

**WSC ADVISORY #2024-010**  
**PRIORITIES FOR ASSISTING CLIENTS IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANE HELENE**

**ACTION REQUIRED**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2024**

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) appreciates the critical role that Qualified Organizations (QOs), Waiver Support Coordinators (WSCs), and Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+) Consultants have in keeping clients safe during emergencies.

On September 24, 2024, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order (EO) 24-209, amending and ratifying EO 24-208, which declared a state of emergency for certain Florida counties due to Hurricane Helene. Those counties are:

Alachua, Baker, Bay, Bradford, Brevard, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highland, Hillsborough, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Monroe, Nassau, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington

This advisory provides guidance related to recovery after the storm. The top priority of the Agency is the health, safety, and well-being of our clients and their families who are a vulnerable and sacred population.

Immediately post storm, QOs, WSCs, and CDC+ Consultants must focus on outreach and check-ins with APD clients to verify the existence and intensity of any unmet needs of our clients and their families. Face-to-face visits are the preferred method of contact. These contacts shall serve as confirmation of the health, safety, and well-being of our clients and their families.

QOs, WSCs, and CDC+ Consultants must take immediate steps to resolve concerns. Any concerns, of any magnitude, regarding the health, safety and well-being of our clients and their families, must be immediately reported to the [APD Region Office](#) that serves the county in which the client resides.

Please remain vigilant in monitoring service delivery and ensuring that providers are carrying out services in accordance with the clients person-centered support plan and approved service authorizations.

Providers are responsible for ensuring continuity of care for APD clients and must continue to provide services in accordance with service authorizations.

Per the iBudget Waiver Coverage and Limitations Handbook, Rule 59G-13.070, Florida Administrative Code, service authorizations may not be approved retroactively. However, the iBudget Handbook allows for an exception in limited circumstances to consider a health or safety risk or emergency situations. APD will grant retroactive authorizations to address critical health and safety needs of the clients during the disaster and recovery in designated State of Emergency areas. Please work with providers to ensure that documentation is maintained to support service delivery.

As always, please continue to maintain progress notes in APD iConnect for all contacts, visits, and assistance provided on behalf of the client.

Thank you for your continued assistance in meeting the needs of APD clients.