

## Hurricane Milton Recovery: Community Resources for Central Florida

Below are community and state resources for people recovering from **Hurricane Milton**. 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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

## Sandbags

### Free Self-Service Sandbag Program

Orange County Public Works will offer self-serve sandbags to residents ahead of potential impacts from Tropical Storm Milton, currently in the Gulf of Mexico.

Orange County Public Works Roads and Drainage Division is delivering sandbags and sand to select parks to meet demand. Residents will be provided with **10 unfilled** sandbags and directed to the sand pile on site.

All residents will need to **bring their own shovel** to fill their sandbags. Individuals with special needs who need sandbag assistance should contact Orange County 311 by dialing 3-1-1 or 407-836-3111.

### Hours of Operation

- Monday, October 7, 2024, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 8, 2024, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.\*

\*Weather permitting. Locations may close earlier on Tuesday.

The sandbags will be offered at the following Orange County Park locations:

**Barnett Park:** 4801 W. Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32808

**Bithlo Community Park:** 18501 Washington Avenue, Orlando, FL 32820

**Clarcona Horse Park:** 3535 Damon Road, Apopka, FL 32703

**Downey Park:** 10107 Flowers Avenue, Orlando, FL 32825

**Meadow Woods Recreation Center:** 1751 Rhode Island Woods Circle, Orlando, FL 32824

**West Orange Recreation Center:** 309 S. West Crown Point Road, Winter Garden, FL 34787

Orange County Public Works Roads and Drainage Division will deliver sandbags and sand to meet demand. Residents will be provided with 10 unfilled sandbags and directed to the sand pile on site. All residents will need to bring their own shovel to fill their sandbags.

Public Works will monitor conditions on Sunday. If the weather deteriorates rapidly or becomes unsafe sandbag operations will cease.

For individuals needing special assistance, please call 311 and detailed information will be provided on securing sandbags.

For detailed information and exact locations, visit the following sandbag site:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/339edbdbcaaaa475a9f45d307c6962fa5>

## Osceola County Shelters

Our Citizen Information Center hotline (407-742-0000) opens Monday, October 7, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and will operate 24 hours a day starting Tuesday at 8 a.m. Citizens that have specific questions or need to speak with an Osceola County representative may call this hotline.

No evacuations are currently in effect for Osceola County. Residents in flood-prone areas or homes with structural concerns should prepare an evacuation plan. The following shelters open at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 8, 2024:

- **Celebration High School** - 1809 Celebration Blvd., Kissimmee, FL 34747
- **Gateway High School (Pet-Friendly)** - 93 Panther Paws Trail, Kissimmee, FL 34744
- **Harmony High School (Pet-Friendly)** - 3601 Arthur J. Gallagher Blvd., St. Cloud, FL 34771
- **Holopaw Community Center** - 8801 Community Center Rd., St. Cloud, FL 34773
- **Kenansville Community Center** - 1178 S Canoe Creek Rd., Kenansville, FL 34739
- **Kissimmee Middle School (Pet-Friendly)** - 2410 Dyer Blvd., Kissimmee, FL 34741
- **Liberty High School (Pet-Friendly)** - 4250 Pleasant Hill Rd., Kissimmee, FL 34746

A special medical needs shelter opens at noon on Tuesday, October 8, at the Osceola Council on Aging, 700 Generation Point, Kissimmee, FL 34744.

If evacuating, first consider staying with family, friends, or in a hotel. Shelters are available but should be considered a last resort.

### Closures

- [Osceola County Schools](#) will close Wednesday, October 9 and Thursday, October 10, 2024.
- Osceola County, City of Kissimmee, and City of St. Cloud government offices will close Wednesday, October 9 and Thursday, October 10, 2024.

### Meals for individuals in need:

- If folks need a hot meal immediately, they can go to the Salvation Army at 700 Union Street. Meals are served starting at 11am and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Crisis Clean-up:

- Those needing clean-up assistance can go to [www.CrisisCleanUp.org](http://www.CrisisCleanUp.org)

## BEFORE THE STORM

Preparing in advance for hurricane season can determine not only how safely and comfortably you ride out the storm, but also how easily it is to handle the days and weeks after the storm has passed. Take a look at the information collected below to learn how you can prepare in the days and weeks before a hurricane.

## SANDBAGS

In preparation for potential severe weather conditions due to Hurricane Milton, Osceola County residents may fill and make sandbags at the following locations:

Sandbags will be available at the following locations on Monday, October 7

- **Osceola Heritage Park**  
1211 Shakerag Road, Kissimmee FL 34744 - Open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Celebration Athletic & Recreation Complex**  
305 Campus St, Kissimmee, FL 34747 - Open 6 a.m. until sandbags run out.

Supplies will be provided including bags and sand. Residents are allowed 25 sandbags per household and will need to bring their own shovel or filling tool. Supplies are limited, and sandbags will be available for filling on a first-come, first-served basis.

**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](http://UW211Help.org).

- **Local Shelter Information by County** – For information about open Shelters, please click [here](#).

## 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](http://DisasterAssistance.gov)

**Phone:** 800-621-3362

Website: [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

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

## Solid Waste Collection

- Residents of unincorporated Osceola County can visit [WMFloridaStorm.com](https://www.WMFloridaStorm.com) for real-time updates regarding collection before, during, and after a major storm.
- [Click here for information on where to take tree limbs, how to secure large waste items, and ensure your property is safe during a hurricane or storm.](#)

## 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.**

**State Assistance Information Line** – The State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) is a toll-free hotline activated at the time of an emergency to provide an additional resource for those in Florida to receive accurate and up-to-date information regarding an emergency or disaster situation impacting Florida, please call [\(800\) 342-3557](tel:8003423557).

# Florida Hurricane Resources

## Florida Disaster State Emergency Response Team (SERT)

Website: [FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.FloridaDisaster.org)

Phone: 1-800-342-3557

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

Facebook: [@FloridaSERT](https://www.facebook.com/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](https://www.fema.gov)

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

## Florida Special Needs Registry

Website: [FloridaDisaster.org/snr/](https://www.FloridaDisaster.org/snr/)

Phone: 800-374-9689

Special needs by county: [FloridaDisaster.org/disability/specialneeds](https://www.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](http://fl511.com)

**Twitter** [@fl511\\_central](https://twitter.com/fl511_central)

**Text alerts:** [fl511.com/personalizedservices](http://fl511.com/personalizedservices)

**App:** [Find here](#)

### GasBuddy

Check GasBuddy for live updates on fuel availability

**App:** [GasBuddy.com/app](http://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](http://Ready.gov/hurricanes)