



**American
Red Cross**

Hurricane Michael **ONE-YEAR UPDATE**

October 2019



“I heard the roof rumbling.
I’ll never forget that sound.”

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael became one of the most powerful hurricanes ever to impact the continental U.S., and the first Category 5 hurricane to strike the Florida Panhandle. Many residents reported that the storm was like nothing they had seen before.

American Red Cross disaster workers mounted a massive response to provide comfort and more to those in Michael's path. People like Donna Hayes—who feared she might not survive on her own—sought safety and support from the Red Cross.

Above: In Panama Beach City, Florida, Donna Hayes takes a moment to talk with Red Cross worker Chuck Parker, who helped restart Donna's medical equipment during the storm. Photo by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross.

Cover photo: Mary Bernhardt shows a Red Cross volunteer around her house in Panama City, Florida. Mary and her husband received financial assistance after Hurricane Michael left their longtime home in need of serious repair. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

A Letter from Gail McGovern, President and CEO, American Red Cross



Last fall, Hurricane Michael barreled through communities in the Florida Panhandle and parts of Georgia with devastating force. In response, thousands of dedicated Red Cross volunteers and employees worked alongside our disaster partners to provide safe refuge, food, supplies and sorely needed emotional support for hurricane survivors left reeling by the monstrous storm's almost unimaginable destruction.

When I visited Panama City, Florida, and other hard-hit areas days after Michael struck, it looked as if homes and businesses had been erased by a giant tornado. I met a veteran in a shelter who had lost his leg in Vietnam; trapped in his home by rubble, it took him days to crawl to safety. So many of those I spoke to shared stories of being cut off in the dark, trying to figure out where to go or how to reach family and friends. But the spirit of these survivors was incredible; their undaunted determination amid such extensive devastation moved me deeply.

I was also inspired by the dedication of our volunteers and employees. I met a woman on her second disaster deployment who somehow had a working cell phone—the only one in the shelter. She gladly shared it with displaced residents, helping them get in touch with loved ones to let them know that they were okay. In a staff shelter where cots were spaced inches apart, our volunteers were unfazed by the crowded conditions; instead, they were determined to work together to bring relief to survivors when it was needed most.

Our response to help people affected by Hurricane Michael was fueled by generous supporters from all over the country. These donors ensured that Red Cross was there to provide food and critical relief items for individuals and families facing devastating losses—both in shelters and in the impacted neighborhoods visited by our emergency response vehicles in the weeks after the disaster. They also enabled the Red Cross to deliver more than \$12 million in financial assistance to survivors, which has helped thousands of severely impacted residents pick up the pieces and begin to rebuild their lives.

The needs of those affected by Hurricane Michael were great, and we still have much work to do as survivors continue their recovery journey. Through the many challenges that lie ahead, the Red Cross will remain by their sides to offer ongoing guidance and support. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for joining us in this vital work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail McGovern". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gail McGovern

Red Cross Provides Help and Support in Michael's Wake

One year ago, Hurricane Michael devastated parts of the Florida Panhandle, sweeping away homes and businesses in coastal towns like Mexico Beach and Panama City. The storm's power stunned many lifelong Floridians as it ripped through communities with 150 mph winds and a 14-foot storm surge, leaving piles of rubble behind. As the storm moved inland, the destruction continued through areas of Alabama and Georgia, damaging homes and leaving many without power.

Thanks to the generosity of our year-round disaster relief donors, the Red Cross was ready to bring swift aid to impacted communities. This support made it possible for us to harness the power of trained volunteers, as well as prepositioned supplies and equipment. Collaborating with community, nonprofit and government partners, we set up shelters, deployed emergency response vehicles, equipment and more to bring much-needed aid to tens of thousands. In addition, our volunteers delivered vital emotional and spiritual support to survivors.

As Michael receded, residents faced the task of assessing damage and beginning the road to recovery. For many, the storm's high winds left massive debris that took weeks to clear. Through it all, Red Cross volunteers remained, providing continued comfort, food and water, cleanup supplies like bleach, tarps, work gloves, trash bags, shovels and rakes—and much more to help ease the challenges created by this ferocious storm.

