



**RON DESANTIS**  
GOVERNOR

August 30, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Through: Robert Samaan, Acting Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region IV  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
3005 Chamblee-Tucker Road  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: Request for Major Disaster Declaration  
Hurricane Idalia

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), as implemented by 44 C.F.R. §206.36, I request that you issue a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Florida as a result of Hurricane Idalia and authorize and make available all programs under Individual Assistance, Public Assistance Category A (debris removal), Public Assistance Category B (emergency protective measures), Direct Federal Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation. This request is timely under 44 C.F.R. §206.36(a).

Based upon updated forecasts and modeling, I request a Major Disaster Declaration for Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Franklin, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Hillsborough, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Levy, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Sumter, Suwanee, Taylor, Union, and Wakulla Counties in the State of Florida. I request Direct Federal Assistance ("DFA"), Public Assistance Category A (debris removal), Public Assistance Category B (emergency protective measures), Hazard Mitigation, and all available programs under Individual Assistance because the severity and destruction of Hurricane Idalia extends well beyond the capability of the State of Florida and affected tribal and local governments in Florida.

## **I. Current Situation and Forecasted Meteorological Impacts**

At 7:45 AM EDT on August 30, 2023, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) reported that Hurricane Idalia made landfall near Keaton Beach, Florida, in Taylor County as a Category 3 hurricane with winds of 125 mph. Only a few hours before landfall, Idalia reached a peak intensity of 130 mph, which is a Category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale. Hurricane Idalia is one of two major hurricanes in recorded history to make landfall in the Florida Big Bend. The only other major hurricane to make landfall within 50 miles of Keaton Beach was an unnamed hurricane in 1896 that made landfall at Cedar Key. Forecasts from the National Hurricane Center indicated a risk to Florida from catastrophic storm surge, strong winds, flash flooding, hazardous seas, and tornadic activity, including areas still recovering from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole.

Hurricane Warnings were in effect for the aforementioned 25 Florida Counties, with Tropical Storm Warnings in effect for an additional 20 Florida Counties. Initial wind readings from automated weather stations across the state report peak sustained winds of 60 mph in Tampa, 62 mph in Crystal River, 72 mph in Horseshoe Beach (before instrumentation failed), 52 mph in St. Marks, 60 mph in Madison (before instrumentation failed), and 62 mph in Perry. Peak reported wind gusts of 85 mph were observed in Perry, 86 mph in Madison (before instrumentation failed) and 81 mph in Horseshoe Beach (before instrumentation failed).

The Florida Gulf Coast, particularly Apalachee Bay, is prone to damaging storm surge from hurricanes. Evacuation orders were in place for Franklin, Jefferson, Wakulla, Levy, Gulf, Taylor, Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, and Dixie Counties due to the forecast potential for inundation as high as 16 feet. Coastal flooding was reported as far south as Collier County where storm surge values of 2-4 inches were observed between Naples and Tampa Bay and resulted in submerged roads and some inundation of structures. North of Tampa Bay and into Apalachee Bay, storm surge values of 4-8 feet were observed by NOAA tide station gauges, with an initial peak value of 8.03 inches on the Steinhatchee River gauge located 2.58 miles upstream from the Gulf of Mexico. Higher than normal tides will continue along the entire Florida Gulf Coast for the next 12-24 hours due to the orientation of the winds combined with the “Super Blue” moon tidal influence which could exacerbate local coastal flooding and prolong exposure of structures to water.

Rainfall amounts of 5-10 inches have been estimated by radar to have occurred across the central and eastern Big Bend between Tallahassee and Lake City, while rainfall amounts of 2-7 inches were estimated to have occurred across much of western Central Florida and southwestern Florida. These rainfall amounts are likely to cause rises on area rivers and River Flood Warnings are in effect for the Suwannee, Santa Fe, St. Mary’s, Alafia, St. Marks, and Ochlockonee Rivers as rises are expected to occur over the next 5 days and crest in minor to moderate flood stage.

Multiple counties are currently conducting search and rescue efforts. Initial communications indicate that most of the coastal counties, from Taylor to Pinellas, and including several east of the Big Bend, have suffered significant flooding in hundreds of homes.

