



**American
Red Cross**

Kentucky Floods

SIX-MONTH UPDATE
FEBRUARY 2023

Standing with Kentucky Residents in the Aftermath of Destructive Floods

In late July 2022, torrential rains brought historic flooding to the hollows and river valleys of eastern Kentucky. Deadly flash floods devastated many of the tight-knit communities across the region — taking more than 40 lives — and caused widespread and catastrophic damage, submerging or sweeping away homes, businesses, vehicles and critical infrastructure like bridges and electrical power lines.

In response, hundreds of American Red Cross volunteers and employees worked around the clock to provide refuge for hard-hit residents who fled their homes just ahead of the raging waters, often with little more than the clothes on their backs. Both in emergency shelters and through visits to affected communities, Red Cross disaster workers from near and far offered warm meals, relief supplies, basic health services and more to residents coping with crushing losses and difficult conditions in the wake of the floods.

As part of this vital aid, we delivered immediate financial assistance to help families address urgent needs for food, clothing, transportation and lodging. Red Cross care teams also met with families who lost loved ones to offer specialized support, including disaster mental health services and other information.

This compassionate care meant everything to flood survivors like Joshua Wagers, who was staying with friends in Jackson, Kentucky, when rising floodwaters quickly engulfed their house. Joshua badly lacerated his ankle while being plucked by a helicopter from an upstairs window and then suffered broken ribs from striking the side of a waiting boat as he swung from the rescue cable. After being discharged from the emergency room, he was directed to the Red Cross shelter, where a volunteer helped tend his wounds.

“I’m grateful for the Red Cross,” Joshua said. “They took me in and treated me like family.”

Six months later, eastern Kentucky residents are still trying to move on from the heartbreaking damage caused to homes and livelihoods by these terrifying floods. Powered by generous support from donors, the Red Cross continues to stand with affected individuals and families to offer support for recovery. In the months since the floods, we have provided additional financial assistance to help some of the hardest-hit residents meet their recovery needs. We have also offered guidance with recovery planning, help locating available community resources and much more as families continue to pick up the pieces and rebuild their lives.

Response at a Glance*

More than **750 Red Cross disaster workers** mounted a massive response to help people impacted by the July 2022 Kentucky floods. They have:



88,000

Served more than **88,000 meals and snacks** with partners



16,600

Reached an estimated **16,600 people with disaster relief and recovery services**



14,000

Provided nearly **14,000 overnight shelter stays** with partners



1,400

Provided more than **1,400 households with relief supplies**

Bringing Help and Hope in the Wake of Devastation

Donor-supported aid provided during the Red Cross response made a crucial difference for thousands of eastern Kentucky residents dealing with the heartbreaking effects of these flash floods. Many of them had nowhere else to turn.



Joyce Ann Hensley — Breathitt County

After Joyce Ann Hensley's Breathitt County home was demolished by the eastern Kentucky floods, she sought safety at the Wolfe County High School Red Cross shelter. Joyce Ann reflected on the loss she experienced, saying "It's destroyed me. You can't even walk into my trailer. Everything is muddy."

While she hoped to retrieve a number of belongings with sentimental value from her home, like a collection of plush animals and some of her favorite CDs and movies, Joyce Ann said her family was relieved just to learn that she and her husband were alive. Like many eastern Kentucky residents, she endured significant lingering power outages, which resulted in delays contacting relatives who don't live nearby.

Despite her traumatic experience, Joyce Ann still managed to smile. "The Red Cross has done good with me," said Joyce Ann. "They have been very nice to me. This right here — a roof over my head and food to eat." In addition to food and shelter, a Red Cross Disaster Health Services nurse also replaced Joyce Ann's prescription medications that were lost in the floods.



Yolanda Haynes — Wolfe County

Yolanda Haynes and her boyfriend were already coping with difficult times last July. They were in a car accident during a visit to Alabama, and once they made it home, the floods hit eastern Kentucky. “It’s devastating. The water went up to the ceiling and over our roof,” said Yolanda.

The couple found refuge at a Red Cross shelter. “It’s been pretty good staying here. The Red Cross replaced my diabetic insulin and pills. I appreciate that,” said Yolanda. She commented on the impact the storm had on the area. “I’ve seen hurricanes roll through but never experienced flooding like this.”