Shelter

For many, Hurricane Michael did not leave much time for evacuation plans. Whether residents made it out of town to ride out the storm or looked for refuge locally, a safe and dry place to stay the night was essential. Along with government and community partners, the Red Cross helped shelter those who were forced from their homes. As one Panama City resident told us in the Bozeman High School Red Cross-operated shelter, "[I]t's a lot easier now that we have somewhere to sleep." In addition to cots, blankets and meals, those staying at shelters also had access to basic health services and emotional support from compassionate volunteers who understand the stress and uncertainty of evacuation.



Top: Hurricane Michael inflicted a monstrous amount of damage to communities across the Florida Panhandle, including this one in Mexico Beach.

Bottom: Kaila and her 1-year-old daughter, Corah, rely on the comfort provided by the environment and volunteers at the Bozeman High School Red Cross-operated shelter in Panama City, Florida: "These people have helped me so much."

Photos by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross.

Food

During emergencies, the most basic needs—like access to food and water—can become huge obstacles for those affected. The availability of warm meals and nourishing snacks brought comfort to those at Red Cross shelters as they navigated stressful circumstances brought about by Michael. Later, when it was safe for people to return to storm-battered communities, Red Cross volunteers in emergency response vehicles visited them to provide water, snacks and meals prepared by dedicated Red Cross partners.

Relief Items

Many residents who left their homes had no time to gather daily essentials like toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant and diapers. To help meet these everyday needs, the Red Cross provided comfort kits with basic personal hygiene items. When people began the arduous work of cleaning up debris and damaged homes, we also delivered coolers, bug spray and cleanup supplies like rakes, shovels and buckets.

Individual Care

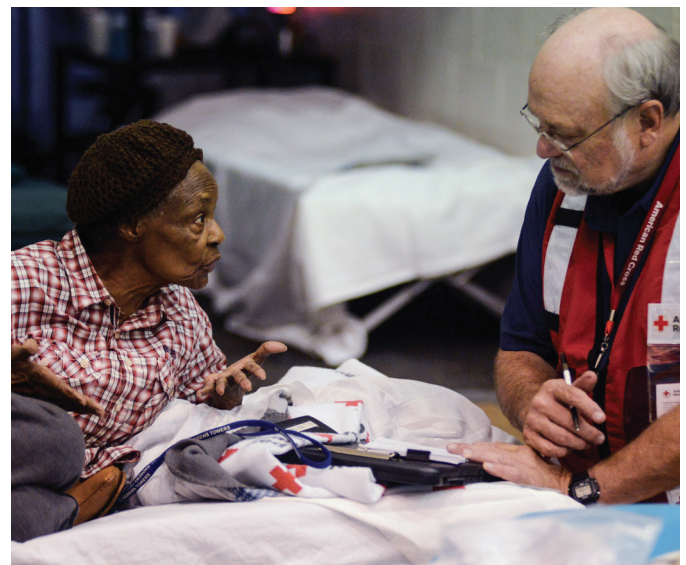
A storm like Michael can leave people struggling to cope mentally and emotionally. Red Cross mental health and spiritual care workers met one-on-one with residents to provide emotional support as they faced stressful evacuations and damaged homes. Volunteer health workers were also on hand to offer first aid, help monitor medical conditions and replace lost prescription medications or eyeglasses. In addition, specially trained volunteers offered support for people with disabilities and those with access and functional needs—a community that is often disproportionately affected by disasters.

Top: Local Panama City, Florida resident Hubert Martin accepts a hot meal from American Red Cross worker James Hogan. Several days after the storm, Hubert's apartment complex is still without utility services due to the impact of Hurricane Michael.

Middle: Michael Gailfoil grew up in the Cove neighborhood of Panama City, Florida, but he had never seen anything like the chaos of Hurricane Michael. Surveying damage, he recalled how nice the neighborhood was before the storm. As we left his home, Michael's final words: "Thank you for being here."

Bottom: Local resident Ollie Lasenberry, 86, talks with Red Cross volunteer Bob Wallace at the Bozeman High School Red Cross shelter in Panama City, Florida.

Photos by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross.



Immediate Financial Assistance

Along with shelter, food, relief supplies and health and mental health services, the Red Cross also provided immediate financial assistance to people in the weeks after Michael's devastating strike. Thanks to support from generous donors, we provided \$450 each to

thousands of severely impacted individuals and families—totaling over \$3.9 million—helping them meet some of their most urgent needs in the storm's aftermath. This immediate assistance helped families with basics like groceries, utilities, clothing, or help with rent and security deposits.

