

July 4, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Through: Gracia B. Szczech, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region IV
Federal Emergency Management Agency
3005 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: Request for Emergency Declaration
Hurricane Elsa

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C §§5121-5207 (the “Stafford Act”), as implemented by 44 C.F.R. §206.35, I request that you declare an emergency for the State of Florida in anticipation of Tropical Storm Elsa. This request is timely under 44 CFR §206.35(a). I submit this request in expectation of the impacts of Tropical Storm Elsa, which as of the most recent National Weather Service forecast includes potential impacts to the entire Florida Keys and portions of the Florida Peninsula as early as Monday. This request is in anticipation of the continued response, rescue, and recovery efforts necessary to save lives and to protect public health and safety.

Based upon current forecasts and modeling, I request an Emergency Declaration for Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties in the State of Florida. Specifically, I am requesting Public Assistance Category B (Emergency Protective Measures), limited to direct Federal assistance and reimbursement for mass care including evacuation and sheltering support that are beyond the capability of State and affected tribal and/or local governments.

At 8:30 AM EDT on July 2, 2021, the National Hurricane Center reported that Tropical Storm Elsa had strengthened into a Category 1 Hurricane and was located 40 miles west of Barbados. As of 11:00 AM EDT on July 3, 2021, the National Hurricane Center reported Elsa slightly decreased in strength and was redesignated into a tropical storm, but could restrengthen once in the Gulf of Mexico to near hurricane strength before making landfall along the Florida Gulf Coast on Tuesday. Tropical Storm Elsa poses a risk of dangerous storm surge, heavy rainfall, flash flooding, strong winds, hazardous seas, and the potential for isolated tornadic activity for much of Florida’s Peninsula, Florida Keys and portions of the Florida Panhandle.

The current forecast from the National Hurricane Center indicates that Tropical Storm Elsa will pass very near or over the Florida Keys overnight on July 5th and will impact the Florida peninsula on July 6th. Tropical Storm and Storm Surge Watches are anticipated to be issued from the National Hurricane Center for portions of South Florida on Saturday, July 3rd. A storm of this size and strength has the potential to produce tropical storm force winds and hurricane force gusts along the entire Florida Keys, portions of Southeast Florida, the West Coast of Florida, and portions of Northeast Florida and the Big Bend. Tropical storm force winds or similar gusts could also affect ongoing rescue and recovery efforts at the Surfside Building Collapse as early as Sunday evening.

Additionally, a storm of this magnitude on the forecast track, utilizing SLOSH directional modeling, could produce storm surge heights up to 3-6 feet above ground level along the West Coast of Florida and associated bays and islands, and 1-3 feet along the Florida Keys. Furthermore, 1-3 feet of storm surge is possible along Northeast Florida, including the St. Johns River, as the storm approaches Northeast Florida. Rainfall amounts of 2-4 inches, with isolated amounts of up to 6 inches, are forecast from the National Weather Service for much of the Florida Peninsula and Big Bend over the next 7 days. Rainfall amounts over the past 2 weeks have been above normal for this time of year across the majority of the state, particularly North and Central Florida. Due to the saturation level of the ground, a tropical system affecting this region of Florida could quickly create urban and riverine flooding conditions and cause trees to become more susceptible to downing from gusty winds.

This event comes at a time when life-saving resources and teams from all parts of Florida, to include the first time in history that all 8 of Florida's Urban Search and Rescue Teams have been deployed outside of hurricane response efforts. Additionally, assets from other states and the federal level are still actively responding to the Surfside Building Collapse (EM 3560-FL). At the time of this request, the incident period for EM 3560-FL is ongoing, with a total of 22 fatalities and 122 individuals who are still unaccounted for. The unknown needs for Tropical Storm Elsa exacerbate an already complex situation regarding response operations for the State and local jurisdictions.

The preparation for Tropical Storm Elsa and the response to the Surfside Building Collapse comes on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as five consecutive hurricane seasons in which the State has been impacted by multiple billion-dollar events. Every jurisdiction in the State of Florida has responded to and is currently recovering from at least three federally declared events in the past five years, with most actively recovering from four events.

In the 2017 hurricane season, the State of Florida received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Irma (DR 4337-FL), followed by Hurricane Nate (EM 3395-FL) shortly thereafter. Hurricane Irma was a category four hurricane that affected the entire State and resulted in the inclusion of all 67 counties in the Disaster Declaration. Following the Hurricane Nate declaration, Florida entered into a Host-State Agreement with FEMA to provide services to Hurricane Maria survivors from Puerto Rico. FEMA has since obligated over \$2.5 billion in eligible costs to jurisdictions to recover from Hurricane Irma; however, significant costs remain unobligated, to

include emergency work. Specifically, Miami-Dade applicants, to include the Town of Surfside, represent over \$431 million of this total amount in financial damages.

In the historic 2018 hurricane season, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend Area received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Michael (DR 4399-FL), a category five hurricane. State agencies expended over \$140.9 million in support of local jurisdictions and individual survivors. The FEMA Joint Field Office estimates that it will obligate over \$3.2 billion for this event, but only \$1.81 billion has been obligated thus far. In 2019, the State was declared for Hurricane Dorian (DR 4468-FL). While costs are still being formulated, the State estimates that the total obligated costs will be over \$181.3 million, with only \$61.3 million being obligated thus far.

