

Resources for Your Family & Community to Rebuild After Hurricane Helene

The effects of Hurricane Helene have rocked South Carolina. Community members have lost their lives, powerlines and trees remain down, and roadways are impassible. Flooding and river cresting continue to pose a concern, while hundreds of thousands of South Carolina residents will continue to be impacted for days and, unfortunately, even weeks to come.

Despite the devastation, neighbors, communities, and leaders have worked together. Dealing with their own losses, the Department of Social Services' staff of more than 4,500 professionals have worked tirelessly staffing emergency shelters, clearing trees and limbs from the roadway, and answering calls to move our state toward recovery.

SNAP Replacement Benefits

DSS has requested a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that if approved will allow DSS to automatically issue federally funded food replacement benefits to current SNAP recipients residing in counties where 50% or more of the total population in that county experienced a power outage lasting more than four (4) hours per federal guidelines.

If you are without food and need immediate assistance, food is available at your local food bank. Emergency shelters and feeding sites are also operating in some areas.

For information regarding emergency shelters and feeding sites open in your area, visit the South Carolina Emergency Management Division website at www.scemd.org, call the statewide emergency management information hotline at 1-866-246-0133, or contact your local county emergency operations center.

If you are a South Carolina resident please follow updates from the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD).

WEBSITE: SCEMD.org

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/SCEMD/>

The SCEMD website will allow you to:

- View press conferences
- Report power outages
- Find emergency shelters
- View road conditions
- Find office closings
- Make an emergency safety plan
- Find ways to help your community

Residents can also use the Damage Assessment tool in the SC Emergency Manager app to report property damage to authorities. [Download the app on the App Store and Google Play.](#)

The app also allows community members to:

- Build and customize a Personal Emergency Plan
- Keep track of Disaster Supply Kits
- View KNOW YOUR ZONE evacuation maps
- Obtain emergency strobe light & alert whistle
- Share your location with emergency contacts

Updates on Infrastructure

Over 500,000 power outages are continuing to be repaired. Thousands of line workers are working

around the clock to repair these lines.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation continues to focus on cleanup efforts throughout the state. Crews are working around the clock to clear roadways and get South Carolina back to normal.

Despite anxiety about the state's dams and waterways, the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) Dam Safety Team has assessed the condition of 149 state-regulated dams and there are no significant issues reported or observed.

Businesses are encouraged to contact the ESF 24 desk (803-737-8524 or esf24@emd.sc.gov) for assistance and to report damage. Please also report damages to your insurance provider as soon as possible. If you're having trouble reaching your company or agent, please call the SC DOI Office of Consumer Services for assistance at 1-800-768-3467.

For questions about the state's Hurricane Helene response, call the South Carolina 24-hour Public Information Phone System at 866-246-0133. United Way's 2-1-1 is a free hotline that provides information to individuals seeking community

resources like shelter, food and water, recovery support, and other basic needs, before, during, and after disasters. The service is available in 180 languages 24/7 by simply dialing 2-1-1 or visiting sc211.org.

Individuals in Aiken, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, and Spartanburg Counties can apply with FEMA in the following ways:

- Apply online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.
- Constituents may call the application phone number at 1-800-621-3362 (TTY: 800-462-7585).

Even if your county is not currently on the list of approved counties to receive disaster assistance, it may still be added by FEMA later if it has incurred widespread destruction. If you have sustained losses, you may apply for disaster assistance before your county is added to the list at this website: www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

If you need free damage clean-up assistance call Crisis Cleanup at 844-965-1386. Volunteers may be able to assist with:

- Mucking out
- Cleaning up trees
- Tarping roofs
- Clearing debris

If power and WIFI continue to be issues for you in your home or temporary shelters, please visit your local library. South Carolina's libraries offer computer access, WIFI, printing capabilities, access to resources, entertainment for your children, and much more for free.

Volunteers will be needed for months and even years. Explore all volunteer and donation opportunities through the South Carolina Emergency Management Division at <https://www.scmd.org/recover/volunteer-and-donate/>.

Child care providers in South Carolina can continue to work with their SC Child Care Resource and Referral Quality Coaches for guidance on assisting their communities, rebuilding businesses, and dealing with stress during a state-wide crisis.

If you are an SC child care provider and you haven't worked with SC CCR&R to strengthen your child care business, please visit <https://sc-ccrr.org> to gain Technical Assistance, business guidance, and free resources and training.