## **II. Effective Response and Recovery is Beyond the Capability of the State and Affected Local Governments – 44 C.F.R. §206.36(b)(1)**

Hurricane Idalia is expected to continue impacting much of the State and its local resources. Meanwhile, the State of Florida is still responding to the catastrophic impacts of Hurricane Ian with over 1,100 survivors in State administered non-congregate shelters (travel trailer units), in addition to other ongoing recovery efforts. The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) alone has expended more than \$3 billion in responding to Hurricane Ian.

Hurricane Ian resulted in the largest housing mission in the State's history and over \$8 billion has already been approved in Federal grants, disaster loans, and flood insurance payments. Additionally, the State Legislature appropriated almost \$1 billion of funding to directly assist local governments with statewide recovery efforts for the 2022 hurricanes. Over half of the counties listed above are fiscally constrained.

### **Debris Estimates**

United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Hurricane Idalia Advisory #13 shows an estimate of over 250 thousand cubic yards of debris resulting from initially impacted counties. Through discussions with USACE and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff at the SEOC, we have determined that estimated costs for this debris removal will easily exceed millions of dollars. As the hurricane's impacts have been felt across the state, these very preliminary figures will dramatically increase due to riverine flooding and sustained tropical force winds.

### **Uninsured Home and Personal Property Losses**

As the State's population continues to grow, so too does the demand for homeowner's insurance. However, with more and more providers exiting the marketplace (according to the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR), over a dozen firms that provide homeowners' insurance in the State have become insolvent in the past two years), the decrease in supply leads to higher rates for consumers. According to the Insurance Information Institute (III), Florida homeowners are projected to pay an average of more than \$4,000 per year on insurance, nearly three times the U.S. average. Because of this, many Floridians are left uninsured.

OIR also reports that in 2021, Florida accounted for 76 percent of all homeowners' insurance lawsuits nationwide. Since Hurricane Ian in 2022, the insurance market in Florida has changed dramatically. As of June 28, 2023, OIR reports "insured" losses from the storm were up to \$17.2 billion. Statewide, claims have increased to 739,771. Of those, 103,196 remain open and 190,956 have been closed with no payment from insurance companies.

## Office of Insurance Regulation Catastrophic Claims Report

Total Estimated Insured Losses: \$17,277,226,813

*OIR required insurers report estimated and paid losses. Estimated or case incurred losses include indemnity case reserves and payments to date.*

Lines of Business	Number of Claims Reported	Number of Open Claims with Payment	Number of Open Claims without Payment	Number of Claims Closed with Payment	Number of Claims Closed without Payment	Percent of Claims Closed
<b>Residential Property</b>	521,819	58,103	23,818	287,021	152,877	84.3%
<i>Homeowners</i>	422,514	47,118	20,566	223,705	131,125	84.0%
<i>Dwelling</i>	54,894	6,924	2,680	30,565	14,725	82.5%
<i>Mobile Homeowners</i>	41,353	3,525	265	31,416	6,147	90.8%
<i>Commercial Residential</i>	3,058	536	307	1,335	880	72.4%
<b>Commercial Property</b>	34,589	6,858	7,828	8,324	11,579	57.5%
Private Flood	4,919	700	196	2,798	1,225	81.8%
Business Interruption	562	57	51	346	108	80.8%
Other Lines of Business*	177,882	2,613	2,972	147,130	25,167	96.9%
<b>TOTALS</b>	739,771	68,331	34,865	445,619	190,956	86.1%

*Data as of June 28, 2023*

### **Additional Economic Factors Affecting Individuals and Families & Disaster Impacted Population Profile**

Average consumer prices in the United States have risen 3.2% over the past year. This increase has not only affected the cost of household goods, but also rent and construction materials, which in Florida have increased exponentially above the Consumer Price Index. Hurricane Idalia's landfall in Florida could significantly contribute to economic disparity and slow recovery in the impacted area due to the inability to purchase necessary supplies, the inability to rapidly rehouse renters, and the inability to repair residential structures.

Hurricane Idalia's path placed the cone over some of Florida's most rural communities in Columbia, Taylor, Dixie, and Levy Counties. Much of the economic engine of Florida's Big Bend hinges on careful management and the preservation of natural resources for both agriculture and

recreation. A major Hurricane is likely to disrupt or cause significant hardship for those who live and work in these areas. Additionally, the disaster impacted population profile for all counties in the State of Florida can be located on the table to the right.

