

Hurricane Idalia Recovery: Community Resources for Central Florida

Below are community and state resources for people recovering from Hurricane Idalia. Please refer back to this document as information changes or go to [Emergency Information at OrangeCountyFL.net](#).

If you need help with this list or understanding what resources are available in your community, please call our **Florida Blue Center community specialists**. We can help with community and social services like food programs, transportation services, financial and housing assistance programs, community support resources, and many other types of relief programs.

We're ready to help members and everyone in the community. Visit one of our local [Florida Blue Centers](#) or call 1-877-352-5830, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. or Saturday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Resources Central Florida Region

Here are important resources for Central Florida residents:

- [FEMA](#)
- [American Red Cross- Central Florida Region](#)
- [Ready.gov](#)
- [CDC: Natural Disasters and Severe Weather](#)
- [Meal on Wheels – Find a Provider](#)
- [United Way of Central Florida 211](#)
- [Heart of Florida United Way 211](#)
- [Goodwill-Central Florida](#)
- [Florida Disaster](#)

Crisis Cleanup

If you need assistance with hurricane damage, call the **Crisis Cleanup Hotline** at 1-800-451-1954. You will be connected to volunteers from local relief organizations, community groups and faith communities.

Mental Health Resources

Call or text the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) at **1-800-985-5990**. The national hotline provides free 24/7, crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

Family Resource Support Center **1-850-300-HOPE (4673)** to speak to a Hope Navigator.

- The Family Resource Support Center serves as a central hub for the community to access needed resources and supports. The center has staff on site, including Hope Navigators, behavioral health partners who specialize in disaster recovery response, and public benefit eligibility specialists to help individuals and families. The

Department will continue to work with local organizations and partners across the state to expand the array of resources that are available to help meet the needs of impacted families.

Orange County Resources

Here are some important links for Orange County:

- [After the storm debris removal](#)
- [Sandbag location](#)
- [Evacuation shelters](#)
- [Food pantry](#)
- [Special needs emergency registry](#). To register, go to ocfl.net/psn, where the registration form can be completed online. Alternatively, a Printable Blank Form can be downloaded from the bottom of the page.
- For the latest storm information, visit ocfl.net/storm or dial 311 (407-836-3111).
- Contact Orange County Citizens Line by dialing 311 or 407-836-3111.
- Questions about FEMA IHP (individuals and household program)? Call the FEMA disaster helpline at **1-800-621-FEMA**. Hearing/speech impaired, call TTY 1-800-462-7585

Orange County Shelters

Orange County provides hurricane and storm shelters as part of its comprehensive response to help individuals, families and communities respond to and recover from disasters. For registration and information on Special Needs Shelters, call 311.

General Shelters

Orange County provides general population shelters for Central Floridians who have been evacuated from their homes, for those who live in low-lying areas, and for others seeking shelter from a storm. Shelters are alcohol, drug and weapon free. Individuals should come prepared with supplies. *ID cards are **not** required to enter shelters.*

Special Needs Shelters

Orange County strongly encourages residents who require a Special Needs/Medical Shelter during an emergency to please call 311. Residents who are deaf or hard of hearing can [chat online](#), download the [OCFL 311 app](#), or register at ocfl.net/psn, to ensure access to resources and transportation.

Pet-Friendly Shelters

Orange County anticipates opening pet-friendly shelters during an emergency and reminds families to include pets in their hurricane prep plans:

- Ensure pet vaccinations are current.
- Consider microchipping pets if not already done so to ensure you can find pets in the event you are separated.
- Have a copy of your pet's medical records, which should be included in your "Pet Disaster Kit."
- Arrange for a safe place to stay that permits pets.

- Research places that are pet friendly. (Note – animals are not allowed in Red Cross Shelters, except for service animals, so you may want to stay with a friend or relative, or motel/hotel that is pet-friendly).
- If possible, PLEASE do not leave pets behind during an evacuation or emergency.
- With pending serious weather, bring all households pets inside.

