

**FEMA**[Apply for Assistance](#)

Hurricane Helene

Hurricane Helene: Rumor Response



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English

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English

Help keep yourself, your family and your community safe after Hurricane Helene by being aware of rumors and scams and sharing [official information from trusted sources](#).

Do your part to stop the spread of rumors by doing three easy things:

1. Find trusted sources of information.
2. Share information from trusted sources.
3. Discourage others from sharing information from unverified sources.

Rumors

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Rumor: FEMA distributes aid based on demographic characteristics.

Fact:

FEMA provides assistance to survivors regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status.

October 4, 2024

Rumor: FEMA is in the process of confiscating Helene survivor property. If I apply for disaster assistance and my land is deemed unlivable, my property will be seized.

Fact:

FEMA cannot seize your property or land. Applying for disaster assistance does not grant FEMA or the federal government authority or ownership of your property or land. When you apply for disaster assistance a FEMA inspector may be sent to verify the damage on your home. This is one of many factors reviewed to determine what kind of disaster assistance you may be eligible for. If the results of the inspection deem your home uninhabitable, that information is only used to determine the amount of FEMA assistance you may receive to make your home safe, sanitary and functional.

October 4, 2024

Rumor: FEMA is no longer accepting applications for housing assistance.

Fact:

FEMA is still accepting assistance applications throughout areas affected by Helene. For current application timelines, visit disasterassistance.gov. You can also see if applications are being accepted on FEMA's state specific Helene disaster webpages; [Florida](#), [Georgia](#), [North Carolina](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Virginia](#).

October 4, 2024

Rumor: FEMA does not have enough money to provide disaster assistance for Helene.

Fact:

FEMA has enough money right now for immediate response and recovery needs. If you were affected by Helene, do not hesitate to apply for disaster assistance as there is a variety of help available for different needs.

October 3, 2024

Rumor: FEMA is asking for cash donations and turning away volunteers.

Fact:

This is false: FEMA does not ask for or generally accept any cash donations or volunteers for disaster response. We do encourage people who want to help to volunteer with or donate cash to reputable voluntary or charitable organizations. After a disaster, cash is often the best way to help as it provides the greatest flexibility for these reputable organizations working on the ground to purchase exactly what is needed.

If you encounter someone claiming to represent FEMA and asking for donations, be careful as that is likely a scam. Government employees will never solicit money.



Learn more about how to help after a disaster: [How to Help After Hurricane Helene](#)

October 3, 2024

Rumor: Funding for FEMA disaster response was diverted to support international efforts or border related issues.

Fact:

This is false. No money is being diverted from disaster response needs. FEMA's disaster response efforts and individual assistance is funded through the Disaster Relief Fund, which is a dedicated fund for disaster efforts. Disaster Relief Fund money has not been diverted to other, non-disaster related efforts.

October 3, 2024

Rumor: FEMA is confiscating donations for survivors.

Fact:

Rumors about FEMA turning away donations, stopping trucks or vehicles with donations, confiscating and seizing supplies often spread after a disaster. These are all false.

FEMA does not take donations and/or food from survivors or voluntary organizations. Donations of food, water, or other goods are handled by voluntary agencies who specialize in storing, sorting, cleaning, and distributing donated items.

FEMA does not conduct vehicle stops or handle road closures with armed guards -- those are done by local law enforcement.

October 3, 2024

Rumor: FEMA will only provide \$750 to disaster survivors to support their recovery.

Fact:

This is false.

One type of assistance that is often approved quickly after you apply is Serious Needs Assistance, which is \$750 to help pay for essential items like food, water, baby formula, breastfeeding supplies, medication and other emergency supplies. There are other forms of assistance that you may qualify to receive once you apply for disaster assistance. As your application continues to be reviewed, you may still receive additional forms of assistance for other needs such as support for temporary housing and home repair costs. Learn more about the types of assistance available. If you have questions about your disaster assistance application and what you qualify for, contact us at 1-800-621-3362 to speak with a FEMA representative.

October 3, 2024

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[Return to top](#)

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Emergency Management

About

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