



# Hurricane Irma DHSMV Response

*A Safer Florida*

September 2017  
Addendum A



# Introduction

Hurricane Irma was a powerful and catastrophic storm; the strongest observed in the Atlantic since Hurricane Wilma in 2005. It was also the most intense hurricane to strike the United States since Katrina in 2005 and the first major hurricane to make landfall in Florida since Wilma.

On September 4, 2017, Governor Scott declared a state of emergency for all 67 counties in Florida. Officials advised residents to stock their hurricane kits and monitor local news for evacuation orders. Governor Scott suspended tolls on all toll roads in Florida starting at 5:00 p.m. on September 5. Mandatory evacuations for the Florida Keys followed the next day. All state offices, including K-12 schools and colleges were closed September 8-11 to allow all Floridians to prepare for Hurricane Irma. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) was prepared.



On September 7, 2017, the entire Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), approximately 1,700 Troopers, started 12-hour shifts, with the primary mission to assist emergency preparedness and response. FHP conducted more than 150 emergency missions, including escorts for numerous fuel trucks, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the National Guard, hospital patients in Broward County, and a Department of Health disaster response communications trailer. Additionally, FHP coordinated multiple requests from local Sheriff's Offices for assistance with evacuation efforts as needs stretched beyond their resources. Furthermore, 10 FHP Troops across the state activated a 33-person Quick Reaction Force (QRF) team for a total of 330 troopers readily available for response where needed. Additionally, the Division of Motorist Services had its Florida Licensing on Wheels (FLOW) mobiles on standby to deploy to impacted areas as needed.

I am extremely proud of DHSMV's response to those we serve and the work captured within this report.

Terry L. Rhodes, DHSMV Executive Director

**Hurricane Irma from space on September 9, 2017, covering the entire state of Florida.**



# Before Irma



On September 4, 2017, Governor Rick Scott declared a state of emergency for Florida. Mandatory and voluntary evacuations were issued in counties statewide. As Hurricane Irma approached, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles began assisting with the largest evacuation in the state's history.



Top: Trooper monitoring evacuations along US 1 northbound in the Florida Keys.  
Bottom: (L) Troopers monitoring traffic along I-95 northbound; southbound traffic is scarce; (R) Trooper monitoring traffic along northbound US 1 in Key Largo.

# FHP Troopers evaluated road conditions, cleared crashes, assisted disabled motorists and escorted evacuees across the state.



**Jimmy Patronis** @JimmyPatronis · Sep 8

No possession is worth your life - evacuate to safety now! Hope for the best but Floridians must be prepared for the worst! #HurricaneIrma

**The Associated Press** @AP

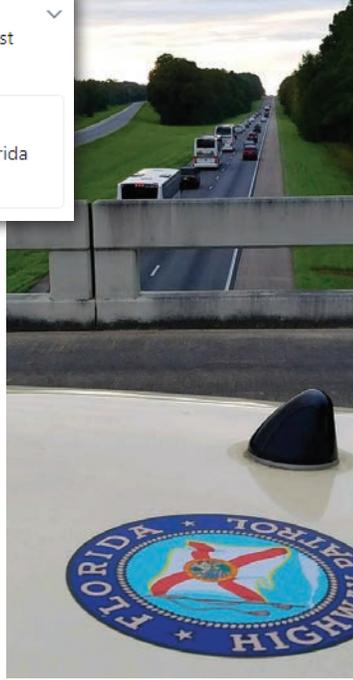
BREAKING: Officials: 5.6 million people have been asked to evacuate Florida ahead of Hurricane Irma.



**Heather Finney** @heather\_finney · Sep 8

Replying to @FLHSMV @WPLGLocal10 and 6 others

This has been awesome and has helped greatly!!!



