

# Red Cross Deploys Volunteers To Puerto Rico And Alaska; More Disaster Volunteers Needed

by Joe Zydlo

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ST. LOUIS - From Hurricane Fiona to Typhoon Merbok, and wildfires across the West Coast, American Red Cross volunteers from across the Missouri and Arkansas Region

continue to answer the call. Dedicated American Red Cross workers have been providing critical aid to wildfire evacuees and are now assisting those in Puerto Rico and Alaska.

The American Red Cross of Missouri and Arkansas has stepped up to deploy volunteers to assist as wildfires continue to ravish multiple areas. As of Wednesday morning, 20 volunteers from across the region have raised their hands to respond, with 11 volunteers on the ground in impacted areas, while nine are headed to Puerto Rico.

“As disasters wreak havoc from coast to coast and beyond, volunteers from the Missouri and Arkansas Region continue to step up to help,” said Chris Harmon, Regional Disaster Officer for American Red Cross of Missouri-Arkansas. “Disasters come in all shapes and sizes, and we need more volunteers to not only help respond to large-scale disasters like this, but also to help at home to respond to local disasters that happen every day, such as home fires.”

Hurricane Fiona hit Puerto Rico with 75 mph winds and heavy rain, knocking out power to the entire island. Some areas could see as much as 30 inches of rain before the storm moves away from Puerto Rico. Flooding, mudslides and debris are making it difficult to restore power and assess the damage. Hundreds have been evacuated and people are being urged to move to higher ground now. Rescuers have conducted multiple swift water rescues. Hurricane Fiona comes just on the heels of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hurricane Maria, which devastated much of Puerto Rico and left mass destruction across the island.

The American Red Cross is responding in western Alaska where Typhoon Merbok struck over the weekend, causing flooding powerful enough to uproot buildings and forcing residents to seek shelter. Towns and villages along the coast are facing flooded homes, power outages and damage to the infrastructure. With winter’s freezing temperatures expected in the coming weeks, flooded homes and airport runways are a major concern. Air travel and delivery of goods and supplies by barge will halt soon because of the incoming cold weather. In some remote areas, these are the main methods of getting supplies.

You can help people affected by disasters like storms and countless other crises by making a gift to Red Cross Disaster Relief. Your gift is a commitment to helping people in need, and every single donation matters. Your gift enables the Red Cross to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from disasters big and small. Visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org), call 800-RED-CROSS, or text the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

More volunteers are also needed to not only respond to large scale disasters like Hurricane Fiona and Typhoon Merbok, but to also respond to local disasters like home fires. To volunteer, please go to [redcross.org/volunteertoday](https://redcross.org/volunteertoday).

***About the American Red Cross:***

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](https://redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](https://CruzRojaAmericana.org), or follow us on Twitter at @RedCross.*