### Impact to Community Infrastructure

Within the evacuation zones of Hurricane Idalia’s impact area, there are hundreds of critical facilities. These facilities include both public and private infrastructure and serve a wide gamut of community needs for emergency services, medical care, childcare, recreation, government function, mass transit, and utilities.

Hurricane Idalia’s landfall as a major storm event is likely to bring widespread damage or destruction to many of these critical facilities. For the populations who rely upon these facilities every day, impacts and suffering will be felt immediately.

### Casualties

While the exact figures will not be known until search and rescue is completed, the landfall of Hurricane Idalia is likely to bring with it loss of life. Despite intense efforts by emergency services to preserve life and safety and message protective actions, in 2022 alone, over 175 confirmed deaths were attributed to US hurricanes, and 145 of those were attributed to Hurricane Ian.

### Historic Event Comparison

Hurricane Idalia is expected to make landfall less than one (1) year after Hurricane Ian impacted the State. As the costliest hurricane in Florida history and third costliest in United States history with damages estimated at over \$112 billion, the state is still actively engaged in recovery efforts.

For reference, to date Hurricane Ian saw almost 912,000 valid applications for FEMA Individual Assistance with a combined total of \$1,131,512,858 in

Statewide Profile - United States Census Bureau						
County	Total Population Estimate (July 2022)	Persons Under 18 years	Persons 65 years of Age or Older	Persons With a Disability <65 years, Percent	Persons In Poverty, Percent	Estimated # of Mobile Homes
Alachua	284,030	49,989	44,024	7.7%	19.1%	9,557
Baker	27,803	6,839	4,198	10.1%	16.1%	3,671
Bay	185,134	38,507	34,249	15.2%	13.9%	13,133
Bradford	27,313	5,653	5,244	14.3%	19.1%	3,621
Brevard	630,693	112,894	155,847	11.2%	11.3%	21,170
Broward	1,947,036	404,677	352,413	6.6%	12.8%	23,112
Calhoun	13,464	2,733	2,598	16.7%	20.6%	2,311
Charlotte	202,661	23,711	82,280	15.1%	10.9%	11,841
Citrus	162,529	23,729	59,160	14.7%	15.5%	17,968
Clay	226,589	51,209	39,199	10.0%	8.0%	10,312
Collier	397,994	64,475	133,725	5.8%	10.4%	10,696
Columbia	71,908	15,675	14,669	15.2%	16.5%	10,548
DeSoto	35,312	6,285	8,157	23.1%	25.5%	4,426
Dixie	17,124	3,099	4,281	18.9%	23.4%	4,705
Duval	1,016,536	225,670	156,546	9.3%	14.9%	18,976
Escambia	324,878	67,249	58,478	12.1%	18.5%	9,984
Flagler	126,705	20,272	39,785	9.2%	10.3%	2,418
Franklin	12,498	1,874	3,361	14.4%	21.0%	1,854
Gadsden	43,403	9,418	8,724	14.4%	25.8%	5,799
Gilchrist	18,992	3,912	3,988	12.6%	15.3%	3,790
Glades	12,454	1,668	3,462	11.8%	19.2%	3,606
Gulf	15,314	2,557	3,614	17.4%	15.7%	1,926
Hamilton	13,217	2,735	2,167	13.3%	25.7%	2,518
Hardee	25,645	6,462	4,205	8.2%	21.9%	2,762
Hendry	41,339	10,376	5,580	8.7%	21.7%	5,846
Hernando	206,896	38,068	54,620	13.4%	12.0%	14,492
Highlands	105,618	17,532	38,233	13.1%	15.1%	14,161
Hillsborough	1,513,301	325,359	228,508	7.9%	14.3%	40,307
Holmes	19,651	4,008	3,989	14.6%	20.0%	2,877
Indian River	167,352	24,768	58,907	9.5%	11.7%	6,141
Jackson	48,211	8,967	10,124	13.3%	20.6%	6,284
Jefferson	15,042	2,527	3,670	9.9%	16.4%	2,462
Lafayette	7,786	1,502	1,487	12.8%	18.9%	1,463
Lake	410,139	77,106	109,917	10.3%	10.0%	29,454
Lee	822,453	138,994	240,978	8.3%	12.2%	36,778
Leon	297,369	54,418	44,307	8.5%	16.2%	10,204
Levy	45,260	8,735	11,586	14.9%	18.8%	10,055
Liberty	7,603	1,315	1,284	17.6%	23.1%	1,679
Madison	18,198	3,293	4,076	9.7%	21.8%	3,534
Manatee	429,125	73,380	124,017	8.8%	9.9%	29,337
Marion	396,415	73,733	114,960	10.2%	13.6%	34,754
Martin	162,006	25,596	52,975	8.1%	11.4%	7,755
Miami-Dade	2,673,837	529,419	458,899	5.8%	15.2%	13,070
Monroe	81,708	12,664	19,855	6.1%	11.0%	6,849
Nassau	97,899	18,796	23,495	12.3%	9.9%	6,930
Okaloosa	216,482	48,059	36,152	11.3%	9.7%	5,208
Okeechobee	40,412	8,809	8,324	11.9%	20.9%	6,967
Orange	1,452,726	306,525	191,759	8.1%	14.9%	19,726
Osceola	422,545	100,565	56,621	10.6%	13.3%	11,179
Palm Beach	1,518,477	282,436	382,656	7.0%	11.6%	19,012
Pasco	608,794	122,367	134,543	11.3%	11.6%	46,795
Pinellas	961,739	146,184	255,822	10.0%	12.3%	47,017
Polk	787,404	171,654	154,331	10.3%	15.6%	62,122
Putnam	74,731	15,693	18,084	18.0%	26.3%	16,179
Santa Rosa	198,268	43,024	33,309	10.8%	8.9%	7,484
Sarasota	462,286	63,333	174,281	8.2%	8.6%	11,853
Seminole	478,772	97,669	79,954	7.1%	9.4%	7,664
St. Johns	306,841	65,357	65,050	7.0%	6.3%	21,817
St. Lucie	358,704	69,947	88,599	9.9%	11.4%	5,321
Sumter	144,970	10,292	83,357	10.3%	9.5%	10,833
Suwannee	45,411	9,445	10,035	16.6%	20.6%	9,971
Taylor	21,283	4,405	4,682	18.7%	20.1%	3,558
Union	15,460	3,463	2,458	13.0%	22.7%	2,124
Volusia	579,192	100,200	147,693	11.8%	13.8%	22,640
Wakulla	35,178	7,281	5,874	9.4%	10.1%	3,673
Walton	83,304	16,910	17,077	11.7%	12.4%	6,887
Washington	25,514	5,128	4,643	13.9%	19.2%	4,167
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,244,933</b>	<b>4,300,594</b>	<b>4,792,145</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>837,333</b>