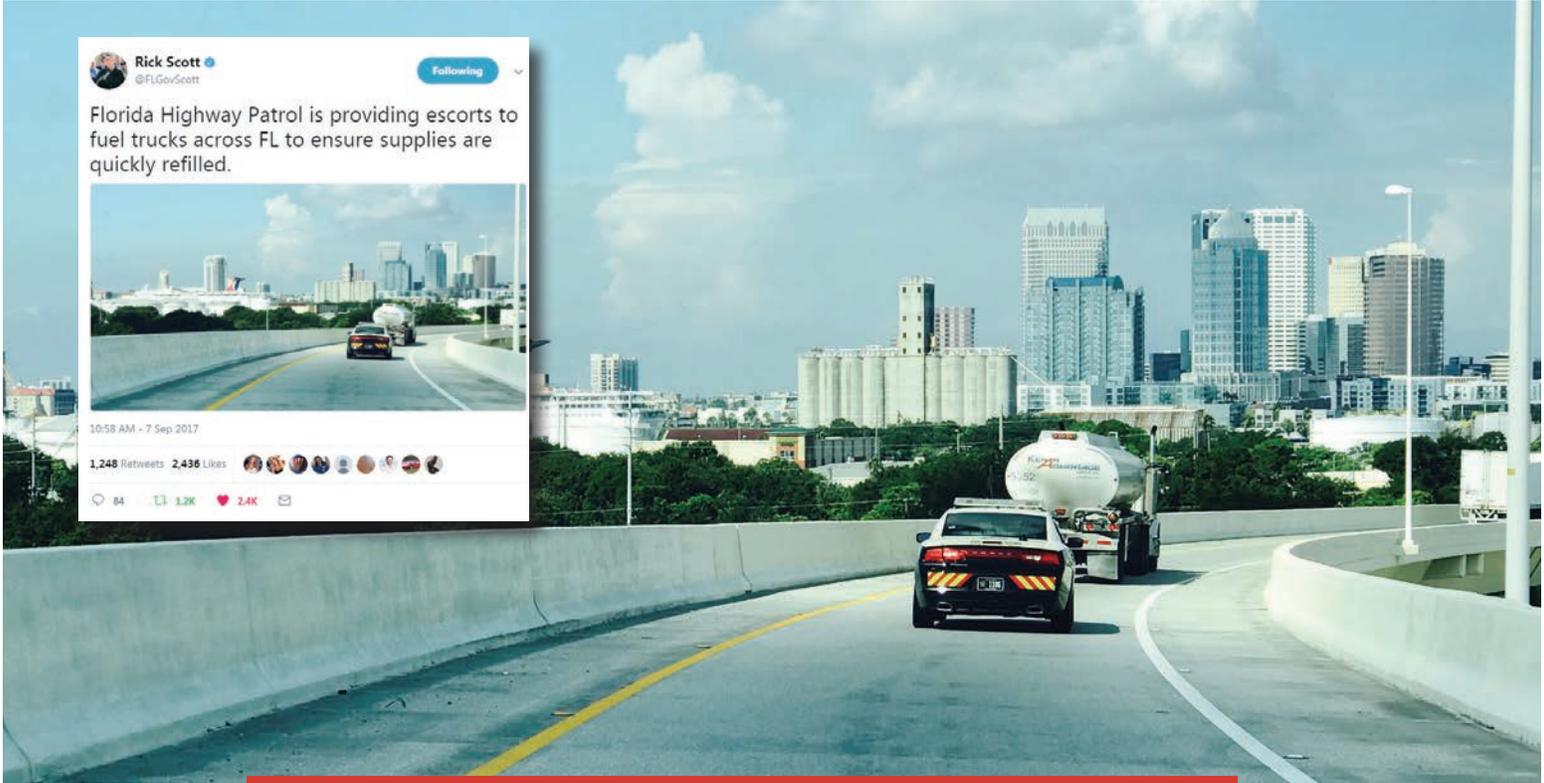
**Adam Putnam**

@adamputnam

Following

I've suspended reqs for the intrastate movement of animals so Floridians can quickly & safely prepare for Hurr. Irma

Top: (L) Emergency shoulder use on I-75 during evacuations; (C) Trooper monitoring traffic in Holmes County on I-75; (R) Trooper assisting a disabled motorist as storm approaches. Bottom: (L) Troopers escorting Department of Corrections evacuations; (R) Trooper monitoring evacuation traffic from the air along I-75.



**Rick Scott** @FLGovScott  
Following

Florida Highway Patrol is providing escorts to fuel trucks across FL to ensure supplies are quickly refilled.



10:58 AM - 7 Sep 2017

1,248 Retweets 2,436 Likes

84 1.2K 2.4K

**FHP Troopers conducted more than 150 missions, escorting critical fuel and supplies to areas throughout Florida for evacuees and those preparing for Hurricane Irma.**



**FHPJacksonville** @FhpJacksonville  
Following

FHP Troopers continuously escorting fuel trucks to central Florida from Camp Blanding during Hurricane Irma.