Red Cross Recovery Program Continues to Help Survivors

One year after Hurricane Michael rocked communities in Florida, Alabama and Georgia, the Red Cross continues to provide support for hurricane survivors. This is a team effort: We collaborate with government agencies and nonprofit organizations, as well as businesses and faith-based organizations to help residents access the critical services and resources they need to rebuild their lives.

We also provided additional financial assistance—totaling approximately \$8.5 million—to thousands of households that needed extra help. This recovery

assistance, geared toward more complex concerns like home repairs, allowed residents to prioritize their own needs, from helping with the purchase of a new roof or specialized medical equipment to paying for transportation and lodging costs.

We had the honor of speaking with a few of the individuals and families who were helped through the generosity of our donors, and they graciously shared their stories with us.

Response at a Glance



More than **2 million meals and snacks** served with partners



More than **48,900 overnight shelter stays** in 113 Red Cross and community shelters



More than **269,200 relief items** distributed



More than **42,400 individual care** contacts made



More than **8,400 damaged or destroyed households** provided with **financial assistance totaling \$12.4 million**

All figures are cumulative and reflect Red Cross response efforts since October 10, 2018

Lettie Craig, Panama City, Florida

Lettie Craig has lived in the same house for 51 years and has never evacuated for a hurricane—including Hurricane Michael.

“I’ve been through storms before but nothing like [this storm]. The next time they tell me to leave, I will definitely leave town. It was very scary!” she said.

During the storm, Lettie, 71, watched the devastation unfold around her. “I thought the windows were not going to hold. They did, but I lost part of my roof—and a lot of the shingles—when five pecan trees fell on my house,” she said. Lettie also lost electricity for three weeks.

In the days after the hurricane, Lettie and her son—who lives in a different community impacted by Hurricane

Michael—relied on hot meals provided via Red Cross emergency response vehicles. Lettie, who has health and mobility issues, still remembers how volunteers walked food over to her, to help keep her a little more comfortable.

As a widow living on a fixed income, Lettie could not afford homeowner’s insurance. However, after Michael, she knew her house badly needed repairs. The Red Cross stepped in, providing financial assistance toward Lettie’s \$17,000 roof repair and helping restore her electricity.

“When I received the money through my debit card, I just sat down and cried. I was so thankful,” Lettie said. “I met the nicest people through the Red Cross. It has been a blessing to me and I thank God for their service.”



Lettie Craig, who lives alone, received financial support to repair her home after Hurricane Michael. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross.



Michael and Mary Bernhardt share how Hurricane Michael impacted their home and neighborhood. They received Red Cross financial assistance to help repair damages after the storm. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross.

Mary and Michael Bernhardt, Panama City, Florida

After many years living in Florida, Mary and Michael Bernhardt have weathered many storms without incident. They were prepared to do the same with Hurricane Michael, with their son's family of six—plus two dogs—in tow. But this storm was different.

"After wind blew the window out, we grabbed the mattress and put it up over the window," Michael said. "I stepped on glass because I don't wear shoes in my house. The kids were just screaming and crying because the ceiling was lifting off."

The family went to a neighbor's home and came back after the storm was over. They found that a massive amount of shingles had ripped off, and two skylights were completely missing.

Mary and Michael also found that they did not have insurance to cover the damages. "We didn't know that

before the storm," Michael shared. "All these years we had thought we were good to go."

Coming from a military family, Michael was familiar with the Red Cross—in high school, the Red Cross helped his family travel from Germany to North Carolina for his grandfather's funeral. But he had no idea how the Red Cross helped after disasters until Michael struck and he reached out after a family member gave him a number to call.

"It started the ball rolling, and I thought, wow," Michael said. With support from the Red Cross, the family replaced their freezer, bought food and began making repairs, which "helped a lot."

"I think that, unless you're on the receiving end, a lot of times people don't know what agencies do," Michael said. "After something like this happens, you find out that [the Red Cross] has been here all along. You don't worry about it until something happens. And then you're thankful you have it."



Kanelia Nixon, her children and niece talk with a Red Cross volunteer outside their home in Albany, Georgia. The family received financial assistance from the Red Cross to help repair damages left behind by Hurricane Michael. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

Kanelia Nixon, Albany, Georgia

As Hurricane Michael plowed through her neighborhood, Kanelia Nixon huddled on her brother's living room floor with her three children, Kynnadi, Collen and Caiden, and her mother, Willa Mae Clark.