Individuals and Households Program (IHP) assistance approved for Floridians.

Based on a combination of changing economic conditions, statewide increases in population, and the forecast severity of this event, the State of Florida believes Hurricane Idalia will bring an even greater need for Federal aid.

**III. Federal Emergency Assistance Is Necessary to Supplement the Efforts and Available Resources of the State, Local Governments, Disaster Relief Organizations, and Compensation by Insurance for Disaster-Related Losses – 44 C.F.R. §206.36(b)(2)**

Due to the impacts that we have received, is projected that Direct Federal Assistance will be necessary to support the activities noted below in section IV. This system experienced rapid intensification, and assistance from the USACE and Urban Search & Rescue was expected and has been staged. However, the extent of such resource needs is currently unknown.

Over the past five (5) years, several multi-million-dollar, and in some cases multi-billion-dollar, emergency events have affected every jurisdiction in the State of Florida. In the historic 2018 hurricane season, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend Area received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Michael (DR 4399-FL), a Category 5 hurricane. State agencies expended over \$140.9 million in support of local jurisdictions and individual survivors. The FEMA Public Assistance Field Staff estimates that it will obligate over \$3.2 billion for this event, with almost \$2.4 billion obligated thus far. In 2019, a state of emergency was declared for Hurricane Dorian (DR 4468-FL). Although exact costs are still being formulated, the State estimates that the total obligated amounts will be over \$181.3 million, with almost \$102 million currently awarded.

For the COVID-19 Pandemic/Public Health Emergency impacts, approximately \$2.6 billion is currently awarded, while costs are still being formulated by applicants. An additional Major Disaster (DR 4564-FL) was declared because of Hurricane Sally in the midst of the pandemic. Current obligations of eligible work have exceeded \$185 million with many projects still in formulation.

**IV. State Actions Taken – 44 C.F.R. §206.36(c)(1)**

On August 26, 2023, in preparation for Invest 93L, now Hurricane Idalia, I issued Executive Order 23-171, which directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the State's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in accordance with section 252.36(10), Florida Statutes, and Section 302(c) of the Stafford Act.

