



St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau

2024 Hurricane Preparedness Plan

Note: The error margin for a five-day forecast is up to 300 miles on either side of the forecast track (600-mile swath). The margin for a 24-hour forecast averages just less than 90 miles in any direction from the forecast track (a 180-mile swath.)

A hurricane warning is issued 36 hours before tropical storm–force winds are expected, and hurricane conditions are possible but a chance they may not occur. A hurricane watch means hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible. A hurricane watch is typically issued 48 hours prior to the anticipated onset of tropical storm-force winds in an area.

The following plan was created to ensure that the Visitors and Convention Bureau will be prepared to provide effective action if a storm, (hurricane, tropical storm, flood, or tornado) threatens to affect or impact the tourism industry on Florida's Historic Coast.

NOAA's outlook for the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, which extends from June 1 to November 30, is anticipated to have a 40% chance of above-normal hurricane season in the Atlantic basin this summer. NOAA predicts an 85% chance of an above-normal season, a 10% chance of a near-normal season, and a 5% chance of a below-normal season. NOAA is forecasting a likely range of 17 to 25 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher). Of those, 8 to 13 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 4 to 7 major hurricanes (category 3, 4, or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). NOAA has a 70% confidence in these ranges.

Action Phases for VCB Hurricane Prep Plan.

Phase 0 - Approach of Hurricane Season (Pre-Season - Planning and Preparation) Blue Sky

Phase I - Any part of Florida appears in a 5-Day Forecast Cone, or a Cone aims at Florida, or a story is being covered by the media (Potential Named Storm - Planning and Preparation) Blue Sky

Phase II – North Florida is within the path of a named Tropical Storm or a Hurricane Watch for our area has been issued (Potential Tropical Storm/Hurricane - Crisis Management) Gray Sky

Phase III - North Florida is within a named Tropical Storm or Hurricane Warning path (Imminent tropical storm/hurricane - Crisis Management) Gray Sky

Phase IV – A named storm passes through North Florida (Post-Tropical Storm/Hurricane Response) Black Sky

Phase V - EOC and impacted areas shift to recovery, or an evacuation order is called off (Post-Tropical Storm/Hurricane Recovery) Gray Sky

Phase 0 – Approach of Hurricane Season (Pre-Season - Planning and Preparation)

Prepare all documents for storm resources, and communication information. To be completed within two weeks of the beginning of Hurricane season.

- Communications team to activate the Significant Weather Page on the VCB site - www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ and place a Weather Button on the FHC home page, Maintain updates using the National Weather Service and NOAA content edited to inform our community and visitors about current local conditions, assuring hyper-local information is being communicated on all levels. Resources to us include content published on forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=29.8947&lon=-81.3145#.XWfv5ZNKiL4 and www.nhc.noaa.gov
- Update all VCB Employee Emergency contact information.
- Review [Visit Florida Hurricane Prep Webinar](#).
- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to ensure social media channels are active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis, Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, communicate with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com.
- Crisis Communications tips on file to include information about www.FloridaNow.com <http://www.Expedia.com/florida>.
- Reach out to all area lodgings informing them of the activation of the FHCBeachInfo.com site and request that they update and connect with <http://www.Expedia.com/florida>. Email: flnorth@expedia.com
- Expedia resource information is communicated to lodging partners through iDSS. Messaging to appear in **PartnerCom in early June** and be delivered to all lodging partners via iDSS.
- [Share Florida's Hurricane Preparedness Plan Resources with Partners](#) including [Visit Florida Resource page](#)
- News Release templates on file.
- News media contacts updated and on file (done June 7, 2024)
- CEO/President to participate in EMS Training – and review the [VISIT FLORIDA Webinar](#) (still relevant for 2024 season).
- Review VISIT FLORIDA Crisis Communication Tips www.visitflorida.org/resources/crisis-preparation/hurricane-information/crisis-communications-tips

Phase I – Any Part of Florida Appears in 5-Day Forecast Cone or Cone Aims at Florida or Story Is Being Covered by the Media (Potential Named Storm - Planning and Preparation)

- Update content on www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ Hyper-local weather updates are culled from <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov> and forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=29.8947&lon=-81.3145#.XWfv5ZNKiL4 reports.
- Review VISIT FLORIDA Hurricane Planning site for updates - www.visitflorida.org/resources/crisis-preparation/hurricane-information/crisis-communications-tips and www.FloridaNow.com. Provide any destination conditions to VISIT FLORIDA for inclusion on www.FloridaNow.com
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com and to use #FloridaNow when updating their status on Twitter.
- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to keep Social Accounts active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis,

Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, communicate with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.

