

North Carolina Helene Recovery

Dec. 23, 2024

Key Messages

North Carolina Disaster Recovery Centers will be closed for the holiday. In partnership with the state and local governments, Helene Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) will be closed for the holiday. Below is a list of dates and times these centers will reopen.

- The DRC in Caldwell County will reopen Jan. 2 at 8 a.m.
- The DRCs in Mitchell and Yancey counties will close at 12 p.m. today. The center will reopen Dec. 27 at 8 a.m.
- The centers in Ashe, Avery, Burke, Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania and Watauga counties will close at 6 p.m. today. These centers will reopen Dec. 27 at 8 a.m.

A Mobile Disaster Recovery Center is open in Buncombe County to provide one-on-one help to North Carolinians affected by Tropical Storm Helene. The MDRC is available today at the Weaverville Town Hall 30 Main St. Weaverville NC. Hours are 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 23.

By the Numbers

- \$286 million approved to 141,000+ households and individuals beginning their recovery. That includes money to help rent a home or apartment as survivors begin their recovery.
- \$307 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 \$6.6 million in loans has been awarded.
- 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 5,200 households are using Transitional Sheltering Assistance hotels and motels.
 - 80 households have been placed in temporary housing units provided by FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Assistance.
 - FEMA has contracted with 12 commercial parks to be able to place units and the agency is working with more than 20 other parks for potential contracting purposes.



FEMA Video: [North Carolinian Christmas Tree Grower is Planting the Seeds of Recovery](#)



FEMA

- To date, more than **2.3 million cubic yards** of debris has been removed from public rights of way by FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its contractors. Debris currently being removed includes: vegetative/woody debris, construction debris, white goods (appliances) and household hazardous waste.
- Find a center near you at: FEMA.gov/drc or text “DRC” and a ZIP code to 43362. You can visit any open center, including locations in other states.

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. The FIRST step in determining eligibility for this assistance is to apply with FEMA. 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 drcarolinas.org/bridging-together](https://drcarolinas.org/bridging-together). To date, FEMA has awarded more than **\$9.3 million** for repair or replacement of roads and bridges to more than 3,500 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 provided at no cost and are available to anyone residing within the declared 39 North Carolina counties and tribal members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, regardless of their eligibility for FEMA financial assistance.
- 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.

The Deadline to Apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance is Extended to Jan. 7, 2025

- Survivors in 39 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians of North Carolina are able to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. To date, \$6.6 million in federal unemployment benefits have been provided to survivors. For more information call the unemployment assistance hotline at 919-629-3857 (for Spanish call 919-276-5698). The hotline is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, and from noon until 4 p.m. on Sunday.

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 or submit them at a Disaster Recovery Center.

Qualifying Private Nonprofit Houses of Worship May be Eligible for FEMA Grants

- FEMA’s Public Assistance program may cover costs to repair or replace facilities damaged during the storm. Interested applicants should contact North Carolina Emergency Management at pahotline@ncdps.gov.

Appeal a Decision

- You can appeal any FEMA decision or award amount by sending additional documents, like estimates for repairs, receipts, bills, etc., that show you qualify and need more help. Each decision letter from FEMA explains why you are ineligible and the types of documents to help you appeal. For more details, please visit: <https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/how-appeal-fema-decision-1>. Video on [How to Appeal](#).

Meet with a FEMA Mitigation Specialist in a Disaster Recovery Center

- FEMA mitigation specialists are in DRCs to help answer questions and give advice on techniques to repair and rebuild safer and stronger. They are meeting with people at DRCs 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

After a disaster, cleaning up is a crucial first step toward a successful recovery. 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, NC. 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 or use the online request form.

All Hands and Hearts – Providing disaster cleanup, mold remediation, and repairs. For assistance, call the local intake number at 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 the intake number at 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 (DUA) 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 multilingual, confidential service that provides health and human services 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 Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) shares guidance on ensuring water is safe and preventing waterborne disease or illness: www.ncdhhs.gov/safe-water-simplified/download?attachment.

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

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

North Carolina State and Local Level Referrals: (www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/disaster-survivors/state-local-referral-lists/north-carolina).

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

FEMA is working to stop the spread of dangerous rumors. Learn more at: www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricane-helene/rumor-response.

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

For the latest information about North Carolina's recovery, visit fema.gov/disaster/4827. Follow FEMA Region 4 [@FEMARegion4](#) on X or follow FEMA on social media at: [FEMA Blog](#) on fema.gov, [@FEMA](#) or [@FEMA_Espanol](#) on X, [FEMA](#) or [FEMA Espanol](#) on Facebook, [@FEMA](#) on Instagram, and via [FEMA YouTube channel](#). Also, follow Administrator Deanne Criswell on X [@FEMA_Deanne](#).