In real time, DHSMV responded to changing customer needs, guiding evacuees to necessary supplies to keep them safe.



## Fuel tips for evacuees:

- ✓ Download the GasBuddy app to locate fuel stations with available gas near you.
- ✓ Fill up the tank BEFORE you leave.
- ✓ Anticipate TRAFFIC. Allow more time than normal to reach your destination.
- ✓ Once you reach a quarter tank full, start looking for gas stations near you to fill up.
- ✓ If you run out of gas or become stranded on the road, call \*FHP (\*347) for assistance.



Fla. AG Pam Bondi  
@AGPamBondi

Those under evacuation orders LEAVE NOW. People buying supplies to brace for #Irma report price gouging to my office [myfloridalegal.com/Contact.nsf/Pr...](http://myfloridalegal.com/Contact.nsf/Pr...)

The Attorney General's Price Gouging Hotline is Activated

(866) 9-NO-SCAM

Top: Troopers helping direct and keep traffic flowing at the Turnpike Plazas during the evacuations. Bottom: (L) Trooper assists disabled motorists during the evacuation; (R) Troopers filling sandbags for their communities.

As Floridians poured into shelters and evacuated their homes in counties across the state, DHSMV members were helping hands in a time of need. FHP Troopers escorted residents from their vehicles, provided traffic control, checked evacuees into shelters and offered support for those temporarily displaced.



Even with state offices closed, DHSMV Motorist Services call centers and field support lines were open for customers.



Photos: Troopers assisting at shelters across the state.

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**DHSMV not only prepared residents and roads in advance of the storm, but prepared internally to make sure critical customer services received as little impact as possible from Hurricane Irma.**

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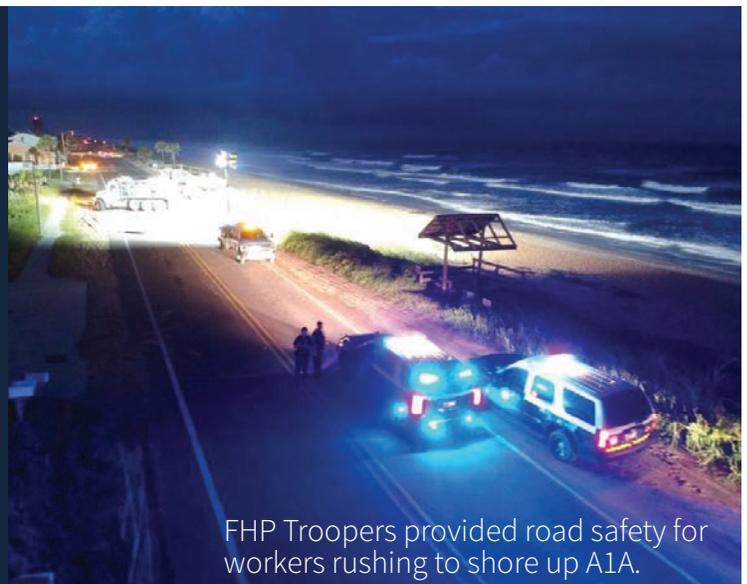
The Division of Administrative Services prepared in advance by inspecting maintenance vehicles, disaster trailers and security vehicles to ensure they were road worthy, and proactively transferred the customer call center and DHSMV headquarters EOC to generator power to ensure both areas were up and running in the event of a loss of power.

The Information Systems Administration worked proactively with partners statewide to ensure that communications plans were set up in advance of the storm. Technical advisories were issued to address those who may be impacted and provided direction to all statewide driver license and motor vehicle offices on how to prepare for the storm's impact.

The department's Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) was reviewed in advance to determine essential staff needed before, during and after the storm. DHSMV Immediate Response Information System (IRIS) communicated office closures to members statewide, and was used after the storm to ensure the safety of all members.

Starting September 8, Information Systems Administration and FHP proactively forwarded voice services from storm-impacted regional communication centers to those without operational issues, making sure, if internet connectivity was lost, regional communications centers could still take calls.

**Hurricane Irma made landfall in Florida as a Category 4 hurricane on September 10, 2017, at 9:10 a.m.**



FHP Troopers provided road safety for workers rushing to shore up A1A.

