

HURRICANE MELISSA

Jamaica

PAHO



Pan American
Health
Organization



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Americas

Situation Report #1 - 27-October-2025

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tropical Storm Melissa formed late Tuesday morning, 21 October 2025.
- On 23 October 2025, a Hurricane Watch and Tropical Storm Warning was put into effect for Jamaica. This was upgraded to a Hurricane Warning on 24 October at 8pm local time.
- On 24 October 2025, the Prime Minister issued an Order pursuant to section 26(2) of the Disaster Risk Management Act. to declare Jamaica an area under threat due to the potential impact of Tropical Storm Melissa.
- Public hospitals have been operating for emergency services only since 23 October. The average staff coverage at the national level is 80%.
- All health facilities are currently connected to electricity and water, as well as operational generators. Only minor leaks have been reported.
- On 25 October, one death was confirmed due to injuries from a fallen tree trunk during preparedness activities.
- The MOHW developed a preliminary health needs list for hospital emergency care equipment, field hospital and equipment, vaccine refrigerators, protective gear, consumables, generators and environmental health items. A formal request for support is being submitted to PAHO.
- The activation level of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was upgraded to Level 3 on 23 October 2025, for preparedness efforts.

IN NUMBERS

Approx. 2.8m
(entire population)

**Potentially
exposed¹**

01 Death²

01 Injured³

00 Missing⁴

00 Evacuated⁵

**0 Health
facilities with
major damage**

1: Statistical Institute of
Jamaica data

2,3,4,5: Ministry of Health and
Wellness report (26 October 2025)



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Service delivery

Primary Care:

- Savanna-la-Mar Health Centre operated successfully on Saturday, 25 October from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- All other health centres were operational until 2 pm on 24 October and have since closed.

Secondary Care:

- Public hospitals have been operating for emergency services only since 23 October. Non-urgent patients are being discharged.
- Bed Occupancy:
 - National average: 62%
 - Savanna-la-Mar Public General Hospital: 14 patients over capacity.
 - May Pen Hospital: 3 patients over capacity.
- Staffing:
 - Most hospitals report **>90% coverage**.
 - Southern Region: **85–93%**
 - Western Region: **74–93%**
 - Southeast Region: **62–100%**
 - Northeast Region: **63–85%**

Clinical Protocols: Reviewed and current, including:

- Dengue Fever Management (October 2023)
- COVID-19 Management (July 2024)
- Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines (July 2024)
- Discharge Protocol for COVID-19 Positive Persons (July 2024)

Surveillance

- The first shelter was activated on 24 October 2025, in St. Thomas. Ongoing surveillance in the shelters is being conducted, with data collection tools updated to include age breakdowns (under 5 years and 5 years and over) for better accuracy. No health concerns have been reported among residents.
- On 24 October, one injury occurred when a fallen tree trunk struck an adult male during pre-hurricane activities. On 25 October, his death was confirmed due to injuries from a fallen tree trunk.

Vaccination Services

- The parishes are currently consolidating their vaccine storage sites to safeguard their supplies in the wake of the hurricane.

Nutrition

- Nutrition and dietetic services report having at least a 3 to 5-day food supply for hospitals for all staff and patients.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

- The mental health team reported an increase in patient discharges, adequate staffing, and crisis response measures that have been implemented across all regions. Emphasis was placed on support for the homeless populations.

Environmental Health

- Vector control activities are ongoing and will resume full-scale operations post-hurricane. Two press releases related to mental health and vector control disruptions were issued within the last 24 hours.

Imaging Services

- Imaging services are operational across most facilities.
- Contingency measures are in place and have been utilized.
- Power backup issue: St. Ann's Bay Hospital reported the digital X-ray machine is not connected to a generator, making it inoperable during power outages.

Laboratory Services

- The National Laboratory Services are fully operational, with electricity and general operations intact for both the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) and the National Blood Transfusion Services. Staff are ready and in place. The buildings are prepared for adverse weather, and generator repairs are complete.
- All necessary supplies are available, including water for sample processing, drinking and sanitary purposes. Reagents are sufficient for up to three months.
- The Kingston Public Hospital analyzer is out of service; therefore, samples are processed at the NPHL with daily transportation support. Bacteriology services are suspended due to a faulty air conditioning unit, expected to be repaired by 27 October.
- There are 15 platelet units remaining, and blood stock is adequate for three days.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- Health Advisories for the Public commenced on 22 October 2025, using prepositioned messages for Severe Weather/Tropical Storm. Press release and Public Service Announcements advised the public in the following areas:
 - Medications Safety
 - Instructions to Pregnant Women, the disabled and the elderly
 - Safe storage of food and water
 - Access to services from health facilities
 - Official sources of information
- Several focused messages were delivered via radio and social media posts. Flyers targeting specific populations have been published.
- An interview focused on mental health was held with Dr. Kevin Goulbourne. Additional content related to environmental health is currently being created.



HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

- There is the potential for heightened risk of transmission of respiratory, vector-borne, food-borne and water-borne diseases due to the potential for lack of running water, pooling of water, and lack of electricity. MOHW is closely monitoring the preparedness of the surveillance and laboratory systems and case management.
- Telephone services and internet connectivity are being monitored to ensure timeliness of alerts and reports. No issues have been noted for attention.
- MOHW will monitor burn-out of staff and impacts on health infrastructure to inform service continuity during the emergency preparedness/response period.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- On Friday, 24 October 2025, the Prime Minister issued an Order pursuant to section 26(2) of the Disaster Risk Management Act to declare Jamaica an area under threat due to the potential impact of Tropical Storm Melissa. This declaration empowers the Government to implement precautionary and protective measures to safeguard lives, property, and critical infrastructure.
- Minor challenges in health institutions were reported; sandbagging and drainage clearance are underway.

