



**American  
Red Cross**

## Hurricane Ida

SIX-MONTH UPDATE | APRIL 2022

### Red Cross Aids Devastated Residents from Gulf Coast to Northeast

In late August and early September 2021, Hurricane Ida and its remnants brought widespread destruction to communities from the Gulf Coast to the Northeast. Along this path of devastation, Ida's storm surge and torrential rains inundated homes and neighborhoods, while its powerful winds toppled trees and downed power lines.

In response, thousands of American Red Cross disaster workers provided safe shelter for people forced from their homes, meals and water for families living without electrical power for days or even weeks, cleanup supplies for those returning to flooded houses, and health and spiritual care for hard-pressed survivors.

These critical relief efforts were assisted by cutting-edge donor-supported technology like our RC View system, which helped us identify communities most at-risk from Ida's impacts and prioritize aid to the hardest-hit residents — many of whom were struggling to make ends meet even before the challenges this storm brought.

Urgent Red Cross support made a real difference for people like the Edwards family, of LaPlace, Louisiana. When Ida threatened, John Edwards stayed behind to watch the house while the rest of the family evacuated to Mississippi. As rising flood waters filled his home, John was forced to ride out the storm in the attic. Reunited with his family at a Red Cross shelter in Baton Rouge, John was grateful they had a place to stay.

"We had nothing left after Hurricane Ida," John said. "I wasn't sure what we were going to do, but I heard about the Red Cross shelter. I am so thankful that the Red Cross is here."

Six months later, many people across the impacted states are still trying to move on from the damage caused to homes and livelihoods by Hurricane Ida. Thanks to generous support from compassionate donors, the Red Cross continues to stand by the sides of individuals and families to meet pressing needs. We have provided additional financial assistance to help residents get back on their feet, aid with recovery planning, support locating available community resources and much more as Ida survivors work to rebuild their lives.



Donna Tindle, pictured kayaking through her Middlesex, New Jersey, neighborhood, and her family lost everything to Ida's floods. Red Cross assistance helped them replace lost clothing and furniture. For more information about our response to this disaster and stories of people we've helped, please visit our Hurricane Ida story map at [redcross.org/hurricaneida](https://redcross.org/hurricaneida). Photo courtesy of Donna Tindle.

## Building Bridges to Recovery for Ida Survivors

As many people who were severely affected by Hurricane Ida struggled to pick up the pieces, the Red Cross provided emergency funds to help families replace clothes or food, offset transportation costs or support any other immediate needs. In the months since Ida's landfall, the Red Cross provided another round of financial assistance to some of the most severely affected survivors, helping them build bridges from hardship to recovery.

As of March 1, 2022, we have provided **financial assistance totaling approximately \$8 million**, reaching thousands of households devastated by Ida's winds and flooding. This financial assistance allowed people to make their own decisions and overcome the barriers standing in the way of their recovery. Some of the top roadblocks identified by Ida survivors included housing and transportation expenses, job-related needs, childcare, and access to health and mental health services.

Recovery from destructive disasters like these is a team effort, and trained Red Cross volunteers and employees have worked closely with nonprofit and civic organizations, local businesses and governments to care for communities and families through the recovery process. These workers helped Ida survivors plan their next steps and identify available recovery resources, as well as offering comfort, encouragement and guidance through this challenging journey.



Red Cross volunteer Mark Howell delivers hot meals to residents at a food distribution site in Ponchatoula, Louisiana. Many residents lost power for days or longer, making cooking at home impossible. As part of Red Cross sustainability efforts, the lunches of red beans and rice are served in our new biodegradable containers, designed to have minimal environmental impact in both manufacturing and waste disposal. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

In addition to financial assistance and one-on-one support, the Red Cross also is making plans to fund work carried out by partner organizations with specialized expertise. We will work with these partners to address unmet longer-term recovery needs in the affected communities and help residents become better prepared for and more resilient against future crises.

### Response at a Glance\*

More than **3,100 Red Cross disaster workers** mounted a massive response to help people impacted by Hurricane Ida. They have:



**1 million**

Served more than **1 million meals and snacks** with partners



**44,500**

Provided more than **44,500 overnight shelter and hotel stays** with partners



**353,000**

Distributed nearly **353,000 relief items**



**21,100**

Opened more than **21,100 cases to provide recovery support**

\*Cumulative figures in Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Virginia as of March 1, 2022



Vivian Forgy received recovery assistance from the Red Cross after losing nearly everything to Ida's flooding. Photo courtesy of Vivian Forgy.

