

North Carolina Helene Recovery

Jan. 8, 2025

Key Messages

The Disaster Recovery Center in Polk County at Isothermal Community College, 1255 West Mills Street, Columbus, N.C., will be closed Thursday, Jan. 9, due to previously scheduled unavailability of the site. **This DRC will reopen 8 a.m. Friday, Jan. 10.** Please be advised, due to winter weather predictions through parts of North Carolina, some centers may close early or have delayed openings. Watch for weather announcements throughout the week.

Survivors have less than a month to apply for assistance. Quickest way to apply is online at

DisasterAssistance.gov. Or use the [FEMA App](#) for mobile

devices. You can also call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. **The deadline is Feb. 6.** Survivors should stay in contact with FEMA after they apply for assistance, to help keep their recovery on track.



FEMA Video: [Applying for Assistance at a Disaster Recovery Center.](#)

By the Numbers

- **\$301 million approved to 143,000+ households and individuals** beginning their recovery. That includes money to help rent a home or apartment as survivors begin their recovery.
- **\$309 million in Public Assistance funding approved** to support community recovery.
- **The U.S. Small Business Administration is still accepting low-interest loan applications.** To date more than 10,720 loan applications have been received, with 2,716 approved for more than \$201 million. Of that, \$53.8 million in low-interest disaster loans have been paid directly to North Carolina survivors.
- FEMA is providing **multiple temporary housing options to meet North Carolinians' individual needs.** The first step to receiving housing assistance is applying with FEMA.
 - More than **5,600 households** are using **Transitional Sheltering Assistance hotels and motels.**
 - **93 households** have been placed in temporary housing units provided by FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Assistance.
 - FEMA has contracted with **18 commercial parks** to be able to place units and the agency is working with **16 other parks** for potential contracting purposes.
- More than **2.6 million cubic yards** of debris has been removed from public rights of way by FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and contractors.



FEMA

- More than \$47.6 million in federal unemployment benefits have been provided to 6,400+ survivors. For more information, call the unemployment assistance hotline at 919-629-3857 (for Spanish call 919-276-5698).

FEMA and Nonprofit Organizations Working to Repair or Replace Private Roads or Bridges

FEMA may be able to help pay for a road or bridge on private property when it is the only route available to reach your primary home or it is the only access for emergency vehicles. Call the FEMA Helpline or visit a Disaster Recovery Center to update your application. Nonprofit organizations are also assisting residents. More information on their efforts can be found at [Bridging Together Idrcarolinas.org/bridging-together](https://bridgingtogether.idrcarolinas.org/bridging-together)

FEMA has awarded more than **\$10.2 million** for repair or replacement of roads and bridges to 3,800+ families.

Crisis Counseling, Mental Health Resources Available for Helene Survivors

- The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' Hope4NC Crisis Counseling Program provides immediate support and crisis counseling services for North Carolinians following Helene. Survivors experiencing stress, emotional fatigue, a mental health crisis or just need someone to talk to, can call the Hope4NC Helpline 24/7 at 855-587-3463. Services are free and available to anyone in the declared 39 North Carolina counties and tribal members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.
- Additionally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline is available anytime to provide support. Survivors and responders feeling overwhelmed can call or text 800-985-5990 to receive free, confidential support in any language.

Read Your FEMA Letter Carefully

- If you applied for assistance, you will receive a letter explaining your application status. If you are not currently approved for assistance, you may need to send additional documentation to FEMA. You can easily upload documents to [Disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov) or submit them at a Disaster Recovery Center.

Meet with a FEMA Mitigation Specialist in a Disaster Recovery Center

- FEMA mitigation specialists will help answer questions and give advice on techniques to repair and rebuild safer and stronger. They are in centers in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga and Yancey counties.

Help Still Available for Survivors in Need of Clean-up Assistance

Help is still available for survivors in need of assistance cleaning up their Helene damaged homes.

Reach Global Crisis Response – Serving Henderson and Buncombe counties. To request crisis cleaning or rebuilding help contact the local intake number at 828-357-7251.

Operation Blessing – Offering crisis clean-up within 40 miles of Black Mountain, N.C. To request assistance, contact 757-254-3851.

Operation Anchor – Offering crisis clean-up, rebuilding, tree removal and driveway repairs in Yancey, Mitchell, and parts of Buncombe counties. To request assistance, call or text 800-730-2537.

All Hands and Hearts – Providing cleanup, mold remediation and repairs. For assistance, call 828-712-7040.

NECHAMA Jewish Response to Disaster – Offering debris removal and crisis cleanup help. For assistance, email: max@nechama.org.

Fuller Center Disaster Rebuilders – Providing disaster cleanup, mold remediation and rebuild help outside Black Mountain. For assistance, call 337-909-5444 or email toni@disaster-rebuilders.org.

Ground Force Humanitarian Aid – Offering disaster cleanup, debris removal, plumbing, and repairs. Request assistance online at <https://gfha.us/requesthelp>

Rise Disaster Relief and Recovery – Providing chainsaw work, muck and gut, tree and debris removal in Mitchell County. Residents can call the office at 980-825-7473 to request assistance with any of the services they provide or apply online at <https://riseteam.org/get-help/>

Helpful Resources for Disaster Survivors

Disaster Unemployment Assistance hotline is now available to survivors of Helene. English: 919-629-3857 | Spanish: 919-276-5698. For more information or to register online, visit: <https://www.des.nc.gov>.

United Way's NC 211 is a service that provides information and referrals through a free statewide phone number (2-1-1 or 1-888-892-1162 if calling from an out-of-state area code) and website (www.nc211.org).

NC Department of Public Safety: Emergency Management (www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management).

North Carolina Office of the Governor: (www.governor.state.nc.us).

North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund: (<https://www.nc.gov/disaster-relief-fund-faqs>).

United States Postal Service has established alternate locations. Find a nearby location at: about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/residential/welcome.htm.