I directed the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and FDEM coordinated preparation and response measures across the State. On August 28, 2023, I issued Executive Order No. 23-172 and on August 29, 2023, I issued Executive Orders 23-174 and 23-175, amending Executive Order 23-171 to include additional counties in the State of Florida.

**V. State and Local Resources Committed to Alleviate the Results of the Disaster – 44  
C.F.R. § 206.36(c)(3)**

FDEM gathered resource needs from threatened counties and mobilized logistic staging areas for critical resources, such as water, food, pumps, generators, and other disaster support materials, but also for personal protective equipment should the need for sheltering operations be identified. FDEM also identified non-congregate sheltering (NCS) options for counties who have a need to shelter those vulnerable populations. Volunteer agency resources are being coordinated as well but have not fully recovered from recent events. Multiple counties have initiated sandbag operations, declared local states of emergency, and identified general population and special needs shelters. FDEM's Logistics Section has instituted the quote process for the following needs:

- 1 Type II response package
- 10 Type III sanitation packages
- 15 (8-stall) restroom trailers
- 10 HVAC strike teams
- 15 Type III pod equipment packages
- 60 semis
- 120 53-foot trailers
- 10 box trucks

**Completed requests (34 Missions):**

- 24 pallets of water sent to Pinellas Hope Homeless shelter
- 1 truckload of MREs sent to Madison County
- 1 pallet of tarps to Union County
- 24 pallets of water and 24 pallets of MREs to Midwest Foodbank
- 2 truckloads of MREs to Alachua County
- 2 truckloads of water to Alachua County
- 2 truckloads of water to Suwanee County
- 2 pallets of tarps to Taylor County
- 4 pallets of tarps to Suwanee County
- 10 pallets of tarps to Hillsborough County
- 10 pallets of water to Marion County
- 1 truckload of water to Levy County
- 1 forklift to Dixie County
- 1 truckload of water to Putnam County
- 5 pallets of MREs to Taylor County
- 10 pallets of water to Bradford County
- 2 pallets of water and 2 pallets of MREs to Baker County
- 1 truckload of water to Dixie County
- 3 truckloads of water to Hillsborough County
- 2 pallets of tarps to Lafayette County
- 1 truckload of water to Pasco County
- 1 truckload of water to Gilchrist County
- 1 pallet of tarps to Jefferson County

- 4 truckloads of water in Hernando County
- 10 pallets of water in Wakulla County

The State of Florida is currently sheltering 1,161 households in travel trailers and recreational vehicles under the Hurricane Ian Non-Congregate Sheltering program. Due to the vulnerable nature of this form of sheltering, the state and local jurisdictions prepared for increased capacity in congregate sheltering to absorb this population if conditions warrant. Occupants in this program were required to evacuate their unit if a voluntary or mandatory evacuation was issued for their location. FDEM closely monitored local evacuations and communicated to occupants through multiple methods.

Furthermore, the following actions were taken in the State's response by the different sections and branches of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC):

### **Infrastructure Branch**

#### **ESF 1/3 Transportation**

- Florida Department Of Transportation (FDOT) readied equipment and vehicles in case of the need for pre-staging and immediate deployment.
- The Howard Frankland Bridge project in Tampa secured barges in the area. All other active construction projects were on alert and standing ready to implement any necessary actions related to storm preparations.
- Port Tampa Bay, Seaport Manatee, and Port of St. Petersburg secured port infrastructure and clearing waterways.
- FDOT issued an Executive Order to temporarily allow expanded weight and size requirements for vehicles transporting emergency equipment, services, and supplies.
- Florida's 511 Traveler Information System was available for drivers to stay informed about roadway conditions during emergencies. This service was monitored and updated 24/7 by FDOT and includes traffic conditions, road and bridge closures, and other specialized alerts.

#### **ESF 2 Communication**

- Monitored MyFloridaNet (MFN II) Data Network and responded to any outages or service disruptions accordingly.
- Coordinated Dixie County two-way radio mission request.
- 50 Starlinks were moved from the Orlando warehouse for staging outside the cone and deployment as requested post-landfall.

#### **ESF 12 Power**

- Identified personnel and resources being staged for deployment.