For the COVID-19 (DR 4486-FL), statewide Public Assistance costs are approximately \$3.6 billion, of which includes over \$577 million for Miami-Dade County applicants, to include the Town of Surfside. The State had preliminarily estimated the total costs would be approximately \$1.4 billion. The current amount has far exceeded these original anticipated figures.

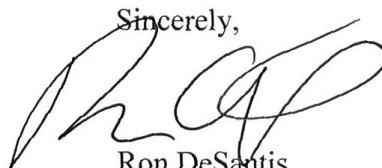
A Major Disaster, DR 4564-FL, was declared because of Hurricane Sally while still responding to the pandemic. While still in the project development phase of this event, it is anticipated that obligations of eligible work will exceed \$184 million.

On July 3, 2021, I issued Executive Order No. 21-150 which directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the State's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in support of the Order in accordance with Section 501 of the Stafford Act.

Emergency protective measures required because of this event will require extraordinary efforts of state and local government for the continued response, rescue, and recovery efforts necessary to save lives and to protect public health and safety. The threat posed by Tropical Storm Elsa requires that timely precautions are taken to protect the communities, critical infrastructure, and general welfare of Florida

I have designated Kevin Guthrie, Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, as the State Coordinating Officer for this emergency. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests, or justification on my behalf, as well as designate additional Deputy State Coordinating Officers as necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron DeSantis', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Enclosures:

Executive Order 21-150
FEMA Form 010-0-13

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Emergency Management Agency
REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

OMB Control Number 1660-0009

Expires 09/30/2019

1. Request Date Jul 4, 2021

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.

Florida

2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). 18,801,310

3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name

Ron DeSantis

4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number

Kevin Guthrie, Director, Florida Division of Emergency Management (850) 294-8250

5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number
Kevin Guthrie

6. Declaration Request For: ☐ Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) ☒ Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Jul 4, 2021 End Date _____ or ☒ Continuing

If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

☐ Drought ☐ Earthquake ☐ Explosion ☐ Fire ☐ Flood ☐ Hurricane ☐ Landslide ☐ Mudslide
☐ Severe Storm (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning) ☐ Snowstorm (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) ☐ Straight-Line Winds
☐ Tidal Wave ☐ Tornado ☐ Tropical Depression ☒ Tropical Storm ☐ Tsunami ☐ Volcanic Eruption ☐ Winter Storm
☐ Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

On July 2, 2021, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) reported that Tropical Storm Elsa had strengthened into a Category 1 Hurricane and was located 40 miles west of Barbados. On July 3, 2021, the NHC reported Elsa slightly decreased in strength and was redesignated into a tropical storm. The NHC also reported Elsa could restrengthen once in the Gulf of Mexico to return to hurricane strength. Elsa poses a risk of dangerous storm surge, heavy rainfall, flash flooding, strong winds, hazardous seas, and the potential for isolated tornadic activity for much of Florida's Peninsula, Florida Keys and portions of the Florida Panhandle. A storm of this size and strength has the potential to produce tropical storm force winds and hurricane force gusts, which could also affect ongoing rescue and recovery efforts at the Surfside Champlain Towers collapse as early as Sunday night.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

This event comes at a time when life-saving resources and teams from all parts of Florida, to include the first time in history that all 8 of Florida's Urban Search and Rescue Teams have been deployed outside of hurricane response efforts. Additionally, assets from other states and the federal level are still actively responding to the Surfside Building Collapse (EM 3560-FL). At the time of this request, the incident period for EM 3560-FL is ongoing, with a total of 22 fatalities and 126 individuals who are still unaccounted for. The unknown needs for Tropical Storm Elsa exacerbate an already complex situation regarding response operations for the State and local jurisdictions.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

☐ Individual Assistance Dates Performed Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

☐ Public Assistance Dates Performed Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance ☒ N/A ☐ Individuals and Households Program ☐ Crisis Counseling Program ☐ Disaster Unemployment Assistance
☐ All ☐ Disaster Case Management ☐ Disaster Legal Services ☐ Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance ☐ N/A ☐ Debris Removal (Category A) ☒ Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) ☐ Permanent Work (Categories C-G)*
(not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).
According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Tribal Land Map, the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes are located in the requested counties.

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity

☒ I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Request for Direct Federal Assistance

☐ I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

☒ I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:
Direct Federal Assistance may be needed for shelter commodities.

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services. With continuing response efforts for EM-3560, the State may not be able perform or obtain the necessary assistance with its own assets or through contracting in a sufficiently timely manner.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

Request for Snow Assistance

☒ N/A ☐ I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* ☐ Statewide **OR**

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date 8-24-2023 b. Type of Plan ☒ Enhanced ☐ Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

☒ I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies ☐ I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request*.

14. Findings and Certifications

☒ I certify the following:

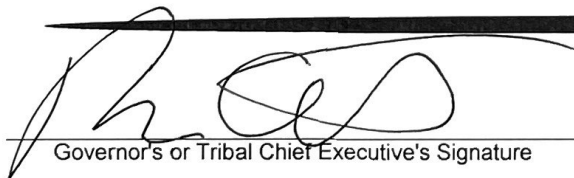
a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on July 4, 2021 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

☒ Cover Letter ☐ Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* ☐ Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*
☐ Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) ☐ Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
☐ Additional Supporting Documentation _____


 Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

July 4, 2021
 Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request