- Evaluate if it is appropriate to post Facebook and other social media messaging with relevant status updates and links to www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ or to go dark. [Refer to VF Crisis communications guidelines.](#)
- Monitor and utilize VISIT FLORIDA Social Media to communicate our status (open for business, evacuating, lodging available or not available, etc.). Use #FloridaNow in social posts. This will ensure content is aggregated to VF social feeds.
- Provide The Brightbell company call center, Chelsy Young - chelsy@brightbellco.com with an updated script including appropriate updates to communicate with inquiring consumers and potential visitors.
- Prepare a release for distribution to media and review the current media distribution list for accuracy.
- Post current conditions and links to www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/

If northeast Florida is declared free of a storm threat, but other areas of the state are still in storm watch or storm warning status, Phase I will stay in effect with continued updated reporting to VISIT FLORIDA so that Florida residents and visitors in the affected areas are aware that our area is a safe haven.

Phase I Media messaging:

There is no risk to our visitors at this time. Florida's Historic Coast is in touch with state and local officials and is monitoring the weather situation. FloridasHistoricCoast.com offers visitors weather updates, with links to local information to assist visitors with making the most informed travel planning decisions possible.

Phase II – North Florida in Named Tropical Storm or Hurricane Watch (Potential Tropical Storm/Hurricane Crisis Management) Follow Phase I procedures plus add the following. A hurricane warning is issued 36 hours before tropical storm–force winds are expected, and hurricane conditions are possible but there is a chance they may not occur. A hurricane watch means hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible. A hurricane watch is typically issued 48 hours before the anticipated onset of tropical storm-force winds in the area.

- Place Severe Weather button on website and update content on www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ to activate the page as the severe weather page- Update content is Hyper-local information culled from www.nhc.noaa.gov and forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=29.8947&lon=-81.3145#.XWfv5ZNKiL4 reports.
- Communicate with St. Johns County EOC, staff, industry stakeholders, VISIT FLORIDA, local and regional media, consumers and other priority audiences ensuring that communications lines are open and response efforts are in place.
- Monitor www.FloridaNow.com for updates from VISIT FLORIDA and other official emergency operations entities.
- Communicate to lodging partners via IDSS and Constant Contact encouraging them to update availability with www.expedia.com/florida using contact flnorth@expedia.com. Expedia will update its consumer page's dedicated crisis landing page to help affected travelers find accommodations and update their travel plans www.Expedia.com/Florida (a dedicated crisis page for Florida). Expedia provides the listing of open businesses for free.
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com and to use #FloridaNow when updating status.

- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to keep Social Accounts active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis, Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, communicate with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.
- **Contact the Advertising Agency to adjust any advertising or promotions in place.**
- Evaluate if it is appropriate to post Facebook and other social media messaging with relevant status updates and links to www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-update or directly to www.FloridaNow.com or to go dark.
- Provide The Brightbell company call center, Chelsy Young - chelsy@brightbellco.com with an updated script including appropriate updates to communicate with inquiring consumers and potential visitors.
- Monitor and utilize VISIT FLORIDA social media to communicate our status. Discontinue the use of #LoveFl and begin using #FloridaNow.
- Prepare a release for distribution to media (review media distribution list for accuracy)

Internal Office Actions:

- All data to be backed up on the server/cloud.
- Prepare the building for storm protection.
- President/CEO to communicate with St. Johns County EOC and Public Affairs office.
- Except for server and internet routers, all computer and electronic equipment are to be unplugged, wrapped in a plastic covering, and stored on counters (not on floor) in area behind reception counter, or in the alcove on the landing on the staircase, or in an area away from windows and doors.
- **All staff make appropriate personal arrangements for evacuation and inform the office manager of plans.**
- Communications to provide CEO with a flash drive and access to Constant Contact with formatted news release templates in place, media lists, and local contacts.
- News Releases to be distributed from St. Johns County EOC through Constant Contact Account: ALL RELEASES and NEWS MEDIA. An additional media list with phone contacts will be provided in an Excel spreadsheet on the flash drive as backup.

