



## NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Volusia County hurricane shelters: What you need to know**

#### *Key points:*

- *Shelters should be used only as a last resort.*
- *They do not provide luxury accommodations.*
- *If you plan to stay in a special needs shelter, register now.*

When disasters occur, Volusia County Government and Volusia County Schools join forces to provide emergency shelters for people who are unable to evacuate or ride out the storm in their homes.

"Shelters do not provide luxury accommodations and should be used only as a last resort," Jim Judge, interim director of emergency management, stressed. "The best place to shelter is outside the evacuation area, in a hotel, or in a safe and secure structure with family and friends."

For those who have no alternatives, general, special needs and pet-friendly shelters will be available at key locations across the county during an emergency. Fourteen local schools and the Volusia County Fairgrounds have been identified as potential shelters for 2022. Together, they can provide refuge for up to 5,000 people. If needed, additional shelters will be opened at other facilities.

#### **General population shelters**

General population shelters are well stocked with basic necessities for survival, including food, water and a warm place to sleep. However, shelters will not be able to provide the same level of convenience as a family member's home or a hotel. Shelters offer little privacy. Oftentimes, they can be crowded, noisy and boring.

#### **Special needs shelters**

Special needs shelters, which will be staffed by health care professionals, will be available to provide assistance during evacuations. Evacuees should be accompanied by one, and only one, caregiver.

These shelters are not for isolation patients or people who need 24 hour dedicated care, a hospital bed, ventilator or other complex care. These individuals should discuss other shelter arrangements with their physician or home health service provider or caregiver.

Elderly, physically, mentally and sensory disabled, visually or hearing impaired residents, and those who need supplemental oxygen should register for the special needs shelters program with Volusia County Emergency Management.

"Don't wait until a storm is approaching because our phones will be ringing off the hook," Judge said. "People with special needs should register now."

[www.volusia.org](http://www.volusia.org)

#### **VOLUSIA COUNTY COUNCIL**

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Residents can obtain a special needs shelter registration form by calling 386-258-4088 or downloading it at <http://www.volusia.org/core/fileparse.php/4360/urlt/PSNreg.pdf>.

Special needs evacuees with pets should contact Volusia County Animal Services at 386-248-1790 to discuss assistance for sheltering pets.

### **What you should bring**

Evacuees may need to stay at a shelter for several days. Since space is limited, bring only:

- Folding lounge chair, air mattress or cot along with bedding, pillow and blanket
- Special dietary food, snacks and comfort food
- Extra clothing
- Medications and medical supplies
- Oxygen supplies
- Toiletry items
- Earbuds to listen to music
- A charger for your phone and laptop
- Flashlight and batteries
- Diapers, infant and elderly/disabled necessities
- Time occupiers such as books, magazines, games or cards
- Important papers, credit cards, cash and identification

“You might want to pack your supplies in a rolling suitcase for ease of transport and organization,” Judge suggested.

Although food will be provided at shelters, Judge recommends that evacuees eat a meal before arriving.

Do not bring alcoholic beverages, smoking materials, vaping devices, valuables, weapons, heavy luggage or several pieces of luggage.

Those with pets and service animals are encouraged to use a pet friendly shelter.

### **Transportation to shelters**

Votran and Volusia County Schools provide free transportation to public shelters. All Votran bus stops are evacuation assembly points during a declared emergency evacuation order. If special needs evacuees cannot reach a bus stop, they must call Votran at 386-322-5100 to arrange transportation.

Bus space is limited. Carry-on items are limited to a pillow, blanket and one carry-on bag that is not larger than 22"x16"x8".

### **Returning home**

Every effort will be made to allow evacuees to return to their home and businesses as quickly as possible. Re-entry to evacuated areas will be authorized based on public safety, security and operational needs of search and rescue teams. The re-entry policy will be established as soon as possible and with as few restrictions as possible. The decision to establish general re-entry will be evaluated through continuous coordination among county and state agencies, municipal law enforcement agencies and adjacent counties and will be announced through the news media.

### **Additional information**

For more information, visit [www.volusia.org/emergency](http://www.volusia.org/emergency) and [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org).

## **List of potential shelters for 2022**

Fifteen Volusia County locations have been identified as potential shelters for 2022.

Keep in mind that some will fill up quickly and some might not open at all. Residents are advised to check availability by calling the Citizens Information Center at 866-345-0345.

### **General population, no pets**

- Ormond Beach Middle School, 151 Domicilio Ave., Ormond Beach
- Mainland High School, 1255 W. International Speedway Blvd., Daytona Beach
- Sweetwater Elementary School, 5800 Victoria Gardens, Port Orange
- New Smyrna Beach High School, 1015 10th St., New Smyrna Beach
- T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School, 100 E. Washington Ave., Pierson
- Citrus Grove Elementary School, 729 Hazen Road, DeLand
- DeLand High School, 800 Hill Ave., DeLand
- University High School, 1000 W. Rhode Island Ave., Orange City

### **People and pets**

- Volusia County Fairgrounds, 3150 E. State Road 44, DeLand

### **Special needs, pet friendly**

- Hinson Middle School, 1860 N. Clyde Morris Blvd., Daytona Beach
- Creekside Middle School, 6801 Airport Road, Port Orange
- Atlantic High School, 1250 Reed Canal Road, Port Orange
- Freedom Elementary School, 1395 S. Blue Lake Ave., DeLand
- Galaxy Middle School, 2400 Eustace Ave., Deltona
- Heritage Middle School, 1001 Parnell Court, Deltona