# During Irma



**Rick Scott** @FLGovScott

Following

The entire Florida Highway Patrol, approximately 1,700 troopers, is on 12-hour shifts, with the primary mission to assist emergency response

8:45 PM - 11 Sep 2017

As Hurricane Irma hit Florida, FHP Troopers left the shelter and safety of their homes and families to protect the state and provide emergency response.



Top: (L) A Trooper hugs his sons as he leaves for his shift; (R) Troopers say a prayer before their 12-hour shift.  
Bottom: Troopers ensure roadway safety in south Florida.

EMERGENCY COMMAND CENTER NAPLES



DHSMV members served at emergency operations centers (EOC) across the state, ready to answer and respond to calls for service.



BROWARD EOC



EMERGENCY INFORMATION LINE



GULF EOC



TALLAHASSEE EOC

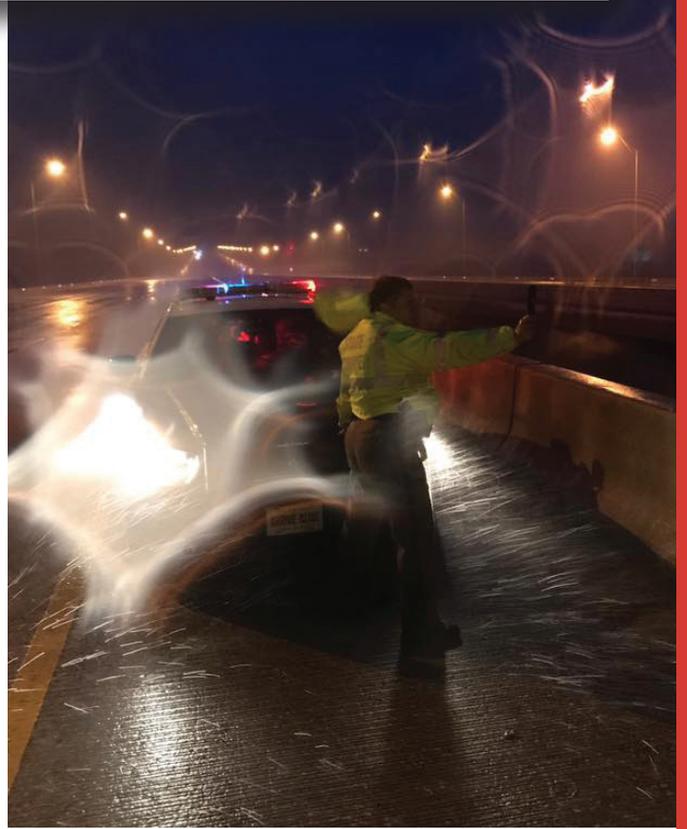


TAMPA EOC

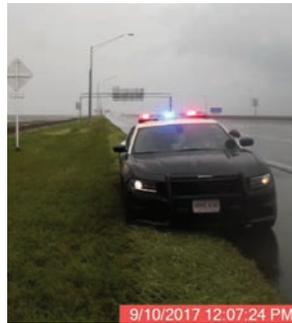




**FLHSMV** @FLHSMV · Sep 9  
Sunshine Skyway Bridge is now CLOSED. We anticipate bridge will remain closed until the storm passes & is deemed safe. @SteveG717 #fhp #irma



## OUT IN THE STORM

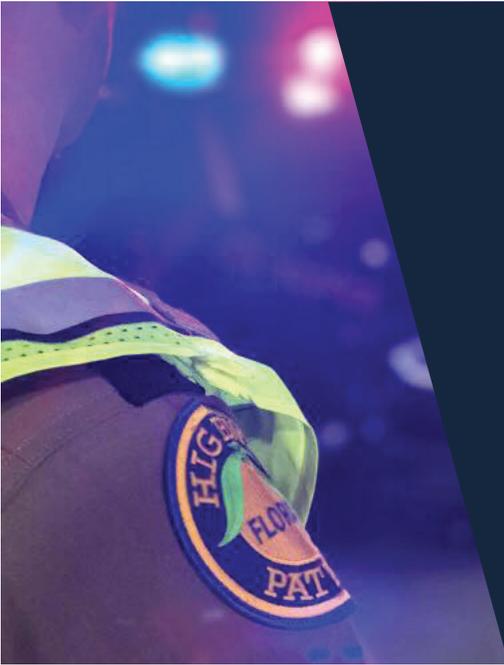


Clockwise from Top Left: Water breaches a wall in Hillsborough County; Troopers check the windspeed at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge; Troopers remove debris from the roadway in Polk County; Trooper monitoring the road in Palm Beach County; FHP monitoring roadways in Troop C; Troopers moving a downed light pole in Troop C.



