



Presentation to Joint House Committees: Hurricane Harvey Response

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Immediate Impact of Hurricane Harvey

- HHSC evacuated 213 residents and 205 staff from the Corpus Christi SSLC prior to the hurricane making landfall.
- HHSC issued alerts to nursing facilities and assisted living facilities to be ready to implement their disaster and evacuation plans, comply with local evacuation orders whenever possible, and evacuate residents if necessary.
- Behavioral health professionals were deployed to shelters to provide support for first responders and impacted Texans.
- 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.
- 2-1-1 Call Centers coordinated emergency messaging.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: Food Assistance

- HHSC initial disaster response included several federal waivers to ensure that current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) recipients continued to receive assistance as they recovered from the disaster:
 - Ability to purchase hot foods
 - Early benefit issuance
 - Automatic benefit replacement
 - Extended certification periods
 - Supplements to bring current recipients to maximum allotment
- HHSC issued replacement benefits to an estimated 693,000 households, totaling \$91 million.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP)

- 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.
 - ❖ Application period is limited and based on the county of residence.
 - ❖ Individuals not currently receiving SNAP may qualify for D-SNAP.
 - ❖ Benefit is equal to the maximum SNAP allotment based on household size for two months.
 - ❖ Verification of identity and residency in a declared county at the time of disaster is required.
- Over the span of 37 days, over 2,100 HHSC staff were deployed to 39 disaster impacted counties and assisted over 503,000 families, or 1.6 million individuals, in obtaining emergency food benefits through the D-SNAP program.
- To date, HHSC has issued more than \$532 million in benefits.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: FEMA Grants

Other Needs Assistance

- 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.
- To date, HHSC has processed more than 300,000 grant applications, totaling about \$269 million in All Funds.

Disaster Case Management

- HHSC has applied for the Disaster Case Management Grant which totals \$50.1 million in federal funding for additional disaster-related aid.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: Regulated Facilities

- Prior to landfall, HHSC staff were in constant communication with affected providers. If a facility reported an emergency, staff immediately notified the State Operations Center (SOC) so local emergency personnel could intervene.
- HHSC obtained federal and state waivers from standard rules.
- HHSC teams conducted on-site inspections to ensure that facilities that had suffered damage could safely resume operations and serve residents.
- A total of 104 assisted living and nursing facilities reported evacuating 4,486 residents at some point due to Harvey. As of October 23rd, 39 nursing and assisted living facilities remained temporarily closed due to damage.



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: Behavioral Health

- HHSC received a federal grant totaling \$2.8 million, and applied for another totaling \$12 million, through FEMA/SAMHSA to respond to behavioral health needs for people affected by the disaster.
- LMHAs and LIDDAs continue to provide triage, assessment, referral, crisis counseling, and 24-hour call center support.
- HHSC is working with LMHAs and community providers to address the ongoing needs of school aged children.
- HHSC deployed behavioral health staff with the Joint Field Office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to conduct assessments of hurricane affected areas.



Additional Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery Activities

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 and Children (WIC)

- HHSC worked with USDA to help individuals in the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program replace their lost WIC card, receive food and formula, and partner with grocery stores.



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:
 - ❖ FEMA Other Needs Assistance
 - ❖ SNAP and Disaster SNAP food benefits
 - ❖ Medicaid and CHIP



Hurricane Harvey Aid and Recovery: Examples of State Agency Coordination

- Before, during and after the disaster, 2-1-1 Call Centers have worked to coordinate emergency messaging and information about relief and recovery services.
- The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council conducted regular disaster calls to coordinate and share disaster-related services amongst the 23 council member agencies.
- HHSC continues to work closely with the Comptroller's Office, through various automated processes and interfaces, to process payments for the Other Needs Assistance program.
- Emergency and Risk Management staff continue to support the State of Texas Emergency Operations Center.





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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>



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Appendix

D-SNAP Income Limits and Allotments

Household Size	D-SNAP Net Income Limit ¹	SNAP Net Income Limit	D-SNAP and SNAP Maximum Allotment
1	\$1664	\$990	\$194
2	\$2009	\$1335	\$357
3	\$2354	\$1680	\$511
4	\$2710	\$2025	\$649
5	\$3084	\$2370	\$771
6	\$3458	\$2715	\$925
7	\$3804	\$3061	\$1022
8	\$4151	\$3408	\$1169

¹ The D-SNAP income limit is the SNAP net income limit plus the standard deduction for the household size and maximum shelter cost of \$517 which is provided to regular SNAP households (For example, for a household of one - \$990 + \$157 + \$517 = \$1664).