Yolanda doubted much could be salvaged from her home. “The trailer is off the base and the kitchen is on the ground,” she said. “As far as we know, we are unable to save anything.” She wondered whether her experience was important enough to share, but Red Cross workers let Yolanda know that her story would inspire others to not give up. “I’m just grateful for what I do have,” she said.

Phyllis Bush — Breathitt County

Phyllis Bush and her husband were rescued twice by boats within a few hours as flood waters rose and forced the couple from their home. Phyllis said her husband was sitting in their vehicle keeping an eye on water levels when he dozed off briefly and awoke to find that water levels had risen so much it was no longer safe to drive.

The couple was standing in their home in knee deep water when they were rescued by boat. They were transported to an intersection where her son-in-law and daughter picked them up and took them to her daughter’s home; however, a second boat rescue was needed a few hours later, when rapidly rising flood waters forced the family to flee her daughter’s home as well.

The boat rescue squads transported them to a bus headed to the Red Cross shelter. “We checked in with Red Cross, and from there, we’ve just been cared for like babies, every little bit,” Phyllis said. “They come by and check on us.” The Red Cross provided Phyllis and her family with shelter and food, as well as replacements for some health care items that were left behind when they had to evacuate.





Flood survivor Joshua Wagers speaks with Red Cross Disaster Health Services volunteer Pepi Nelson from Valdosta, Georgia, who helped tend injuries he suffered while being rescued from the flooding. To learn more about this disaster and stories of people we've helped, please visit our story map at redcross.org/kentuckyfloods. Photo by Kevin Suttlehan/American Red Cross

Providing Ongoing Recovery Assistance for Affected Residents

As many people who were severely affected by the Kentucky floods struggled to pick up the pieces, the Red Cross provided emergency funds, which can help families replace clothes or food, offset transportation costs, or support any other immediate needs. In the six months since these devastating events, the Red Cross has offered additional “bridge” financial assistance to some of the most severely affected individuals and families, helping them overcome obstacles on their journey from hardship to recovery.

As of January 28, 2023, we had provided relief and recovery assistance totaling approximately \$4.8 million, reaching thousands of households devastated by last July's historic flooding. This financial assistance will allow people to make their own decisions and overcome the barriers standing in the way of their recovery, including housing and transportation expenses, job-related needs, childcare and accessing health and mental health services.

Recovery from destructive disasters like these is a team effort, and trained Red Cross volunteers and disaster workers continue to collaborate closely with nonprofit and civic organizations, local businesses and government partners to care for communities and families throughout this process. These volunteers are working with flood survivors to plan their next steps and identify available recovery resources, as well as offering comfort, encouragement and guidance along their challenging journey.

In addition to financial assistance and one-on-one support, the Red Cross is making plans to fund work carried out by partner organizations with specialized expertise. We will support these organizations as they address unmet longer-term recovery needs and help people in the affected communities become better prepared for and more resilient against future crises.

Generous Supporters Power Kentucky Floods Relief and Recovery

Thanks to our compassionate donors, the Red Cross has raised \$10.9 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help people affected by the floods in Kentucky. As of January 28, 2023, the Red Cross had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$10.4 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for these floods. We will continue to program the remaining funds to provide and support services for both individual and community long-term recovery in the impacted region.

Kentucky Floods Expenses and Commitments¹ (in millions)

As of January 28, 2023

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Financial Assistance	Community Recovery and Resilience	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$0.3	\$0.4	\$4.8	—	\$5.5	53%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$1.1	\$0.5	\$0.4	—	\$2.0	19%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$0.5	—	—	—	\$0.5	5%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.3	—	\$0.1	—	\$0.4	4%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$0.2	\$0.1	\$0.1	—	\$0.4	4%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.2	\$0.1	—	—	\$0.3	3%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.1	—	\$0.1	—	\$0.2	2%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.1	—	—	—	\$0.1	1%
Total Program Expenses	\$2.8	\$1.1	\$5.5	—	\$9.4	90%
Management, general and fundraising ²					\$1.0	10%
Total Spent and Committed					\$10.4	100%
Additional budgeted recovery programs					\$0.5	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					—	
Total Budget					\$10.9	

¹ Dollar figures in all tables are rounded to the nearest \$100,000; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

² Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support our more than 17,000 employees and nearly 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. Ninety cents of every dollar spent for Kentucky Floods will support delivering care and comfort to help people affected by the floods in Kentucky.

Thank you!

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of more than 60,000 disasters each year — including home fires, severe weather, floods and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and throughout their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.