Media Message: *St. Augustine Ponte Vedra & The Beaches VCB remains in touch with local and state officials and is continuing to monitor the situation. The safety of our visitors and residents is our primary concern. FloridasHistoricCoast.com offers visitors weather advisories, with links to official Florida and weather information. We provide official local information our visitors need to assist them with making the most informed travel planning decisions possible. For additional state-wide regarding current conditions and lodging availability, go to www.Expedia.com/Florida and www.FloridaNow.com.*

Phase III - North Florida in Named Tropical Storm or Hurricane Warning (Imminent Tropical Storm/Hurricane - Crisis Management)

A hurricane warning is issued 36 hours before tropical storm–force winds are expected, and hurricane conditions are possible but there is a chance they may not occur. A hurricane watch means hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible. A hurricane watch is typically issued 48 hours before the anticipated onset of tropical storm-force winds in our area.

Internal Office Actions: (In addition to actions in Phase II)

CEO to check in with EOC, and relocate to where dependable internet connection can be maintained. All other staff are to go to a safe place. Staff are to communicate with office manager, their plans to evacuate, stay in a local safe shelter, or remain at home. Staff are to follow evacuation orders.

Communication

Continue to update content on www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ as the Severe Weather Page utilizing content culled from www.weather.gov and www.nhc.noaa.gov

- Evaluate if it is appropriate to post Facebook and other social media messaging with relevant status updates and links to www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ using #FloridaNow
- Provide The Brightbell company call center, Chelsy Young - chelsy@brightbellco.com with an updated script including appropriate updates to communicate with inquiring consumers and potential visitors
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com and to use #FloridaNow when updating their status on Twitter
- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to keep Social Accounts active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis, Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, communicate updates with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.
- Monitor and utilize VISIT FLORIDA Social Media to message our status. Use #FloridaNow in social posts.

Media Message: *St. Augustine Ponte Vedra & The Beaches VCB remains in touch with local and state officials and continues to monitor the situation. The safety of our visitors and residents is our primary concern. FloridasHistoricCoast.com offers visitors weather advisories, with links to the official National Weather Service and NOAA. We provide official local information our visitors need to assist them with making the most informed travel planning decisions possible. For additional state-wide information about conditions and lodging availability, go to www.Expedia.com/Florida or www.FloridaNow.com. For current travel conditions around the State of Florida, please visit www.FloridaNow.com.*

Phase IV - Named Storm Passes through North Florida (Post-Tropical Storm/Hurricane - Response)

Internal Office Actions:

Executive Team - In communication with county emergency operations to determine impacted areas and the extent of the damage.

Staff is to first evaluate the safety of their homes and determine if it is safe to return to the office.

Communication

- Communicate with EOC, staff, industry stakeholders, media, consumers and other priority audiences to ensure communications lines are open and response efforts are in place.
- Update content on www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/. Hyper-local weather updates are culled from www.noaa.gov and www.weather.gov reports
- Review information available on www.Floridadisaster.com
- Evaluate if it is appropriate to post Facebook and other social media messaging with relevant status updates and links to www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ and www.FloridaNow.com using #FloridaNow
- Communicate to Lodging partners via iDSS and PartnerCom encouraging them to update availability with www.expedia.com/florida by email to flnorth@expedia.com
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com and to use #FloridaNow when updating their status on Twitter.

- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to keep Social Accounts active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis, Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, keep in communication with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.
- Prepare a release for distribution to the media.
- News Releases are to be distributed from EOC through Constant Contact account using lists: ALL RELEASES, LOCAL MEDIA, and NEWS MEDIA
- Participate in all-industry conference calls to bring the entire state up to speed on the latest developments and VISIT FLORIDA's efforts.