### Vivian Forgy – Englewood, New Jersey

The night Ida's remnants came through, Vivian Forgy woke to the sound of firefighters knocking on the front door of her first-floor apartment in a senior housing building in Englewood, New Jersey. They were telling her she needed to get out — a nearby brook had overflowed and the building was flooding.

"I was in shock," said Vivian. "I never had anything like this happen to me before. It's a blessing we all made it out alive."

Returning to her apartment the next day, Vivian learned that the building was closed and residents had to vacate for at least two years for repairs. She had lost everything in the flood.

Thanks to our generous donors, the Red Cross was there to provide Vivian emergency financial assistance to help with immediate needs. "Thank goodness for that assistance," said Vivian. "With that help, I was able to purchase some clothes, shoes, and well, undergarments — I really had nothing but the clothes on my back!"

**"Thank you to your volunteers, donors and all at the American Red Cross for reaching out to me and touching my life! I am able to begin again at 81!"**

Vivian Forgy, who lost nearly everything she owned in Ida's flooding

After searching for months, Vivian was able to find a new apartment in a nearby town. Around this same time, she received additional Red Cross bridge (recovery) assistance, which helped Vivian purchase furniture, linens and kitchen items for her new place.

"This is one grateful 81-year-old lady... you have no idea how this lifted my spirits," said Vivian. "Thanks to the Red Cross, I was able to get through it."

### Michelle Rae-Thibodaux Parfait – Cut Off, Louisiana

Michelle Rae-Thibodaux Parfait rode out Hurricane Ida at home in Cut Off, Louisiana, one of the hardest-hit communities in coastal Lafourche Parish.

Planting herself in a chair in the hallway, Michelle waited as the winds howled, trees snapped and shingles flew around outside "like playing cards." Water gushed from the ceiling, and she tried to catch it with buckets. The roof over her prayer room started to collapse, and the ceiling in her living room dropped on her furniture.

"I was praying the whole time," Michelle recalled. "God, I know you've got me regardless."

After surviving the storm, Michelle endured what it left behind. This meant sleeping in her vehicle during overnight rainstorms — a pitfall of making do in a severely damaged house categorized as "unlivable."



Michelle Rae-Thibodaux Parfait outside her damaged home. Photo courtesy of Michelle Rae-Thibodaux Parfait.

A chef put out of work by the hurricane, Michelle volunteered to cook food for community organizations to distribute. She saw the Red Cross serving meals and was reassured to learn our workers were committed to helping her community recover.

Michelle qualified for immediate financial assistance from the Red Cross and later received additional “bridge” recovery funds. She told us the aid was “a tremendous blessing,” helping her with necessities that don’t abate after a disaster — groceries, bills and a mortgage payment on the home she plans to rebuild.

“I know everything’s just [about] being patient,” Michelle said months after the storm. “No matter what, just don’t stay down. Deal with it and keep pressing forward.”

### Rajeeyah Taylor – Elizabeth, New Jersey

Rajeeyah Taylor and her daughter, Akasha, lived in a townhouse in Elizabeth, New Jersey, when the remnants of Hurricane Ida swept through the area. “The storm happened on Akasha’s 11th birthday on September 1,” Rajeeyah said. “That is a day she will never forget, because everything she knew was snatched from her in an instant.”



Rajeeyah Taylor and her daughter, Akasha, celebrate her birthday. Rajeeyah wanted to give Akasha a sense of normalcy after flooding from Ida devastated their home on her 11th birthday. Photo courtesy of Rajeeyah Taylor.

Their home was inundated by floodwaters, and the family of two was left with just minutes to pack what they could. “I have never in my life seen anything like this outside of television,” Rajeeyah said. She also lost her car to the storm.

“I had to replace our clothes and still get my daughter prepared for school and my return to work,” she said. Rajeeyah and Akasha were displaced from their home for three months, spending most of that time in hotels. “The stress this has caused is like no other,” Rajeeyah explained.

