



IRS employees help Hurricane Helene efforts; 500 phone assistants supporting FEMA, Criminal Investigation agents work on rescue efforts in North Carolina, Florida

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WASHINGTON – As part of efforts to help victims of Hurricane Helene, the Internal Revenue Service is taking special steps to provide more than 500 employees to help with the [Federal Emergency Management Agency's \(FEMA\)](#) disaster relief call lines and sending IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) agents into devastated areas to help with search and rescue efforts and other relief work.

Earlier this week, the IRS assigned more than 500 customer service representatives from Dallas and Philadelphia to help FEMA phone operations. The IRS employees answer the FEMA calls and intake initial information to help disaster victims get federal relief.

For nearly 20 years, the IRS has stepped in to help FEMA during national emergencies by providing help on phone lines during peak demand periods following hurricanes and other disasters. During the past decade, more than 10,000 IRS phone assistants have helped FEMA call centers, answering more than 1.6 million calls from storm survivors seeking help.

IRS Criminal Investigation is also continuing its long-standing practice to help during disaster situations. A team of 16 special agents from across the country were initially deployed last week to the Tampa area to help with search and rescue teams. During the weekend, the IRS team moved to North Carolina to assist with door-to-door search efforts. As part of this work, the IRS-CI agents are also assisting FEMA with security and protection for relief teams and their equipment.

On Tuesday, the Internal Revenue Service announced other help to assist taxpayers hit by Helene.

The IRS announced [disaster tax relief](#) for all individuals and businesses affected by Hurricane Helene, including the entire states of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina and parts of Florida, Tennessee and Virginia.

Taxpayers in these areas now have until May 1, 2025, to file various federal individual and business tax returns and make tax payments. Among other things, this includes 2024 individual and business returns normally due during March and April 2025, 2023 individual and corporate returns with valid extensions and quarterly estimated tax payments.

The IRS is offering relief to any area designated by FEMA. Besides all of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, this currently includes 41 counties in Florida, eight counties in Tennessee and six counties and one city in Virginia.

Individuals and households that reside or have a business in any one of these localities qualify for tax relief. The same relief will be available to other states and localities that receive FEMA disaster declarations related to Hurricane Helene. The current list of eligible localities is always available on the [Tax relief in disaster situations](#) page on IRS.gov.

In addition, in response to disruptions resulting from Hurricane Helene, the IRS will not impose a penalty when dyed diesel fuel with a sulfur content that does not exceed 15 parts-per-million is sold for use or used on the highway throughout Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina and in the several counties in Florida, Tennessee and Virginia. More details are available in a [special news release](#).