



**American
Red Cross**

JANUARY 2025

Hurricane Helene: Three-Month Report

RESPONSE AT A GLANCE



More than **3.3 million**
meals and snacks
served with partners



Nearly **56,500** overnight
shelter stays provided
with partners



More than **149,000**
households provided
with relief items



Reached an estimated
464,200 people with
disaster relief and
recovery services

Cumulative figures as of December 26, 2024, for our Hurricane Helene response in Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Delivering Vital Aid to Storm-Battered Residents

As it swept through the South in late September, Helene battered communities from the Gulf Coast to Appalachia. Along Florida's west coast and Big Bend region, the hurricane's high winds and destructive storm surge caused renewed hardship for many people still recovering from the impacts of earlier hurricanes. Hundreds of miles inland, Helene's remnants brought torrential rainfall and catastrophic flash floods to mountain valleys in North Carolina, sweeping away homes, businesses and entire towns.

To meet these dire needs, the American Red Cross mounted a massive response across 10 states, including Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. Despite widespread communications and access challenges caused by the storm, dedicated Red Cross employees and selfless volunteers joined nonprofit, community and government partners to provide safe shelter for thousands of individuals and families who fled from — or lost — their homes due to Helene.

Many who were able to remain in their homes still lacked communications, power or running water for days or even weeks after the storm. At our shelters and community service sites, the Red Cross helped with daily needs, providing hot meals, drinking water, essential relief and cleanup items, and a safe place to recharge devices and get the latest information. Trained volunteers also offered basic health services and sorely needed comfort to heartbroken residents, and they responded to thousands of requests from people searching for missing friends and loved ones.

Above: Betzabel Escobedo and her mom, Maria, of Asheville, North Carolina, stop by a comfort, care and distribution site in Swannanoa, North Carolina, for hot meals and relief supplies following Helene's devastation. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

As bridges were repaired and roads re-opened, our emergency response vehicles reached more isolated areas with help and hope. Beyond our standard services, the Red Cross has worked to address the unique circumstances of many storm survivors. For example, we provided “non-traditional” supplies like laundry and shower trailers, cooking stoves, and spark plugs to power generators and machinery as cleanup and repair activities got underway. In addition, our Latino Engagement Team deployed in multiple states, conducting outreach to primarily Spanish-speaking communities and ensuring their needs were met.

Critically, the Red Cross also offered some of the most severely impacted individuals and families Immediate Assistance — emergency funds storm survivors can use as they see fit, for example, to pay for necessities like groceries and gas money, rental deposits and transportation costs, utility bills and much more. As of December 26, 2024, the Red Cross had already provided approximately \$3.1 million in financial assistance to help residents with some of their most pressing needs.

Months after Helene’s landfall, the Red Cross is still on the ground in impacted communities, and we will continue to stand with hurricane survivors over the coming year and beyond. For those who couldn’t return home, our Shelter Resident Transition teams have worked to identify stable alternative housing solutions, while caring caseworkers are helping affected individuals and families make recovery plans and locate available resources as they begin to rebuild their lives. We will also be providing additional financial assistance for people whose homes were destroyed or suffered severe damage, as well as funding community recovery grants to nonprofit partners with specialized expertise to meet specific recovery needs, such as home repairs.

“I appreciate the Red Cross, law enforcement, medical — they were there 24/7,” Thomas said.

Red Cross and Partners Support Displaced Veterans in Helene’s Wake

Thomas Reimuth has lived in North Carolina for 45 years — the past eight in Asheville. As an Army National Guard combat veteran, Thomas told us he has seen a lot, but nothing like the impact of Hurricane Helene.

“When the storm started coming through, we just sat there and watched. There were folks just floating down the river,” he said.

The Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ) in East Asheville — home to Thomas and many other vulnerable veterans in the area — was among the many houses, businesses, and community buildings heavily damaged or destroyed by Helene.

After the storm, Thomas and several other veterans were evacuated to local shelters supported by Red Cross disaster teams. We worked closely with VA officials and community partners to ensure they had access to vital medications, community groups and resources for ongoing aid and recovery.

“I appreciate the Red Cross, law enforcement, medical — they were there 24/7,” Thomas said.

With support from the Red Cross and partners, dozens of veterans have comfortable shelter and access to their veteran friends and neighbors.

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday, the Asheville-Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM), which operates the VRQ, partnered with the Red Cross Long-Term Recovery team to support intermediate housing for the veterans. Other Red Cross partners, such as Team Rubicon, have crews at work cleaning and restoring the veterans' damaged home.

Now housed at a local hotel with support from a Red Cross grant to the ABCCM, dozens of displaced veterans have comfortable shelter and access to their veteran friends and neighbors, as well as hot meals, laundry and transportation services, job resources, VA and medical support, and more. Thomas finds solace in spending time with fellow veterans and the peace of his faith, both of which he says give him hope.

"I have my days sometimes — everybody does," said Thomas. "But hold on a bit longer. It's not like looking into a microwave; it's not overnight. You've gotta have patience and trust in the Lord all your heart. That's what I pray for everyone — it'll be okay."



Army National Guard combat veteran Thomas Reimuth is among several veterans displaced by Helene's flooding who have received shelter and other relief support from the Red Cross and partners. Photo by Sharonne Hayes/American Red Cross

Compassionate Donors Power Relief and Recovery Support

Thanks to generous supporters, the Red Cross has raised \$164.5 million¹ — including the value of critical donated goods and services — designated for our Hurricane Helene response to help people impacted by this disaster. As of December 26, 2024, the Red Cross had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$42.9 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for Hurricane Helene. We will continue to program the remaining funds, as well as funds from our combined Hurricanes Milton and Helene designation, to provide and support services for both individual and community long-term recovery for people impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Hurricane Helene Expenses and Commitments ^{2,3,4} (in millions)						
as of December 26, 2024						
Expense Categories	Food, Shelter, and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Financial Assistance	Community Recovery & Resilience	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food, shelter and other relief items	\$18.3	\$0.7	\$3.1	\$0.4	\$22.5	52%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$6.5	\$0.9	\$0.8	—	\$8.2	19%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$1.7	\$0.1	\$0.2	—	\$2.0	5%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$1.4	—	\$0.2	—	\$1.6	4%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$1.5	—	—	—	\$1.5	3%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.9	\$0.1	\$0.1	—	\$1.1	3%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$1.0	—	—	—	\$1.0	2%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.4	\$0.2	\$0.1	—	\$0.7	2%
Total Program Expenses	\$31.7	\$2.0	\$4.5	\$0.4	\$38.6	90%
Management, general and fundraising ⁵					\$4.3	10%
Total Spent and Committed					\$42.9	100%
Program Dollars to be Spent on Recovery					\$109.4	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					\$12.2	
Total Budget					\$164.5	

¹Does not include \$47.9 million raised through the combined “Hurricanes Milton and Helene” designation. These funds will be programmed as needed to help people impacted by hurricanes Helene and Milton.

²Dollar figures are rounded to the nearest \$100,000; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

³Includes Hurricane Helene responses in Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

⁴Includes expenses that are to be reimbursed by the state of Florida.

⁵Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support nearly 18,000 employees and more than 265,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. Ninety cents of every dollar spent for Hurricane Helene will support delivering care and comfort for people affected by this disaster.



The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of about 65,000 disasters each year — including home fires, severe weather, floods and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and throughout their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.