

HURRICANE MELISSA

Jamaica

PAHO



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE
Americas

Situation Report #2 - 28-October-2025

HIGHLIGHTS

- As at 8pm local time on 27 October, a hurricane warning remained in effect for the country, with Hurricane Melissa remaining a Category 5 hurricane. The hurricane made landfall in Jamaica on 28 October.
- The entire country is declared to be a threatened area, under Order pursuant to section 26(2) of the Disaster Risk Management Act.
- Public hospitals continue to operate for emergency services only. Staffing remains stable, with average staff coverage at the regional level of 90%.
- All health facilities are currently connected to electricity and water, as well as operational generators. Only minor leaks have been reported.
- As at 27 October, three deaths have been confirmed due to injuries sustained during preparedness activities.
- PAHO is working to support the MOHW in preparedness and response efforts, particularly in the areas of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, Post-Disaster Infrastructure Assessments, and continuity of health services.
- The activation level of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) remains at Level 3.

IN NUMBERS

Approx. 2.8m
(entire population)

**Potentially
exposed¹**

03 Deaths²

12 Injured³

00 Missing⁴

N/A Evacuated^{5*}

**0 Health
facilities with
major damage**

1: Statistical Institute of
Jamaica data

2,3,4,5: Ministry of Health and
Wellness HEOC report #5
(27 October 2025, 8pm)

*Seventeen communities have been
evacuated

Additional source of data in the report:
NEOC Situation Report #3
(27 October 2025, 8pm)



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Service delivery

Primary Care:

- All health centres remain closed in all 14 parishes and four regions of the country, with no update on reopening operations.

Secondary Care:

- Public hospitals continue to be in operation for emergency services only.
- Bed occupancy remains over 100% capacity in Savanna-la-Mar Public General Hospital in the Western Regional Health Authority (WRHA) and Mandeville Hospital in the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA).
- Two facilities in SRHA (May Pen Hospital and Percy Junor Hospital) and two in the Northeast Regional Health Authority (NERHA) (Port Antonio Hospital and St. Ann's Bay Regional Hospital) have partial functionality, offering Accident and Emergency services and emergency surgeries. Percy Junor Hospital also continues to offer elective surgeries.
- Staffing levels remain stable, with an average of 90% coverage at the regional level. One hospital in the Southeast Regional Health Authority (SERHA) has brought in additional staff.

Surveillance

- Ongoing surveillance in shelters is being conducted. Data collection tools have been updated to include age breakdowns (under 5 years and 5 years and over) for better accuracy. Disaggregated data are also available by sex.
- Data on demographics and health conditions as at 7:00pm local time on 26 October were available for 586 persons in shelter.
 - One case of fever with rash has been reported in a female 5 years of age and over. The case is currently under investigation.
- Three deaths and twelve injuries have been reported between 24 October and 27 October, 8pm local time.
 - All deaths were in males and were related to injuries sustained during hurricane preparedness activities. One suffered head and chest injuries due to a falling tree trunk, one fell from a ladder while cutting tree limbs, and one was electrocuted while cutting a tree limb.
 - Seven injuries were sustained due to a fall, two due to motor vehicle accidents, two from nail injuries to the foot, and one from electrical exposure.

Vaccination Services

- Ongoing efforts are being made to ensure that vaccines are adequately stored and the cold chain is effectively monitored.

Nutrition

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

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

- Continued efforts in risk communication and community engagement aim to keep the public well-informed about where and how to access mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), if needed.
- In response to the official MOHW request for support received on 27 October, PAHO is preparing to deploy an MHPSS specialist to guide the response to the anticipated trauma and psychological impact on affected communities.

Environmental Health

- Due to persistent rains, vector control activities are not taking place in three parishes: Kingston and St. Andrew, St. Catherine, and St. Thomas.

Imaging Services

- Imaging services remain operational across most facilities. Contingency measures are in place and are being utilized. No further updates have been reported.

Laboratory Services

- The National Laboratory Services (NLS) remain fully operational, with electricity and general operations intact for both the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) and the National Blood Transfusion Services (NBTS). All necessary supplies are available with sufficient stock in place. Staff are ready and in place, and the NLS continues to rely on the Health Emergency Operations Centre (HEOC) for transportation services.
- There are 7 platelet units remaining, a change from 15 units reported in the previous report. Blood stock remains adequate for three days.
- The Kingston Public Hospital analyzer remains out of service; therefore, samples are processed at the NPHL with daily transportation support.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- Press releases, Public Service Announcements, radio and social media posts continue to advise the public in the critical areas of preparedness and response, including:
 - Medication Safety
 - Instructions to pregnant women, persons experiencing disability, and older persons
 - Safe storage of food and water
 - Access to services from health facilities
 - Mental health
 - Vector control disruptions
 - Emergency readiness checklists, contact numbers and guidance for evacuations
- A social media video was developed with the Minister of Health and Wellness, acknowledging the three storm-related deaths in preparation for Hurricane Melissa. The opportunity was used to urge the public to exercise extreme caution in preparedness activities.



HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

- There is a heightened risk of transmission of respiratory, vector-borne, food-borne and water-borne diseases due to the impacts on running water, pooling of water, lack of electricity and disruptions to vector control activities. MOHW continues to closely monitor preparedness and response of surveillance and laboratory systems and impacts on continuity of health services and case management.
- Public Health Inspectors have been utilizing an MOHW digitized tool for primary disaster rapid assessment data collection in a field test during preparedness activities. Results of the field test are forthcoming and will inform utilization of the tool in the response phase.
- Telephone services and internet connectivity are being monitored to ensure timeliness of alerts and reports. No issues have been noted for attention.
- MOHW continues to monitor burn-out of staff and impacts on health infrastructure to inform service continuity during the emergency preparedness/response period.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Sandbagging, roof checks and drainage clearance continue as part of preparedness activities.
- Problems persist with generators in SEHRA and WHRA with no updates as of 27 October.
- At least one facility (Ulster Spring Health Centre) has reported requiring manual operation of its generator due to automatic transfer switch (ATS) failure, increasing the risk of delayed power restoration during emergencies.

Phone and Radio communications:

- 216 very high frequency (VHF) radios have been installed across the MOHW under the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) / Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) / “Disaster-Emergency Communication System” (DECOM) project. The HEOC activated daily checks on 26 October 2025.
- 80% of base stations were confirmed to be operational in recent checks, while mobile and handheld radios showed inconsistent responses, prompting follow-up and assessments.
- Three hospitals reported issues either with telephones or Disaster-Emergency Communication System (DECOM) radios.



WASH

- High turbidity and power outages are affecting water systems in the parishes of Portland, Clarendon, and Manchester.
- Impacts on water supply have also been reported due to power outages.
- Chlorine residuals and other water quality surveillance activities were at a minimum due to increased levels of rainfall.
- PAHO is part of the WASH Coordination Platform and has participated in the Caribbean Development Partners Group (CDPG) - WASH Thematic Working Group Meetings for Hurricane Melissa response. Daily WASH meetings were initiated.



SHELTERS

- Approximately 900 emergency shelters have been prepared island-wide, with 694 of all shelters deemed satisfactory for occupancy, considering their public health status for housing members of the public in a disaster situation. Two hundred and sixty-eight (268) shelters have been activated.
- Two-thousand three-hundred and forty (2340) persons were reported to be housed in shelters as at 8pm local time on 27 October.
- Seventeen communities are undergoing evacuation, with confirmation pending on the number of persons impacted.
- Daily monitoring by the public health team continues.



HEALTH NEEDS

Immediate needs

- A preliminary health needs list was developed by MOHW as part of preparedness activities, focusing on support for field hospital equipment, cold chain and service delivery equipment, protective gear and equipment for personnel, consumables, laptops and environmental health equipment. An updated health list is anticipated to be developed based on needs that will be identified during post-impact needs assessments.
- All airports in Jamaica, including Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston and Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay, remain closed, limiting immediate delivery of needed items, and deployment of personnel to support with hurricane response.



RESPONSE

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:

- The National Emergency Operation Center remains activated at Level 3.
- The MOHW HEOC remains activated, with twice daily briefing meetings at 10am and 3pm local time 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 continue to be conducted.
- All government ministries, departments and agencies have been in the field gathering data and information to inform ongoing preparedness activities and upcoming response activities.

PAHO RESPONSE:

- PAHO JAM EOC and Incident Management Team remains activated since 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 28 October.
- PAHO is coordinating anticipated deployment to support the MOHW requests on WASH, MHPSS and infrastructure assessments. PAHO is also supporting coordination with MOHW for the possible deployment of international partners.
- PAHO continues to provide technical support in additional critical areas, including surveillance, vector control, and continuity of health services.

COORDINATION

- PAHO is represented at UN meetings, including the United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETT), with the last meeting held on 26 October 2025.
- Regular contact is established with key health sector partners.