## Hurricane Irma left no DHSMV member untouched, both personally and professionally.

Clock wise from Top Left: Fallen I-95 sign in Broward County; Trooper on abandoned I-95 in Broward County; Trooper working a checkpoint in Miami, making sure only emergency personnel and linemen are granted access; FHP Troopers monitor a shelter in Lee County; FHP arriving for shift duty in Hernando County during the storm.





Photos: Law enforcement seeks shelter at gas stations, under overpasses and inside parking garages across the state as the storm goes by.



**For their safety, once hurricane winds were sustained over 45 miles per hour, FHP Troopers were directed off the road to seek shelter.**





**As the storm passed, an FHP Trooper and U.S. Army Veteran recovered an American flag. Once recovered, the Trooper made sure it was respectfully and properly folded.**

# After Irma



**Hurricane Irma left behind impassable roads and devastating conditions across the state.**

**DHSMV was prepared to respond.**

**FHP Quick Reaction Force (QRF) teams were deployed in heavily impacted counties to assist local emergency management and first responders.**



Top: (L) Troopers respond with National Guard in Monroe County; (R) FHP QRF team deploys in Okaloosa County. Bottom: FHP Troopers in Orange County help enforce mandatory curfews.



**FHP Orlando**  
@FhpOrlando  
Following

30min till Orange County Curfew at 7pm.  
Make arrangements to be off the roads and  
in a shelter until further notice.



**Rick Scott** @FLGovScott Following

FHP is providing traffic escorts for 600 utility trucks into impacted areas and restoration workers are going non-stop.

1:33 PM - 12 Sep 2017

109 Retweets 294 Likes

31 109 294

In addition to fuel escorts, FHP escorted utility trucks across the state to help restore power.

DHSMV members also assessed damage to service centers to quickly reopen for customers.



Top: FHP escorts recovery vehicles in Monroe County.  
Bottom: FHP pictured with linemen deployed from Michigan to assist with hurricane recovery efforts in Lee County.

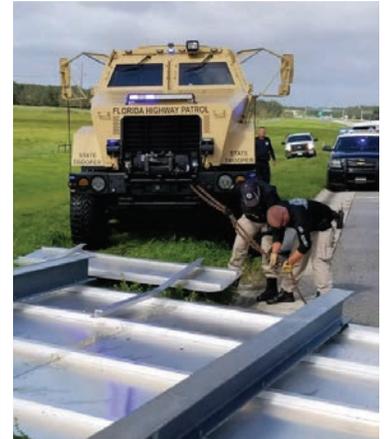
Rick Scott Retweeted

**FPL** @insideFPL · Sep 11  
Our trucks are rolling by the hundreds with a little help from our friends @FLHSMV. Thank you, Florida Highway Patrol!

