

SUMMARY

- Stories on Afghan mission moving toward meeting needs of emigres
- Ida coverage in Pennsylvania and Maryland focusing now on seeking federal assistance
- As covid surges, late-breaking story on vaccine mandate for federal employees tops pandemic news
- Of note: FEMA flood maps called “outdated” in Philadelphia flood story

NATIONAL NEWS

[Tropical Storm Mindy makes landfall in Florida hours after forming](#)

Tropical Storm Mindy made landfall along the Florida Panhandle Wednesday night in almost the same spot that Tropical Storm Fred hit less than one month ago. The [Weather Channel](#) reports Mindy's main impact is enhanced rainfall in northern Florida, south Georgia and southern South Carolina. [AccuWeather](#) says the system will track into the Atlantic and away from the Southeast coast later Thursday. The [New York Post](#) reports Mindy could bring more flash flooding to the New York City area. The storm is expected slow down cleanup efforts in areas that were flooded by unprecedented rainfall last week by Ida.

[Gov. Tom Wolf wants a federal disaster declaration; Gov. Murphy urges flood coverage](#)

On Wednesday, Gov. Tom Wolf requested a major disaster declaration for several Pennsylvania counties. Now the commonwealth waits for President Biden to approve it, which is expected. He has already approved New Jersey for the FEMA aid. The [Morning Call \(PA\)](#) reports the collective damage so far is estimated at \$117 million, which far exceeds Pennsylvania's \$19.7 million threshold. Wolf said, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia and York counties should qualify to receive “critical support as they recover from significant damages to their homes and public infrastructure.” The [Bucks Courier Times \(PA\)](#) reports the request seeks help for those impacted by heavy rainfall, severe flash flooding, and the multiple tornadoes produced by Ida.

In New Jersey, [The Press of Atlantic City \(NJ\)](#) reports Gov. Phil Murphy told residents to prepare for another round of storms and to consider buying flood insurance. He also said the state needs more options to deal with storms and flooding and said buyouts of houses in particularly flood-prone areas may have to accelerate.

[Mother of three gets blue roof after Hurricane Ida; 'Blessed to be first on the list'](#)

In New Orleans, the [Advocate \(LA\)](#) reports roofing contractors started installing the first of what it expected to about 70,000 temporary blue tarp roofs on Wednesday under FEMA's Operation Blue Roof program. More than 40,000 households have applied for the roofs, and the work is managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for FEMA. Officials aim to put on about 800 blue roofs per day once the program is moving full speed. An [Army press release](#) notes the program in a no-cost service and after the tarp is installed the structure is declared habitable.

[Nearly 20 years after 9/11 attack on World Trade Center, former FDNY commissioner reflects on life, the job](#)

[Fox News](#) did a profile story marking the 20th anniversary of 9/11 with former FEMA Region 2 Administrator Thomas Van Essen who was the New York City Fire Commissioner when the twin towers were attacked. Van Essen was one of the first people on the scene and says he soon realized that the situation was more than the FDNY could handle after both towers collapsed within hours of being hit. Von Essen ended up working for FEMA out of the new One World Trade Center. He agreed to the job before realizing the office's location calling it “strange” to work in the same area where the attacks took place.

In Colorado, [CBS News 9 \(CO\)](#) also profiled Michael Rieger on his experience with FEMA as a photographer documenting FEMA's role in recovery efforts after the attack. Rieger was deployed with FEMA for six weeks. Rieger says, “The energy, the sight, the smells, the smoke, the sound was overwhelming, and I remember just telling myself, ‘take pictures.’” Colorado Task Force One canine specialist Julie Noyes is also interviewed in the story. Noyes said she'd trained for disasters, but not the kind she encountered in New York noting she was only three months on the job when she was called up by FEMA for “the biggest deployment this country's ever seen.”

[Biden to unveil new COVID plan as Delta variant surges](#)

[CBS News](#) reports President Biden will unveil a new COVID plan as the Delta variant continues to surge and millions of children head back to school across the country. While no specific FEMA mention, the article says COVID task force officials warn more kids are going to get sick as pediatric hospitalizations continues to rise and the virus continues to spread. [CNN](#) reports Biden will push for new vaccine mandates and testing programs as part of a revamped approach to ending the pandemic.

[USA Today](#) says the six-pronged plan will build on recent actions from the administration including: requiring federal workers to attest to being vaccinated or face routine testing and other mitigation requirements; conditioning federal funding for nursing homes on vaccination of staff; and encouraging private companies to institute vaccine mandates.

In West Virginia, [CNN](#) reports hospitals are "inundated" according to Republican Gov. Jim Justice, who has for weeks warned his fellow citizens that declining to be vaccinated is playing a death lottery. Kentucky's Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear told CNN's Kate Bolduan on Wednesday that the state's medical centers were getting to the point at which they would have to ration care owing to overcrowding. Beshear said, "We're in a really tough place." The [Associated Press](#) reports military medical teams are also being sent to Arkansas to help with a surge in COVID cases.

AFGHAN ARRIVALS MISSION

- [Multi-Faith Neighbors Network Helping Afghan Evacuees Settle In Greater Philadelphia Region](#) (KYW-TV)
- [Local houses of worship collecting supplies to help Afghan refugees](#) (Metro Philadelphia)
- [‘This is close to home for me’: Student veterans collect donations to aid Afghan refugees in Virginia](#) (Virginia Commonwealth University News)

COVID-19

- [Biden to announce that all federal workers must be vaccinated, with no option for testing](#) (CNN)
- [Coronavirus Updates: Biden to unveil new 6-point COVID vaccination plan](#) (WPVI-TV)
- [Booted from class: Colleges penalize unvaccinated students as Delta surges](#) (Politico)
- [Child Covid-19 hospitalizations reach a new high as schools reopen. That's not the only reason to protect kids from Delta, doctors say](#) (CNN)
- [OPINION: GOP West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice is done with all that nonsense on vaccines](#) (The Washington Post)