

Hurricane Helene

Answers to commonly asked questions:

I would like to volunteer to help North Carolina disaster victims. How may I do that?

Click [HERE](#) to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

I am a PT/PTA licensed out-of-state and would like to provide physical therapy services to help North Carolina residents impacted by Hurricane Helene:

During periods of official disaster designation, physical therapists (PT) and physical therapist assistants (PTA) from states outside of North Carolina (NC) may be authorized to practice in NC under the following guidelines:

- PT and PTA licensees from other states who have been displaced during Hurricane Helene and wish to practice in NC should contact the Board to see if they qualify for an exemption from licensure during the recovery.
- Those PT and PTA licensees not qualified for an exemption, wishing to assist in physical therapy services in NC must possess a NC license to practice physical therapy or a PT Compact privilege. Link for information on obtaining [PT Compact privileges](#).
- Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants holding an active, compact privilege from NC can practice in North Carolina at any time.

During a disaster, can I be required to come to work? If I refuse, does this constitute patient abandonment? If I do report for work, what do I do if my employer requires me to stay longer than my designated shift and I am fatigued?

In a disaster situation, available caregivers, licensees and managers/administrators need to work together to provide care for essential client needs while ensuring rest periods for one another.

It is essential that Physical Therapists, Physical Therapist Assistants, managers/administrators and staff work together to provide safe care to all clients in a manner consistent with NC Practice Act and Board rules. Clear communication is essential to arrive at solutions that best focus on essential client care needs without compromising either patient safety or a physical therapy license. Short staffing and extended work hours pose considerable challenges for licensed Physical Therapists, Physical Therapist Assistants, and managers/administrators in emergency situations.

Governmental Resources regarding Hurricane Helene.

Link to information from [NC Department of Public Safety – Hurricane Helene](#)

Link to information for [NC Department of Health and Human Services \(English\)](#)

Link to information for [NC Department of Health and Human Services \(Spanish\)](#)