- In the Southeast region, Spanish Town Hospital is managing localized flooding between A&E and Maternity (pumps are being used and patients are being migrated) and Bustamante Hospital resolved electrical issues in ICU and temporarily relocated patients to the cardiac area of the ICU.

Electricity and water:

- All facilities are currently connected to electricity and water, as well as operational generators, even if the fuel reserve is variable.
 - Mandeville: 40 days
 - May Pen: 3 days
 - Percy Junor & Lionel Town: 7 days
 - Black River: 4 days
- In SERHA, 9 facilities identified an issue with their generators, as listed below. For 15% of the region's generators, a larger diesel tank is recommended. This suggests a systemic vulnerability in fuel storage capacity, which could compromise generator runtime during extended outages, especially in remote or high-demand locations.

Facility	Issue Type
Maxfield Park Health Centre	Replacement Needed
St. Joseph (Clinac)	Turbocharger Replacement
Princess Margaret Hospital	Upgrade Needed
Bath Health Centre	Larger Diesel Tank Recommended
Seafort Health Centre	Larger Diesel Tank Recommended
Isaac Barrant Health Centre	Larger Diesel Tank Recommended
Yallahs Health Centre	Larger Diesel Tank Recommended
Morant Bay Health Centre	Larger Diesel Tank Recommended
Linstead Health Centre	Retired Generator

- In WHRA, 6 facilities identified an issue with their generators, mostly related to a needed replacement (11% of the total). 18% of WHRA facilities suffer serious generators issues, which poses risk to emergency power reliability, especially during peak hurricane impact.

Facility	Issue Type
Adelphi Health Centre	Replacement Needed
Catherine Hall Health Centre	Replacement Needed
Wakefield Health Centre	Replacement Needed
Ulster Spring Health Centre	Manual Operation Required
Warsop Health Centre	Starter Repairs Needed
Clarks Town Health Centre	Battery Malfunction



WASH

- Several water supply systems in Portland, Clarendon, and Manchester parishes have been shut down due to high turbidity, debris, and heavy rainfall. Some communities in Portland have been without water for two to three days. Residents are advised to practice safe rainwater harvesting (using clean containers, boiling water, etc.).
- The MOHW team is monitoring water quality and other aspects of environmental health.



SHELTERS

- Over 800 shelters have been prepared for activation, and 76 are currently activated. There are 972 individuals in shelters, however, four of fourteen parishes have no occupants in the shelters. Clarendon Parish has the highest number, with 311 persons, followed by St. Thomas with 227 persons, and Kingston & St. Andrew with 179 persons. Assessments are being conducted across the parishes; shelter occupancy numbers are expected to increase as the storm progresses.
- Daily monitoring by the public health team continues.



HEALTH NEEDS

Immediate needs

- A preliminary health needs list was developed by the MOHW. The following provision needs were identified:
 - Field hospital equipment
 - Equipment for maintaining service delivery and enhancing the cold chain –generators, incubators, ECGs, defibrillators and vaccine refrigerators, etc.
 - Protective gear and equipment for personnel
 - Consumables
 - Laptops
 - Environmental health equipment
- A meeting was held with the Minister of Health and HEOC with the Incident Manager on 27 October to discuss support from PAHO. We are currently awaiting the formal request letter from MOHW.



RESPONSE

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:

- The National Emergency Operation Center was activated at 12:00 pm (JAM) on 25 October 2025. It is activated at Level 3.
- The MOHW HEOC was activated at 10:00 am (JAM) on 23 October 2025. Twice daily briefing meetings are held at 10am and 3pm to facilitate decision-making for the health response. In attendance are the Permanent Secretary (acting), Chief Medical Officer (acting), Health Disaster Coordinator (HDC) and the PAHO Incident Manager. The national and subnational level EOCs are also represented.
- Daily government press briefings have been conducted since 22 October 2025.
- All government ministries, departments and agencies have been in the field gathering data and information to inform ongoing preparedness activities and upcoming response activities.
- On 27 October 2025 Jamaica's Minister of Health and Wellness made a formal request to PAHO which highlights:
 - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support to address the anticipated trauma and psychological impact on affected communities, with particular attention to vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and persons with pre-existing mental health conditions.
 - Rapid needs assessment to be deployed immediately following the hurricane's passage, enabling systematic identification of priority health needs, service delivery gaps, and resource requirements across affected areas.
 - Technical guidance for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services to ensure preparedness and, enable swift restoration of these essential systems, thereby preventing disease outbreaks and protecting public health throughout the emergency and recovery phases.

PAHO RESPONSE:

- PAHO JAM EOC and Incident Management Team was activated on 26 October 2025.
- PAHO continues to provide technical guidance to the MOHW HEOC and maintains dialogue with the HDC.
- PAHO is represented at the Caribbean Development Partner Group – Disaster Management meetings, with the last meeting on 27 October.

COORDINATION

- PAHO is represented at UN meetings, including the United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETT), with the last meeting on 26 October 2025.
- Regular contact remains with partners and is in coordination regarding possible post-disaster deployment for response support.