#### **ESF 19 Emergency Fuel**



- Terminal contaminated unleaded tanks by erroneously pumping a barge resupply of diesel into unleaded tank farm causing this terminal to cease operations.
  - Contamination happened around 8:00am on 08/26/23.
  - FDACS tracked to find which stores received contaminated fuel.
- Macro also had bulk potable water tanks which the state used in response to Hurricane Ian that were available if needed.
- Due to the possibility of gale force winds (34-47 knots) entering the Tampa Bay area, the Captain of the Port (COTP) ordered Port Condition ZULU for the ports of Tampa, St. Petersburg, Manatee, and Ft. Myers effective on 08/29/23, at 0800.
- COTP continued to evaluate weather predictions for the region.

### **Emergency Service Branch**

#### **ESF 4/9 Search and Rescue**

- All 8 State of Florida US&R teams were activated/rostered NLT 08/29/23 1200 as outlined below—alerts sent out by 1700 hrs.
  - FL-TF1 and FL-TF2: Type 1 w/Swift Water capability (Activated-repositioned and staged pre-storm at the OCC by 1800 hrs on 08/29/2023).
  - FL-TF3,4,6: Type 3 w/ Swift Water capability (Activated-Remained in place).
  - FL-TF5: Type 2 with ERAT resources/Swift Water capability (Activated-Remained in place).
  - FL-TF7/ FL-TF8 Type 4 w/ Swift Water capability. (Activated-Remained in place).
  - MARC Units: x3 paired with parent teams from 4/5 and 7.
  - MARC Unit x1 assigned to the OCC in support of the State IST (NOTE: FEMA activated RED IST and 2 Type 3s w/ swift water on FOS orders).
  - Coordinated with FNG, ESF 8, ESF 16 and other ESFs as appropriate.
  - Scott Chappell collaborated with/ FLNG and assist agencies in drafting a post-impact ADSAR plan. Also, liaised with the US Coast Guard as warranted.
  - FFS Gold Complex IMT/State IST/FEMA IST operated out of the OCC.

#### **ESF 8 Health and Medical**

- Rostered 6 strikes teams which included 30 ambulances.
- AHCA coordinated with all residential healthcare facilities including hospitals.
- Activated Special Needs Sheltering Branch to monitor special needs shelter openings.
- Received reports from county health departments on response activities and actions taken.
- AHCA update:
  - 1 Hospital evacuated in North Pinellas (Advent Health).

- 8 strike teams staged in Dothan, AL (ALS, BLS, Critical Care Transport Units) will be moving to Marianna.
- Requested 6 strike teams from EMAC.
- Requested national FEMA ambulance contract: 200 (120 ALS and 80 BLS) ambulances, 2 Type VI-ADA Transit buses, 4 Type V-Minibuses, 2 Type III-Transit buses, and 5 Type II- minibuses paratransit vehicles.
- 6 strike teams that were in Ocala moved to Orlando.
- Activated Tallahassee and Kissimmee warehouses.

## **ESF 10 Environmental Protection**

- ESF10 fully staffed w/EPA Rep.
- HazWaste: DWM contacted Identified Facilities and Remediation Sites on protective actions.
- WATERTracker Event created.
- Division Specific Guidance Documents were uploaded to WebEOC as Info Messages.
- Dam Safety Press Release sent out 8/28 to Counties listed in EO.
- HART: Completed call to determine Responder Teams and Identified Teams.
- DWRM: Water Rep coordinated ESF3 staffing.
- Facilities within the current Cone:
  - Priority 1 Haz Waste: 25
  - Priority 2 Haz Waste: 51
  - Potable Water (PWS): 2,208
  - Wastewater (WAFR): 587
- Facilities within the Cat 4 Storm Surge Zone and within the Cone:
  - Priority 1 Haz Waste: 7
  - Priority 2 Haz Waste: 23
  - PWS: 235
  - WAFR: 129
- State Parks in Potential Cone of Impact: 74
  - List of Park Closures: 66
- Gypsum Stack:
  - Statewide: 15
  - At Action Level: 2
  - May Treat: 1
  - Must Treat: 0

## **ESF 16 Law Enforcement**

- The Florida Highway Patrol was in close communication with law enforcement and transportation partners and stood ready to assist with any potential impacts across the state.
- The Florida Highway Patrol staffed the SEOC coordinating preparation efforts for Hurricane Idalia.
- The Florida Highway Patrol was prepared to implement 12-hour Alpha, Bravo shifts.

