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Sent: 9/29/2017 10:54:10 PM
Subject: Governor Scott Directs Additional State Action for Puerto Rico



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 29, 2017

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Governor Scott Directs Additional State Action for Puerto Rico

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Governor Rick Scott made the following statement after his meeting with President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence. Governor Scott met with President Trump and Vice President Pence to discuss his trip to Puerto Rico and actions the State of Florida is taking to help Puerto Rico as they recover from Hurricane Maria. Governor Scott also hosted a call with Puerto Rican government officials and Florida state agency leaders today to ensure the State of Florida is doing everything possible to help Puerto Rico recover from Hurricane Maria.

Governor Scott said, "Yesterday, at the request of Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló, I visited San Juan, Puerto Rico to help coordinate response and recovery efforts following Hurricane Maria. Puerto Rico is completely devastated and we have been in constant contact with Governor Rosselló and the Puerto Rican government to offer support as they respond and recover from Hurricane Maria. This morning, I had a call with Puerto Rican government officials, as well as my state agency heads to ensure that our leaders are in contact and the State of Florida is doing everything we can to help. During my meeting with President Trump, I let him know the resources and assets that are needed in Puerto Rico that the federal government could assist with."

See below for more information on what the State of Florida is doing to support Puerto Rico:

MILITARY SUPPORT

- The Florida National Guard is assisting with the coordination of National Guard response from across the country and processing requests through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to facilitate National Guard Bureau resource assignments.
- An airman from the Florida Air National Guard is currently on the ground in San Juan, Puerto Rico, directing the Joint Air Coordination Element (JACE).
- The Florida National Guard is coordinating with the full-time Guardsmen as part of the 601st Air Operations Center at Tyndall Air Force Base. This organization, under the U.S. Air Forces North (AFNORTH), is coordinating all military airflow in the Joint Operations Area.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) traveled to San Juan with Governor Scott this week and met with the Puerto Rico Department of Public Safety to discuss security concerns and needs.
- FDLE is coordinating a request for 1,500 law enforcement officers to deploy to Puerto Rico to supplement Puerto Rican law enforcement. These assets will come from across Florida, including state and local partners, and other states.
- FDLE is also sending an eight-member incident management team to Puerto Rico to help assess law enforcement needs.
- The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has identified volunteers from across the state that are part of the FWC Special Operations Group (SOG) to stand by for potential deployment. Many of these officers have recently deployed to assist with Hurricanes Harvey and Hurricane Irma response and recovery operations.
- FWC has identified specialty equipment such as trucks, coastal and river patrol boats, ATVs and shallow draft boats to be considered for potential use as needed.

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- The State Emergency Response Team (SERT) is identifying food and water assets and standing by to support feeding and shelters through coordination with local, state and federal partners.
- SERT is working with utility partners at the State Emergency Operations Center to identify resources that may be offered to Puerto Rico.
- SERT is contacting fuel industry partners to identify availability of resources and coordinate with federal partners on providing port statuses and the need to assist with coordinating fuel delivery.
- SERT is reaching out to the Florida Trucking Association and major Florida-based fleet trucking companies to identify commercial driver's license (CDL) drivers that would be able to deploy to Puerto Rico to assist with delivery resources.
- SERT is reaching out to the American Logistics Aid Network (ALAN) to identify large commercial logistics firms that could donate goods and services such as forklifts, trucking services, logistics advisors once needs are identified.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

- The state coordinated with Florida International University to host evacuees from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 90 of which were dialysis patients, at Florida International University.
- The state is currently on the list of Federal Coordinating Centers (FCCs) to accept patients if needed from Puerto Rico as recovery efforts continue. The Florida Department of Health (DOH) will stand ready to coordinate patient transport as needed.
- The Agency for Health Care Administration will work with our federal partners to gather information on any waivers the Medicaid program would need to serve individuals from Puerto Rico. As always, the Medicaid program covers medically necessary services for children and families eligible for Medicaid.

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS

- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is prepared to provide procurement advice and technical assistance as needed on transportation-related issues.
- FDOT subject matter experts stand ready to consult with officials from Puerto Rico on recovery efforts.
- The Governor has called on Florida port directors to prioritize and expedite the shipment of goods from across the country quickly to Puerto Rico and many ports have committed to stand ready to help move supplies through their facilities as quickly as possible.

VOLUNTEER FLORIDA

- Volunteer Florida is providing information and resources to Floridians who want to make donations or volunteer at www.volunteerflorida.org.
- Volunteer Florida is assisting with Puerto Rico's Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) application.
- Volunteer Florida stands ready to provide volunteers, donation management training and support for donations management logistics; deploy Volunteer Florida's Spanish-speaking staff on site; and coordinate service for those receiving temporary shelter assistance.

EDUCATION

- Florida school districts have processes in place to enroll K-12 students displaced by natural disasters, and all districts are prepared to enroll Puerto Rican evacuees. Families displaced by Hurricane Maria have begun arriving in Florida, and a number have already enrolled their students.
- The below Florida state colleges and universities are waiving out-of-state tuition and fees for students from Puerto Rico displaced by Hurricane Maria following a request by Governor Scott:
 - Broward College
 - Chipola College
 - College of Central Florida
 - Daytona State
 - Eastern Florida State College
 - Florida Atlantic University
 - Florida Gateway
 - Florida Gulf Coast University
 - Florida International University
 - Florida Keys Community College
 - Florida Southwestern State College
 - Florida State College at Jacksonville
 - Florida State University
 - Gulf Coast State College
 - Hillsborough Community College
 - Indian River State College
 - Lake Sumter
 - Miami Dade College
 - New College of Florida
 - North Florida Community College
 - Northwest Florida State College
 - Palm Beach State
 - Pasco-Hernando State College
 - Pensacola State College
 - Polk State College
 - Santa Fe College
 - Seminole State
 - South Florida State College
 - St. Johns River State College
 - St. Petersburg College
 - State College of Florida, Manatee–Sarasota
 - Tallahassee Community College
 - University of Central Florida
 - University of Florida

- University of North Florida
- University of South Florida
- University of West Florida
- Valencia College

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