For pet-friendly shelters, individuals are asked to bring a carrier, copy of medical records to ensure pets are current on vaccines, food, water and any necessary medications and identification for the pet.



Call: 211

Text: Your zip code to 898211

Chat: [online here](#)

United Way's 2-1-1 is Central Florida's 24/7/365 information and assistance hotline during natural disasters, and throughout the year, for connecting with community resources, like:

- Shelter information and housing assistance
- Sandbags, tarps and other storm supplies
- Evacuation routes and road closures
- Food, clothing and hygiene locations
- Special needs registry and medical supplies
- Emotional and crisis support

To search for resources in your area using our online database, visit UW211Help.org.

Sandbags

Free Self-Service Sandbag Program

Orange County Government's Office of Emergency Management is carefully monitoring Hurricane Idalia. In preparation for heavy rain, the county will re-open its free self-service sandbag program at select parks. Residents will receive 10 unfilled sandbags per household and will need to bring their own shovel or filling tool.

Self-Serve Sandbag Sites:

- [Downey Park](#): 10107 Flowers Avenue, Orlando, FL 32825
- [Meadow Woods Recreation Center](#): 1751 Rhode Island Woods Circle, Orlando, FL 32824
- [Bithlo Community Park](#): 18501 Washington Avenue, Orlando, FL 32820
- [West Orange Recreation Center](#): 309 S West Crown Point Road, Winter Garden, FL 34787
- [Clarcona Horse Park](#): 3535 Damon Road, Apopka, FL 32703

[\(Important Sandbag Information | Información Importante Acerca de Los Sacos de Arena\)](#)

Sites will operate on Monday, Aug. 28, from noon to 7 p.m., and Tuesday, Aug. 29, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., pending severe weather. For questions or additional information for residents with special needs, please dial 3-1-1 or 407-836-3111.

After Storm Resources Information

Emergency food pantry locations

Phone: 407-295-1066

Website: [Feed Hope Now](#)

Red Cross Shelters

Phone: 407-894-4141 (local) or 800-733-2767 (Toll Free National)

Website: [Red Cross: Find an open shelter](#)

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

Apply for assistance: [DisasterAssistance.gov](#)

Phone: 800-621-3362

Website: [FEMA.gov](#)

Twitter: [@FEMA](#)

Utility Service Provider: Florida Public Service Commission

Program provides an [online locator tool](#) for public, private and city utility providers.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to staff our state's shelters and support other disaster relief organizations.

- Heart of Florida United Way – Disaster Response Team. [Sign up here.](#)
- Volunteer Florida – Disaster Action Team Responders, Disaster Mental Health Services, and Food Banks. [Sign up here.](#)

Disaster Distress Helpline

Provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. **Call 800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs.**

Florida Hurricane Resources

Florida Disaster State Emergency Response Team (SERT)

Website: [FloridaDisaster.org](#)

Phone: 1-800-342-3557

Twitter: [@FLsert](#)

Facebook: [@FloridaSERT](#)

Alerts: Text **FLPrepares** to 888777 to have alerts sent straight to your phone

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

Phone: 1-800-621-3362

Website: [FEMA.gov](#)

Twitter: [@FEMA](#)

Florida Special Needs Registry

Website: FloridaDisaster.org/snr/

Phone: 800-374-9689

Special needs by county: FloridaDisaster.org/disability/specialneeds

Additional Resources

5-1-1

Contact 5-1-1 for information about traffic and evacuation routes.

Call: 5-1-1

Website: fl511.com

Twitter [@fl511_central](https://twitter.com/fl511_central)

Text alerts: fl511.com/personalizedservices

App: [Find here](#)

GasBuddy

Check GasBuddy for live updates on fuel availability

App: GasBuddy.com/app

Price Gouging Hotline

Report instances of price gouging on hurricane supplies

Phone: 1-866-966-7226

Ready.Gov

Step-by-step plan on how to prepare from days to hours before a hurricane: Ready.gov/hurricanes