## **Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV)**

FLHSMV issued Emergency Order 082623, waiving specific requirements for commercial motor vehicles providing emergency relief and waiving the replacement fees for driver's license and identification credentials, vehicle registrations and titles, vessel registrations and titles, and temporary parking permits for impacted individuals.

## **Human Services Branch**

### **ESF 6 Mass Care**

- Continuing to determine resource needs, inventory, and staging for mass care resources & feeding operations.
- Department of Children and Families prepared HOPE Navigators for deployment.
- Midwest Food Bank delivered water and Gatorade to Lee County barrier islands.
- Mobilizing 10 kitchens for hot meal distribution.
- Sheltering Operations: 94 shelters open with over 5,000 survivors and over 100 pets sheltered.

### **American Red Cross**

- American Red Cross assigned over 580 responders to the incident, with additional being assigned as needed.
- American Red Cross Logistics continued to coordinate the shelter support trailers and meals ready to eat in support of sheltering and immediate post-landfall operations.
- American Red Cross liaisons coordinated with local county emergency management to align planning activities.

### **The Salvation Army**

- Canvassed the state for canteen units and canteen drive.

## **Department of Children and Families**

- Preparing to deploy DCF assets to the disaster area including Hope Navigators to support Family Resource Support Centers, Disaster Recovery Centers, shelter transition teams, and DSNAP.
- DCF Regions and Mental Health Treatment Facilities are finalizing preparation plans to ensure safety of staff, residents, and children in care.

## **Department of Education (DOE)**

- DOE is gathering and disseminating public K-12, college, and university closure information. This includes asking if they are being used as shelters and when they will reopen.

## **State University System**

- Gathering information on university closure plans and procedures.

## **ESF 11 Food and Water**

- Received authorization to release USDA foods to Red Cross and Salvation Army for congregate feeding.
- Generating Damage Projections.

## **ESF 13 Military Support**

- Mobilized up to 5,000 Florida National Guard (FLNG) personnel.
- Pre-positioned aircraft.

## **ESF 15 Volunteers and Donations**

- Active coordination with VOAD partners.
- Active coordination with Florida CERT Association.
- Consistent messaging: Cash, Confirm, Connect: Confirm the need. Cash is best. Connect with organization before volunteering or donating.
- Communication and emphasis on documentation of all donated resources and volunteer hours.
- Gathered and connected resources with statewide partners.
- Communicated Disaster Leave Law available for State employees.
- Active coordination with local ESF15 leads.
- Coordinating with ESF14 to monitor social media, coordinate messaging for spontaneous volunteers to register at Volunteer Connect.
- Browse Volunteer Connect for opportunities.

## **ESF 17 Animals and Agriculture**

- Monitoring requests for Florida Forest Service assets.
- Activating the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART).
- Activated the ESF 17 IMT.
- The Animal Movement Waiver to temporarily suspend the intrastate movement requirements for the transportation of animals from the areas expected to be impacted by Hurricane Idalia was coordinated for issuance by the Division of Animal Industry. Still coordinating the waiver for interstate import requirements for Florida for pets and livestock into Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.
- The FDOT weight waiver is being coordinated for agricultural commodities.
- Continuing to map a preliminary needs assessment of potential affected animal and agricultural facilities for impacted areas.

## **ESF 18 Business, Industry & Economic Stabilization**

- FloridaCommerce alerted the statewide Community Action Agency (CAA) Network and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to initiate disaster preparedness activities.
  - LWDBs and CAAs were advised to submit their anticipated cash needs or invoice packages for reimbursement, as appropriate, to ensure critical services to Floridians are not disrupted.
- FloridaCommerce hosted a daily private sector coordination call from 2:00-3:00 p.m., Eastern Time, beginning Monday, August 28, 2023. Briefings provided by SERT Meteorology, fuels, communications, transportation, and energy, as well as private sector partners such as the Florida Retail Federation and Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association.
- [www.FloridaDisaster.biz](http://www.FloridaDisaster.biz) houses informative flyers for business owners to prepare their businesses, families, and employees for Hurricane Idalia.
- FloridaCommerce is in contact with local ESF 18 representatives in the anticipated impacted areas to support economic resiliency in their communities.
- FloridaCommerce partners, including Walmart, Publix, Avis, Waze, and LE Harris have indicated that they are monitoring and preparing their employees for potential impacts.
- Wells Fargo is ensuring banking services remain available to Floridians.