The Red Cross was there for the Taylor family, providing financial assistance to help with their many pressing needs. “[It] was beneficial because it allowed me to buy the things we needed,” Rajeeyah said. “It was a blessing, because I had already lost so much and had to replace everything we lost.”

### Cathy Hebert – Crown Point, Louisiana

Cathy Hebert knows her recovery from Hurricane Ida will take time, but it’s not a matter of whether it will get done, just when.

Unfortunately, her Crown Point home nearly 20 miles south of New Orleans that she shared with her boyfriend, Rene Michel, wasn’t insured. Unprotected from Ida’s surge, the home sustained damage so severe that Cathy had a tough time even processing it.

“We were displaced and lost all of our things in our home,” Cathy said. “Water and mud, wind damage. I can’t describe the sight. We were devastated.”

Cathy and Rene plan to rebuild. She takes solace in knowing that she has help from her friends, family and community — and the Red Cross. Because of damage to her home, she qualified for two rounds of Red Cross financial assistance. She described the process as seamless.

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**“[The financial assistance] really came in at the perfect time. ... The American Red Cross has been amazing to us.”**

Cathy Hebert, whose home was severely damaged by Hurricane Ida

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“[The Red Cross] contacted me; I didn’t have to contact them,” she said. “It really came in at the perfect time. ... The American Red Cross has been amazing to us.”

Cathy used Red Cross assistance to pay for bills, gasoline and supplies, such as a nail gun that Rene used to make home repairs. “We’re just going to go one day at a time,” Cathy said months after the storm. “One thing at a time. Until we get it done.”



Rene Michel and Cathy Hebert outside their Crown Point, Louisiana, home. Photo courtesy of Cathy Hebert.



Red Cross volunteers Peter Romany (left) and Francisco Rodriguez (right) support shelter relief for people affected by the downpour and flooding that came with the remnants of Hurricane Ida in Paterson, New Jersey. Some 90% of Red Cross disaster workers are volunteers. Photo by Marko Kocio/American Red Cross

## Compassionate Supporters Power Hurricane Ida Relief and Recovery

Thanks to our generous donors, the Red Cross has raised \$42.5 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help people impacted by Hurricane Ida.

As of March 1, 2022, the Red Cross had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately

\$51.1 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for Hurricane Ida. To fill this gap, we have used an allocation from our Disaster Relief fundraising designation, as well as specific expenses reimbursed by the states of New Jersey and New York. We will continue to stand by survivors for as long as we are needed.

### Hurricane Ida Expenses and Commitments (in millions)<sup>1</sup>

as of March 1, 2022

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter, and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Financial Assistance	Community Recovery	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items <sup>2</sup>	\$15.5	\$0.6	\$8.0	–	\$24.1	47%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$6.7	\$1.0	\$0.9	–	\$8.6	17%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$4.2	–	–	–	\$4.2	8%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$4.1	–	–	–	\$4.1	8%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$1.4	\$0.1	\$0.4	–	\$1.9	4%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.7	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$0.1	\$1.3	3%
IT, communications and call centers	\$1.0	\$0.1	\$0.1	–	\$1.2	2%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.5	–	–	–	\$0.5	1%
Long-term recovery grants to help unmet needs	–	–	–	\$0.1	\$0.1	0%
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$34.1</b>	<b>\$2.0</b>	<b>\$9.7</b>	<b>\$0.2</b>	<b>\$46.0</b>	<b>90%</b>
Management, general and fundraising <sup>3</sup>					\$5.1	10%
<b>Total Expenses<sup>4</sup></b>					<b>\$51.1</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Dollar figures in all tables are round to the nearest \$100,000; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

<sup>2</sup>Includes specific expenses of \$3.4 million reimbursed by the states of New York and New Jersey.

<sup>3</sup>Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support our approximately 19,000 employees and more than 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 90 cents of every dollar spent for Hurricane Ida will support delivering care and comfort to help people affected by Hurricane Ida.

<sup>4</sup>In addition to Hurricane Ida donations, response efforts are being supported in part by donations to Red Cross Disaster Relief.

*Thank you!*

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of more than 60,000 disasters per year—including single-family or apartment home fires, severe weather, floods and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and through their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.