



Hurricane Harvey Relief Efforts

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Executive Commissioner

Health and Human Services
Commission



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Interim Charge

Examine the use of federal funds by state agencies responding to the effects of Harvey and identify opportunities to maximize the use of federal funds to reduce the impact of future natural disasters. Also identify the need for state resources to respond to Hurricane Harvey relief and recovery efforts, as well as opportunities for state investment in infrastructure projects that will reduce the impact of future natural disasters.



Immediate Impact of Hurricane Harvey

- SNAP recipients in affected counties had their September benefits automatically loaded onto their Lone Star Card early.
- Behavioral health professionals were deployed to provide support for first responders and impacted Texans.
- HHSC inspected and responded to affected nursing facilities and assisted living facilities.
- HHSC evacuated 213 residents and 205 staff from the Corpus Christi SSLC.
- HHSC provided ice and water to impacted counties.
- HHSC temporarily closed more than 115 offices, many of which sustained water damage.
- HHSC staff in affected counties were given up to five days of leave if their homes were flooded.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery Activities

FEMA Grants

- FEMA determines eligibility and award amounts for individuals who evacuated or whose property was damaged by Hurricane Harvey.
- FEMA pays 75 percent of costs and the state is responsible for providing the 25 percent match.
- HHSC has processed more than 200,000 grant applications, totaling about \$300 million in All Funds.



Federal Flexibility Granted to Aid in Recovery

SNAP

- Replacement Food Benefits:
 - ❖ Recipients in affected counties saw a percentage of their August benefits automatically added to their Lone Star Cards to replace food that was lost during Hurricane Harvey.
 - ❖ HHSC issued replacement benefits to more than 700,000 households, totaling \$91 million.
- Disaster Food Benefits:
 - ❖ HHSC received a federal waiver to allow the state to offer short-term food benefits to eligible families after they return home following the disaster.
 - ❖ HHSC has issued more than \$40 million in Disaster SNAP benefits.



Federal Flexibility Granted to Aid in Recovery

Medicaid and CHIP

- HHSC worked with CMS to receive flexibility that would allow displaced individuals to access out-of-network services and expedite the enrollment process for out of state providers.

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

- HHSC is working with USDA to help individuals replace their lost WIC card, receive food and formula, and partner with grocery stores.



Other Federal Grant Funds for Disaster Response

- Immediate Services Program and Crisis Counseling Assistance & Training Program – \$2.8 million
- Administration on Community Living – \$415,000
- FEMA Case Management Grant – In process of applying for grant, which totals \$128 million
- Regular Services Program Grant – In process of applying for grant



Additional HHS Services Provided to Impacted Texans

- Behavioral health and IDD services and supports are being provided to individuals in affected areas.
- LMHAs and LIDDAs are providing triage, assessment, referral, crisis counseling, and 24-hour call center support.
- Behavioral Health Coordinating Council agencies are sharing disaster related services and supports.
- HHSC is working with LMHAs and community providers to address needs of school aged children.
- Emergency and Risk Management staff continue to support the State of Texas Emergency Operations Center.
- 2-1-1 Call Centers are coordinating emergency messaging.



Impact to Regulatory Services

- HHSC continues to pursue and provide information on federal and state waivers from standard rules, as appropriate.
- HHSC is coordinating with and inspecting affected nursing facilities and assisted living facilities.
- HHSC is conducting on-site inspections of hospitals and dialysis centers that evacuated patients.
- HHSC is in continual contact with child care providers and is working closely with state and federal partners to assist them.



Communications Strategy

- HHSC sent news releases to all media outlets in areas affected by Hurricane Harvey.
- HHSC created a webpage that lists recovery information and created a webpage specifically for Disaster SNAP benefits.
- Social media accounts continue to be updated with the latest disaster recovery information.



Initial Estimate of Financial Impact of Hurricane Harvey

- HHSC's initial estimate totals approximately \$1.3 billion in All Funds and includes costs related to:
 - ❖ Other Needs Assistance (FEMA).
 - ❖ SNAP and Disaster SNAP food benefits;
 - ❖ Medicaid and CHIP;
 - ❖ Immediate response such as evacuation, ice, and water; and
 - ❖ Agency infrastructure and equipment damage.



Examples of Federal Funding Received for Past Disasters

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2005)

- HHSC received:
 - ❖ \$88 million in federal SSBG funding;
 - ❖ \$66 million in All Funds for Other Needs Assistance;
 - ❖ \$97 million in one-time TANF grants to provide short-term, non-recurring cash assistance;
 - ❖ \$8.9 million for crisis counseling from SAMHSA; and
 - ❖ A waiver to offer Medicaid coverage to Katrina evacuees and establish an uncompensated care pool, totaling \$142 million.

Hurricane Ike (2008)

- HHSC received:
 - \$219 million in federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding; and
 - \$200 million in All Funds for Other Needs Assistance.





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For More Information

- **Call 2-1-1 for Disaster Assistance**
- **Hurricane Harvey Disaster Assistance:**
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/financial/disaster-assistance>
- **Disaster SNAP:**
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/financial/disaster-assistance/disaster-snap>