## **Operations Section**

### **Field Operations**

- Regional Coordinators are reporting essential elements of information from county EOCs and coordinating potential unmet needs.
- FDEM SERT Liaisons pre-positioned in County EOCs.

## **Local Evacuation Orders**

- Multiple County EOCs relocated operations to alternate locations.
- Mandatory Evacuations were issued for the following Counties: Citrus, Dixie, Franklin, Gulf, Hillsborough, Lafayette, Levy, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota, Suwannee, Taylor.
- Voluntary Evacuations were issued for the following Counties: Baker, Gilchrist, Hernando, Jefferson, Madison, Marion, Sumter, Union, Volusia, Wakulla.

## **VI. Certification of Compliance with Applicable Cost-Sharing Requirements – 44 C.F.R. § 206.36(c)(5)**

I certify that State and local government obligations and expenditures for the current disaster will comply with all applicable cost sharing requirements of the Stafford Act.

## **VII. Field Damage Assessments Are Not Necessary to Determine the Requirement for Supplemental Federal Assistance Because the Disaster Is a Catastrophe of Unusual Severity and Magnitude – 44 C.F.R. §206.36(d)**

For this disaster, there is no need for damage assessments. The destruction anticipated from this major hurricane with up to 15 feet of storm surge should be more than sufficient to satisfy any arbitrary, per capita threshold for State or county damages. As mentioned above, this system posed a significant risk of catastrophic storm surge, strong winds, flash flooding, hazardous seas, and tornadic activity for much of the Florida Gulf Coast and northern Florida. In short, this area of the state near Apalachee Bay has not experienced a major hurricane strike in over 100 years and Hurricane Idalia is likely to cause massive devastation of these coastal communities.

Hurricane Warnings were issued for the aforementioned 25 Florida Counties, and Hurricane Idalia made landfall as a major hurricane. The Florida Gulf Coast, particularly Apalachee Bay, is prone to damaging storm surge from hurricanes that could result in evacuations from several coastal counties and inundation that may move several miles inland. This event is expected to result in historical damages for these communities. Moreover, the combination of heavy rainfall and storm surge may result in rapid river rises which could last for weeks.

To date, the total amount of Federal obligations for Hurricane Ian has almost reached the CY 2022 per capita threshold of \$3,489,186,294. This threshold is calculated using the Federal obligations from Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, Mitigation, and Operations. With the vast number of expected survivors that would qualify for Individual Assistance and the exponentially higher expectations of infrastructure damage, it is reasonable to estimate that the Federal obligation for this event exceeds the current per capita thresholds necessary for an increased Federal Cost Share. Furthermore, the needs of the survivors in those counties should paint a sufficient picture for an Individual Assistance declaration.

Consequently, the risk that a lightly impacted county would receive unnecessary Federal assistance is minimal, at best. Given these considerations, damage assessments would be a clear waste of resources during a time of critical need.

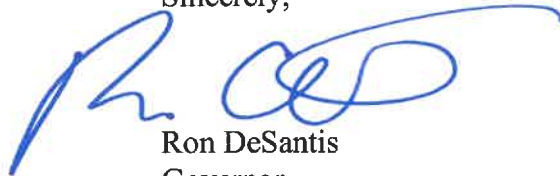
**VIII. The Disaster Is So Extraordinary That a Higher Federal Cost Share Is Warranted – 44 C.F.R. §206.47(d)**

More than half of the counties identified in this request are fiscally constrained. Given the size, strength, and track of the storm, and given the fact that Florida communities are still recovering from multiple events from the last five (5) years to include Hurricane Michael, Hurricane Dorian, Hurricane Ian, and Hurricane Nicole, I specifically request the following: 100% Federal cost share for Categories A and B (Debris Removal and Emergency Protective Measures) for the first 60 days, with a 90% Federal cost share thereafter.

**IX. Conclusion**

I have designated Kevin Guthrie, Executive Director of FDEM, as the State Coordinating Officer for this emergency. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests, or justification on my behalf. I have designated Kevin Guthrie, Luke Strickland, James Bujeda, and Keith Pruett as the Governor's Authorized Representatives.

Sincerely,



Ron DeSantis  
Governor

Enclosures:

Executive Orders 23-171, 23-172, 23-174 and 23-175  
FEMA Form 010-0-13