Media Message:

If significant impact to Northeast Florida

The storm has moved offshore/away from Northeast Florida and is no longer a threat to this part of the state. We are working closely with authorities in the impacted area to provide status messages. We are also monitoring communications with the state and the National Weather Service to keep consumers informed. Visitors may still have questions or concerns about their vacation to this part of Florida. For current travel conditions around the State of Florida, please visit www.FloridaNow.com. The information there is provided in real-time by local travel sources around the state to assist with informed travel planning decisions.

Messaging will include relevant information about damage and quotes from local officials with an accurate summary about how FHC recovery plans are being initiated. *If minimal impact on Northeast Florida:*

The storm has moved offshore/away from northeast Florida and is no longer a threat to this part of the state. We are working with authorities in the impacted areas to get status messages out. Florida has many vacation options throughout the state, so there are still things to see and do in Florida. We realize our visitors may still have questions or concerns about their Florida vacation. For current conditions, please monitor www.floridashistoriccoast.com/visitor-info/weather/significant-weather-updates/ for hyper-local weather updates which are culled from www.nhc.noaa.gov and forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=29.8947&lon=-81.3145#.XWfv5ZNKiL4 reports. For information about travel conditions around the state of Florida, please visit www.FloridaNow.com. Information there is provided in real-time by local travel sources around the state to assist visitors with informed travel planning decisions.

If no impact to Northeast Florida:

While Florida's Historic Coast avoided a direct impact, our visitors may still have questions or concerns about their vacation here. Go to www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com or www.FloridaNow.com to get the real-time information they need to assist with making the most informed travel planning decisions possible.

The Brightbell Company will provide inquiring visitors, who may need to travel away from our area, with a list of tourism websites, phone numbers, and other resources to assist them with making new vacation plans.

Stakeholders

Continue to request hotel availability information from the local lodging industry; Alter messaging to Chelsy Young - chelsy@brightbellco.com with Brightbell Company, and social media messaging. Reach out to lodging partners through iDSS and PartnerCom to gather information on available lodging and hospitality services. Encourage partners to keep their information updated with www.Expedia.com/Florida by emailing fnorth@expedia.com

Marketing and Promotions - Adjust advertising and promotions content appropriately.

Phase V - EOC and impacted areas shift to recovery once the evacuation order is called off (Post-Tropical Storm/Hurricane - Recovery)

Executive Team

Executive staff in communication with county emergency operations to determine the impacted areas extent of the damage.

All Staff are to report to the office for further assignments and resume business activity.

- Report key message points and the status of FHC to VISIT FLORIDA for inclusion in their post storm information to www.FloridaNow.org
- Relay to VCB partners that state-wide severe weather updates can be found at www.FloridaNow.com and to use #FloridaNow when updating their status on Twitter.
- Keep Netweave and ENroute Communications updated to keep Social Accounts active and current. Kevin McNulty, kevin@netweaveonline.com; Pamela Whitman, pamela@netweaveonline.com; Rossana Wyatt, rossana@enroutecommunications.com; Marisol Hernandez, marisol@EnrouteCommunications.com; and Gustavo Rivas-Solis, Gustavo@ENrouteCommunications.com. Also, communicate updates with NE Florida Visit Florida Representative Brenna Dacks, BDacks@VisitFlorida.org.
- In addition to our own, monitor and utilize VISIT FLORIDA social media to message our status using #FloridaNow.
- News Releases are to be distributed from EOC through Constant Contact account using lists: ALL RELEASES and NEWS MEDIA

Media Message

Florida's Historic Coast's hospitality and lodging community have returned to operation. However, if visitors still have questions or concerns about their vacation here, visit <https://www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com> or contact lodging confirming your accommodations.

Resources and Contacts:

Wayne Larson, Director of the Office of Public Affairs
904.209.0542 – office
904.687.9816 cell
sicpublicaffairs@sicfl.us

<https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsEOC>

<https://twitter.com/StJohnsEOC>

<https://www.facebook.com/SJCFL/>

Tom Stallings – AV Producer
904.209.0558
tstallings@sicfl.us

<https://twitter.com/StJohnsCounty>

St. Johns County EOC Hotline - -
904.824.5550

<http://www.sjcemergencymanagement.org/>

<http://www.co.st-johns.fl.us/>

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/hurricanes>

Social: