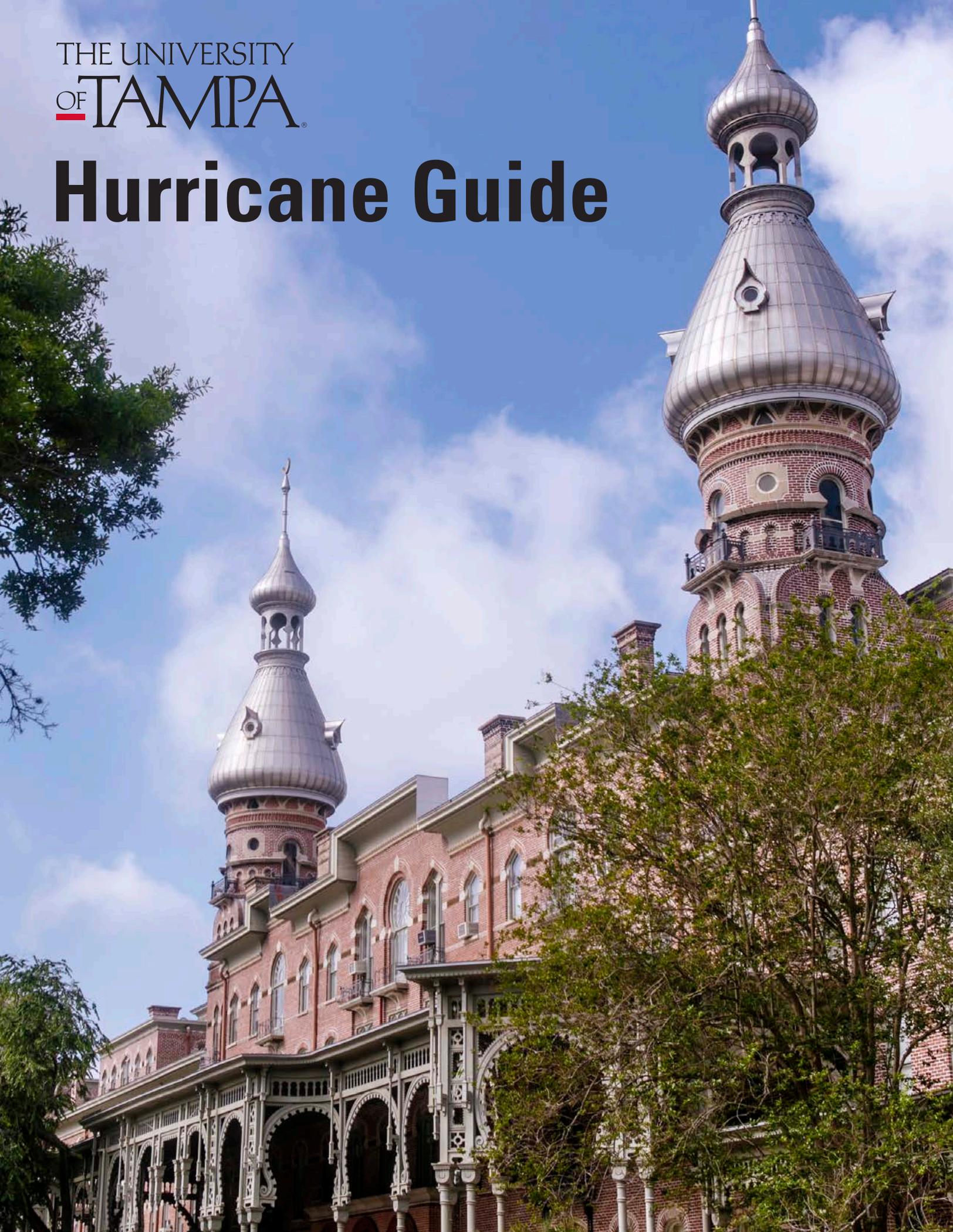


THE UNIVERSITY  
OF TAMPA

# Hurricane Guide



## Important Sources of Information

All official information regarding campus closures, class cancellation, evacuation, and return will be communicated through UT global emails, on the UT website at [ut.edu/about-ut/university-services/emergency/tropical-weather-alerts](https://ut.edu/about-ut/university-services/emergency/tropical-weather-alerts) and available on the emergency phone line at (813) 257-4636. The emergency line will activate no more than 120 hours before a storm's impact.

### UT Operations

The Office of Operations website has information regarding hurricane preparedness and other campus safety initiatives.

#### [ut.edu/emergency](https://ut.edu/emergency)

Emergency Information Line:  
(813) 257-4636 (INFO)

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### National Hurricane Center

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) is the official source for predictions, advisories, warnings, satellite images and analysis of hazardous tropical weather.

#### [nhc.noaa.gov](https://nhc.noaa.gov)

Twitter: [@NHC\\_Atlantic](https://twitter.com/NHC_Atlantic)

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### Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The "Ready" website has information to help you prepare for disasters. This includes putting together an emergency plan and emergency supply kit.

#### [ready.gov](https://ready.gov)

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### Florida Division of Emergency Management

FDEM provides pre- and post-event information and planning tools on their websites.

#### [floridadisaster.org](https://floridadisaster.org)

### SMART Mobile Alert

Spartan Mobile Alert (SMART) is UT's emergency notification system. The SMART service is only used in potential or developing emergency circumstances. You will receive a UT text message alert advising you of the situation and where to get additional information and details. Faculty, staff and students are strongly encouraged to include their cell phone number in Workday to receive SMART alerts.

#### [ut.edu/about-ut/university-services/emergency/spartan-mobile-alert--\(smart\)](https://ut.edu/about-ut/university-services/emergency/spartan-mobile-alert--(smart))

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### Local Community Emergency Management Resources

Local emergency management partners provide evacuation route directions, shelter locations and other information specific to your area.

#### Hillsborough County Emergency Management

[hillsboroughcounty.org/emergency](https://hillsboroughcounty.org/emergency)

(813) 236-3800

#### Pinellas County Emergency Management

[pinellascounty.org/emergency](https://pinellascounty.org/emergency)

(727) 464-3800

#### Pasco County Emergency Management

[pascocountyfl.net/365/emergency-management](https://pascocountyfl.net/365/emergency-management)

(727) 847-8137

Your individual preparedness contributes significantly to UT's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from any storm – minor or major. The information contained in this guide is intended to help you prepare. Additional hurricane preparedness information is available from the FEMA website at [ready.gov/hurricanes](https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes) as well as other resources listed in this guide.

This guide can serve as your ready reference for the specific activities that are likely to occur should a tropical storm or hurricane threaten the Tampa Bay area. Hurricane season encompasses June through November with August to October being the most active months. Prior to this time, it is important to prepare. Maintain a disaster supply kit, have a plan in place, keep track of the weather and university communications, and be prepared!

## **Hurricane season begins on June 1 and runs through Nov. 30**

Tropical depressions are low-pressure storm systems with maximum sustained surface winds of 38 mph or less. Tropical storms have maximum sustained surface winds of 39-73 mph. Hurricanes are large, spiraling tropical cyclones with wind speeds of 74 mph and can elevate to over 160 mph and unleash more than 2.4 trillion gallons of rain per day. Forty percent of the hurricanes that occur in the U.S. hit Florida, so it's critical for the UT community to be alert and prepared. Remember, tropical storms and hurricanes can intensify and change direction within hours.

The National Weather Service (NWS) and National Hurricane Center (NHC) release information regarding storm strength, forward speed, timing and landfall probabilities. States, communities, local weather forecasters and others rely on this information to decide when to take preparedness actions and to make evacuation recommendations and decisions. UT monitors weather forecasts from the NWS and NHC and receives situational reports from both Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Hillsborough County Office of Emergency Management regarding actions taken for our community.

### **Watch vs Warning**

Hurricane watches and warnings are issued by the National Hurricane Center; these designations correspond to hours before the estimated time of arrival of gale force or hurricane force winds, and the likelihood the event is to occur.

A **watch** lets you know that weather conditions are favorable for a hazard to occur. Watches are issued **48** hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds. During a weather watch, gather awareness of the specific threat and prepare for action – monitor the weather to find out if severe weather conditions have deteriorated and discuss your protective action plans with your family.

A **warning** requires immediate action. Warnings are issued **36** hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds. This **means a weather hazard is imminent** – it is either occurring (for example, a tornado has been spotted) – or it is about to occur at any moment. It is important to act during a weather warning.

Watches and warnings associated with tropical weather are:

**Tropical Storm Watch** – Tropical storm conditions are *possible* within the specified area.

**Hurricane Watch** – Hurricane conditions are *possible* within the specified area.

**Tropical Storm Warning** – An announcement that tropical-storm conditions are *expected* within the specified area.

**Hurricane Warning** – Hurricane conditions are *expected* within the specified area.

**Extreme Wind Warning** – Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, *are expected to begin within the hour*.

## Forecast Cone

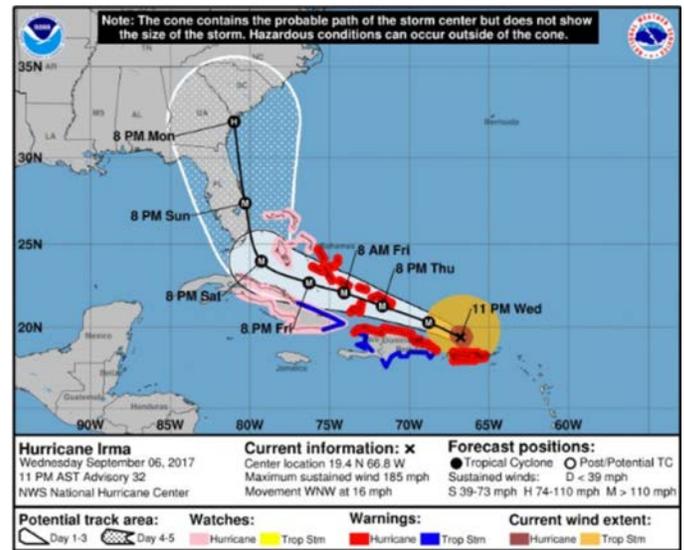
The National Hurricane Center (NHC) uses models and historical data to predict the path of the center of tropical storms and the eye of hurricanes. The forecast cone is a projected path of the hurricane's center within five days. It is important to remember that the effects of a tropical cyclone can be experienced well away from the center of the storm and well outside of the forecast cone. The actual path of the storm's center does not always stay within the cone.

The line in the center of the cone is typically the best estimated path of the threatening storm and can have a margin of error up to 99 miles during a 48-hour outlook. Community members living in any area inside the cone should prepare for some affects from the storm.

If UT lies within the NHC's five-day (120 hour) forecast cone, UT will monitor reports by the NHC, NWS, and county and state agencies regarding the size, intensity, speed and projected place of landfall to assess the projected impact on our area. These reports will guide the University's decision to cancel classes, close or evacuate the campus.

## Wind Scale

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a 1 to 5 rating based on a hurricane's sustained wind speed. Hurricanes reaching Category 3 and higher are considered "major hurricanes" because of their potential for significant loss of life and damage. However, Category 1 and 2 storms are still dangerous and require protective and preparation measures.



Example of a storm path projection showing the "Forecast Cone".

## Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

Category 1	Wind: 74-95 mph/119-153 km/h Damage: Some
Category 2	Wind: 96-110 mph/154-177 km/h Damage: Extensive
Category 3	Wind: 111-129 mph/178-208 km/h Damage: Devastating
Category 4	Wind: 130-156 mph/209-251 km/h Damage: Catastrophic
Category 5	Wind: >156 mph/ >252 km/h Damage: Catastrophic

## Safe Spartan Tip

Do not focus on the exact forecasted track – the cone represents a probable track and hazardous conditions can occur outside of the cone. Listen to local officials and University-distributed information. For more information, go to [weather.gov](http://weather.gov) and click on the Tampa Bay area.

## Preparing for a Hurricane

### Class Cancellations and Campus Closures/Evacuations

Communications regarding class cancellations, campus closures, evacuations and re-openings will be posted to the main UT website and sent to students and employees via phone and email as a UT Alert and/or through global messages. It is important to monitor official UT communications during emergencies as conditions can change rapidly. Continue to check your UT email and the UT website for information. Students and employees should also verify they are enrolled in SMART.

Should it be necessary to evacuate the campus, faculty members will communicate with students regarding assignments and, if possible, remain in touch with students via email. Prior to any evacuation, resident students will meet with their resident assistant (RA) to review procedures.

### Make a plan

You should begin making a general evacuation plan now. As the storm nears, communicate your evacuation plan to family, friends and coworkers so someone knows where you are. If you change your plan, make sure to communicate the change. Students should have conversations with their families to review their hurricane plans and discuss where they will go in the event the campus is evacuated.

Visit [FLgetaplan.org](http://FLgetaplan.org) for assistance developing an emergency plan.

Visit [FloridaDisaster.org](http://FloridaDisaster.org) to find evacuation zones and [FEMA.gov](http://FEMA.gov) to find flood zones by address.

### Disaster Supply Kit

It is important to maintain a disaster supply kit year-round with enough supplies to last 72 hours. Supply kits should include, but are not limited to:

- Water, one gallon per person, per day;
- Non-perishable food;
- Manual can opener;
- Battery-powered or hand crank; AM/FM radio;
- NOAA Weather Radio with extra batteries;
- Flashlight with extra batteries;
- First aid kit;
- Personal hygiene items;
- Blanket;
- Extra clothes and comfortable, closed-toe walking shoes;
- Medications;
- Cash.

Visit [ready.gov/kit](http://ready.gov/kit) for more information on putting together a disaster supply kit.

### Residence Evacuation Preparation

Take your most important belongings, valuables, and personal documents with you. Students should remember to take course materials with them.

When evacuating, completely empty and unplug your refrigerator and wrap towels around the base to absorb water due to defrosting. Unplug all power cords before leaving. Close and lock your windows tightly. Do not tape your windows. Move any items that may be damaged by water off the floor and cover electronic items with plastic. Remove any trash, and lock the door.

## **Pets/ESAs**

Do not leave your animals behind. Prepare a safe location for your animals – this may be with you, with a friend, in a kennel in a non-evacuation zone, or in a pet-friendly shelter. Pet friendly shelters will only accept dogs and cats with up-to-date vaccinations and registration. Visit your county's emergency management website for more information.

### **Pet Disaster Supplies:**

- Proper ID collar with current rabies vaccination;
- Vaccination paperwork;
- Crate and leash. Cats need a crate large enough to contain litter and food/water;
- Ample food, water, treats, cleaning supplies and litter, if necessary;
- Any required medication.

## **Transportation**

If leaving the area by car, fill your gas tank and prepare your vehicle for travel as the storm approaches. Gas supplies are often scarce, and prices may increase due to high demand during an evacuation. If your vehicle remains on campus, move it to the designated locations with the garages. Ensure that your valid UT parking decal is properly displayed so you can be identified as the owner.

If you choose to evacuate by plane, be aware that returning to campus may be challenging due to fuel rationing, demand for flights and overwhelmed airports.

You should plan for two evacuation locations: (1) in your county or within close driving distance of your residence, and (2) a non-local location, away from the storm's path. Consider developing a plan to share driving and lodging expenses with friends or family.

## **Evacuation Shelters**

Shelter space is often limited, and it is difficult to safeguard your personal belongings. Evacuation shelters do not have generators and offer no services other than a basic food provision, water and limited amount of floor space per person. There are no cots, pillows or blankets provided. You should treat shelters as a refuge of last resort. Attempt to stay with friends and family in non-evacuation zones, or other lodging alternatives.

Shelters are activated during hurricanes by the county emergency management officials. Pre-registration is required for special needs shelters and may also be required for pet-friendly shelters. Contact your county emergency management agency to register.

If you evacuate to a shelter, you should take the following items:

- Medications;
- Pillow, blanket, air mattress and/or cot;
- Food for special dietary needs;
- Passports and hard to replace documents in a secure plastic bag;
- Cash;
- Identification;
- Clothing for 5-7 days, socks and sturdy shoes;
- Personal hygiene items;
- Quiet games, reading material, music player, headphones and batteries;
- Flashlight and extra batteries;
- Keys to your car and residence;
- First aid kit.

If UT's campus is required to evacuate, residential students will be provided information regarding shelter plans through the Office of Residence Life.

### **Safe Spartan Tip**

The National Hurricane Center is the best resource to find accurate and up-to-date forecasts.

## **Returning to Campus**

The severity and intensity of damage caused by the storm on roadways, transportation routes and campus will contribute to UT's decision to reoccupy campus. Valid and current identification such as a driver's license, Spartan ID, and proof of residence may be required at checkpoints for evacuees to return to the area.

All students, faculty and staff should continually monitor the UT website and email communications for up-to-date information regarding campus operations. The University will make all attempts to re-open and resume classes as quickly as possible but must make every effort to provide a safe environment for the UT community to return.

## Safe Spartan Tip

Absences due to a storm are considered unscheduled excused absences by the General Attendance Policy, but you should be prepared to provide documentation or verification that the absence was a consequence of a storm. You should also contact your professors to let them know when you cannot attend class due to a storm, and work with your faculty members to make up the work you missed.

## Hurricane Season and Public Health

A public health emergency adds an extra level of stress and preparation to the standard hurricane season. You are encouraged to make multiple plans and plan early. Health emergencies, including infectious diseases, present challenging, fluid situations and personal health guidelines may change at any time.

If you must evacuate, a shelter should be your last resort. Consider staying with friends or family who live outside the evacuation area and away from storm surge risk areas. If you must go to a shelter, be aware there may be operational changes. Typically, shelters are loud and crowded, and physical distancing guidelines will limit the number of people allowed in a shelter. During a major health crisis, masks and other personal protective equipment may be required, and there may be temperature checks and symptom screenings for evacuees and shelter staff.

Consider updating your hurricane kit to include masks, soap, gloves and hand sanitizer. Begin to build your kit early as supplies have been limited due to recent health events and may continue to be limited by stores to allow everyone has access to crucial supplies. If you are evacuating with friends, consider building and sharing a kit together.

If you, or a loved one, is part of the high-risk population for an infectious disease, explore your evacuation and shelter options early. Counties may offer and open non-traditional shelter options including hotel and motel locations to adhere to public health recommendations.

# Hurricane Disaster Kit Checklist

- Medications
- Pillow, blanket, air mattress and/or cot
- Passports and hard-to-replace documents in a secure plastic bag
- Cash
- Personal and student identifications
- Clothing for five to seven days, including socks and sturdy shoes
- Personal hygiene items
- Quiet games, reading material, music player, headphones and batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Keys to your car and residence
- First aid kit
- Bottled water, snacks and non-perishable nutritious food
- Can opener
- Food for special dietary needs
- Masks/facial coverings
- Gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Battery-powered or hand crank AM/FM radio
- NOAA Weather radio with extra batteries