries

### January 2025 Los Angeles Fire Map



<https://www.fire.ca.gov/Home>  
as of Thursday, January 23, 7:09 a.m. PST