



Dear Industry Partners,

As many of you are well aware by now, Hurricane Irma has strengthened into a Category 5 Hurricane and is currently moving west across the Atlantic Ocean. While we hope for the best, there is a possibility that Irma could have severe impacts on Florida, and we must be prepared for the worst.

Yesterday, Governor Scott issued a State of Emergency to prepare Florida for Hurricane Irma, which allows our emergency management officials to act swiftly in the best interest of Floridians. I would also encourage everyone to visit floridadisaster.org/getaplan/ to get a plan and be prepared ahead of time.

The talented and experienced staff at VISIT FLORIDA has also begun preparing ahead of Hurricane Irma. These preparations include:

- Held a call this afternoon with DMO leaders and emergency contacts, as well as our Board of Directors, to provide updates.
- Activated Banner and Florida Now page on VISITFLORIDA.com to advise consumers.
- Through our partnership with Expedia, Expedia.com/Florida has been activated to provide accommodations availability information for visitors, residents and first responders. (The EAM no longer exists-Expedia is now the sole source for this information)
- Pausing VISIT FLORIDA promotions and marketing advertising.
- Monitoring and responding across all social media accounts to assist consumers. As you are sharing updates on storm impacts via social media, please switch from using #LoveFL to #FloridaNow.
- Pausing back-end work on website to ensure all resources are available to be responsive ahead of, during and after the storm.
- Pausing all staff travel and ensuring staff is available in Tallahassee and able to prepare for the storm.
- Beginning 24 hours out from landfall, our Welcome Centers will begin transitioning away from normal visitor services activities toward emergency information centers that have extended hours.

For real time updates on Hurricane Irma, please visit www.floridadisaster.org.

Stay safe and be prepared.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Lawson', written in a cursive style.

Ken Lawson
President & CEO
VISIT FLORIDA