"You could hear the trees crackling and hitting the ground, and we weren't sure if [they] would land on the roof over our heads," Kanelia remembered. "All my kids are still terrified every time the wind starts to blow or it rains."

After the storm, Kanelia's home was still standing, but roof damage forced the family into a hotel for a couple of days. There were massive amounts of downed trees and branches that blocked the family's path from their driveway to their home.

"For about a month, every time we came to or left the house, I had to help all the kids up and over all the trees. It was hard," Kanelia said.

The storm hit at a particularly difficult time for Kanelia; she had recently been laid off from her job at a local pharmacy. As a single mother who was born without a right hand, Kanelia is familiar with life's ups and downs—and she has always been willing to help a friend or family member in need.

That attitude is part of the reason she is grateful for the financial support she received from the Red Cross after the hurricane, allowing her to take care of everyday needs for her loved ones.

"The assistance we received from the Red Cross really helped with groceries and hotel bills," Kanelia said.

In the months since the storm, she has also talked with her children about preparedness, to help ease their fears about a future emergency. Despite the scars Michael left behind, Kanelia remains grateful for one other reason: "I'm just thankful we are all still alive."

Katrina Hodges, Bainbridge, Georgia

When Hurricane Michael bore down on communities across Georgia, Katrina Hodges was at home with five family members—including her three-year-old granddaughter.

“I just remember how very noisy it was and how much the house was shaking. We could hear all the big [tree] limbs hitting the house, and we heard a loud boom when the power was knocked out,” Katrina remembered.

Like many in Michael's wake, Katrina's family lost power after the storm. It took a week to restore it, but the family made it through thanks, in part, to meals from a nearby Red Cross site. In the months after the hurricane, they also received Red Cross financial assistance to help make ends meet.

“Thanks to the Red Cross, we are getting caught up on bills.”

Katrina Hodges, Bainbridge, Georgia

“Now we're doing okay,” she said. “Thanks to the Red Cross, we are getting caught up on bills.”

Katrina and her family now also have an emergency plan for future events like Michael, which includes having plenty of supplies like batteries, water and non-perishable food.

“We have faith and patience and we're just pressin' on,” Katrina said. “But should another storm come our way, we'll be ready.”

Caring Supporters Make Relief and Recovery a Reality

None of our response or recovery assistance would be possible without the extraordinary support of our donors. The Red Cross has raised \$36.7 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help Hurricane Michael survivors in Florida, Alabama and Georgia. As of September 30, 2019, the Red Cross

had already programmed approximately \$35 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for people affected by Hurricane Michael. The remaining funds will be used to help with unmet needs for individuals and families impacted by Hurricane Michael, as well as to support longer-term community-based recovery services.



Red Cross volunteer driver Steve Patterson embraces a resident of Panama City, Florida, who is still without power and basic utilities nearly a week after the storm devastated her neighborhood. Photo by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross.

Hurricane Michael Expenses and Commitments (in millions)¹

As of September 30, 2019 (\$36.7 million raised)

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Immediate Financial Assistance	Individual and Community Recovery ²	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$6.5	\$0.2	\$3.9	\$8.5	\$19.1	55%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$4.5	\$0.4	\$0.1	—	\$5.0	14%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$2.0	—	—	—	\$2.0	6%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$1.2	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$1.8	5%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.5	—	\$1.0	\$0.1	\$1.6	5%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$1.2	—	—	—	\$1.2	3%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.3	—	\$0.1	\$0.3	\$0.7	2%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.5	—	—	—	\$0.5	1%
Total Program Expenses	\$16.7	\$0.7	\$5.3	\$9.2	\$31.9	91%
Management, general and fundraising ³					\$3.1	9%
Total Expenses					\$35.0	100%
Program dollars remaining to be spent					\$1.5	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					\$0.2	
Total Budget					\$36.7	

¹Dollar figures are rounded to the nearest \$100K; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

²Long-term recovery financial assistance.

³Management, 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 more than 20,000 employees and approximately 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 91 cents of every dollar received for Hurricane Michael will be spent on services to people affected by Hurricane Michael.

Thank you!

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of more than 62,000 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.

YOUR HELP MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE

The extraordinary generosity of the public helped tens of thousands in need after Hurricane Michael.

To learn more about Red Cross response and recovery efforts to help Hurricane Michael survivors, visit redcross.org/michael.



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