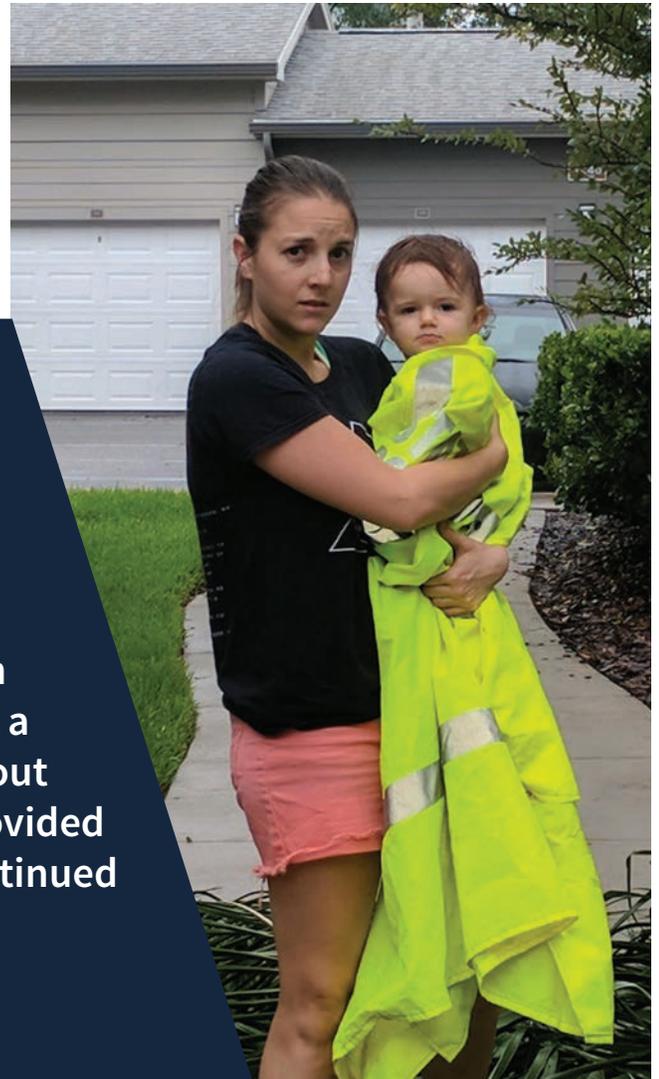
**Lt. Harry Coker**  
Florida Highway Patrol



Top: FHP closes road in Alachua County. Middle: FHP trooper monitors flooded bridge in Columbia County. Bottom: (R) FHP troopers lift road sign in Polk County; (L) Flooded road in Orange County.

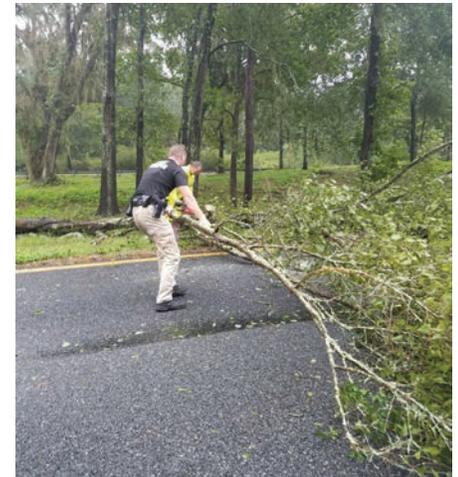


Many roads after the storm were flooded or impassable. FHP worked alongside local and state partners to close roads, update travel information for motorists coming back home and clear debris or other obstructions from the roadway.



Early morning, September 11, FHP troopers checked a Tampa apartment complex for survivors who were blocked by numerous downed trees. After sawing through several trees to reach the complex, troopers searched several apartments which had broken glass and doors ajar. They found a mother and her child in her apartment without power, cold, wet and shivering. Troopers provided the family food, water and rain gear and continued with rescue efforts.

FHP Troopers, equipped with chainsaws, worked tirelessly to free homes and roads from fallen trees.



Photos: Troopers clearing debris in Troops B, C, F and H.





Florida Licensing on Wheels (FLOW) issued more than 2,100 credentials and registrations for customers in Lee, Collier and Monroe counties.



# FHP Troopers joined the effort to help deliver much-needed rescue and recovery supplies across Florida.



Photos: FHP works in coordination with retailers to help escort, deliver and distribute necessary supplies.

**“We cannot thank you enough for the job you do. We love and appreciate you for all you do to keep us safe. We pray God blesses you and keeps constant watch over you so that you can return safely each day to your families. You are appreciated! Never doubt that!”**  
**- A thankful customer**



**Rick Scott**  
@FLGovScott

Following

FHP is providing traffic escorts to resources in route to the Keys, such as fuel tankers, food and water deliveries.

6:12 PM - 15 Sep 2017

78 Retweets 218 Likes

3 78 218





*Thank you to all three of you!!*



Top: A thankful citizen leaves a note for FHP Troopers working shifts after Irma.  
Right: FHP helps to deliver critical blood supplies with OneBlood in Bay County.





**“Sometimes we don’t realize how much the small gestures of kindness impact those we deal with on a daily basis. I can’t say enough how proud I am to be a Trooper and to work with such a professional group of men and women.”**

**– Colonel Gene S. Spaulding**

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**LEADERS IN SERVICE • AGENTS OF PROGRESS • CHAMPIONS FOR SAFETY**

