

Climate Summary for Florida – December 2025

Prepared by Emily Powell of the Florida Climate Center, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida
Online at: <http://climatecenter.fsu.edu/products-services/summaries>

Summary

- Monthly mean temperatures in December were near to above normal across Florida.
- Monthly precipitation totals in December were generally below normal, with the exception of parts of central Florida and the Panhandle.
- Drought conditions improved but persisted in the Florida Panhandle, and drought expansion and degradation occurred in the Peninsula during the month.
- A La Niña advisory continued in the equatorial Pacific Ocean and a transition to ENSO-neutral is expected during January-March 2026 (75% chance).

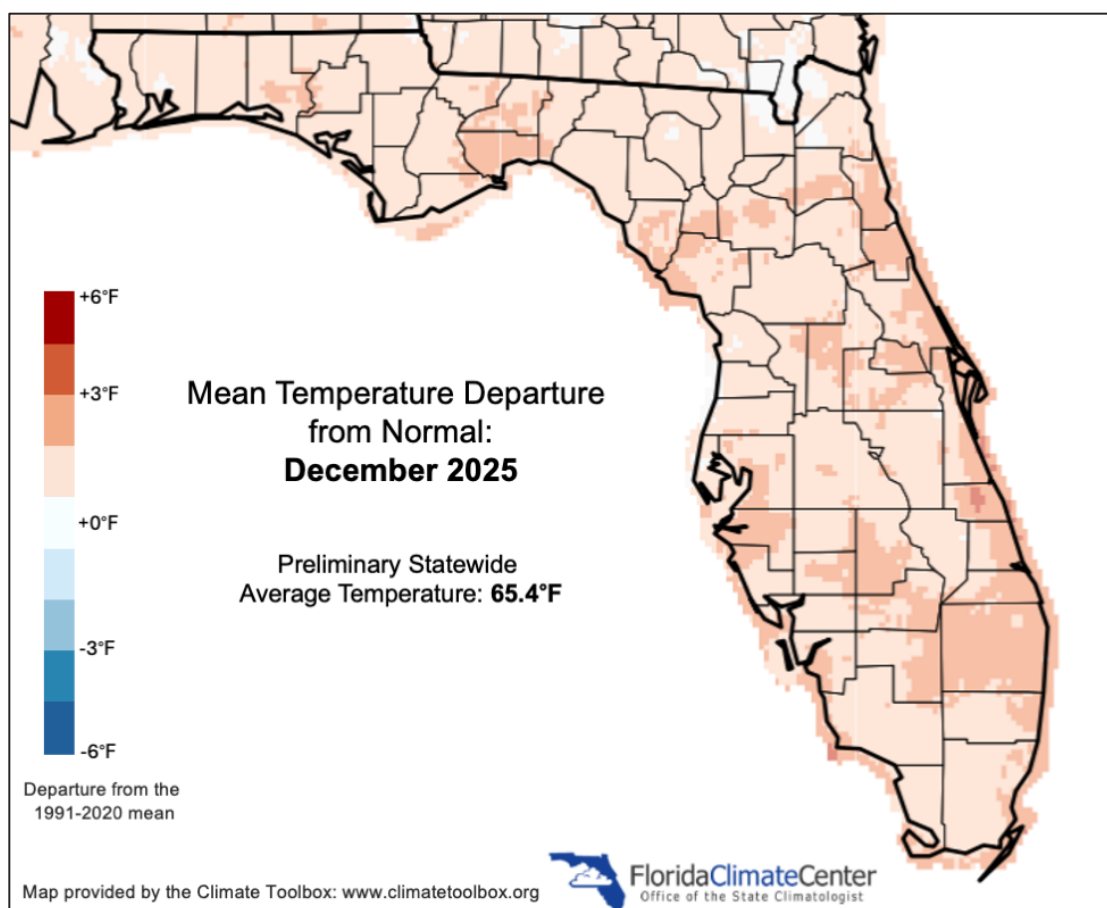
Monthly temperatures in December were near to above normal in Florida, with mean temperatures near normal in the Florida Panhandle and above normal elsewhere. Average monthly temperature departures from normal ranged from -0.2 °F in Pensacola to +3.1 °F in West Palm Beach for the month (see Table 1 and Appendix 1 for select cities). The month was marked with temperature swings. Weak cold fronts affected the state in early December, with a warming trend during the second half of the month. The holidays were marked with high pressure and well-above average temperatures, especially in northern Florida. Several stations measured one of their top 5 warmest Christmas Eves on record based on daily maximum temperatures, including Chipley (tied for warmest), Pensacola (4th-warmest), Crestview (4th-warmest), Tallahassee (3rd-warmest), Jacksonville (3rd-warmest), and Gainesville (3rd-warmest). On Christmas Day, Pensacola tied for its warmest Christmas on record at 78 °F (147 years), and Tallahassee and Jacksonville both reached 80 °F which tied for 3rd-warmest (125 years) and 4th-warmest (155 years) on record, respectively. By month's end, a strong cold front moved through the state and brought below average temperatures to close out the year. Minimum temperatures on New Year's Eve dipped down to the mid- to upper-20s in the Panhandle and low to mid-30s in inland areas of the Peninsula as far south as Lake Okeechobee. Select Christmas Day high temperatures and all-time records are provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1. December average temperatures and departures from normal (°F) for select cities.

Station	Mean Temperature	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	55.3	-0.2
Tallahassee	54.4	0.0
Jacksonville	57.1	+0.4
Orlando	65.5	+2.2
Tampa	66.6	+1.7
Miami	73.3	+2.1
Key West	74.2	+1.2



Figure 1. Monthly average temperature departures from normal (°F) in Florida for December 2025.

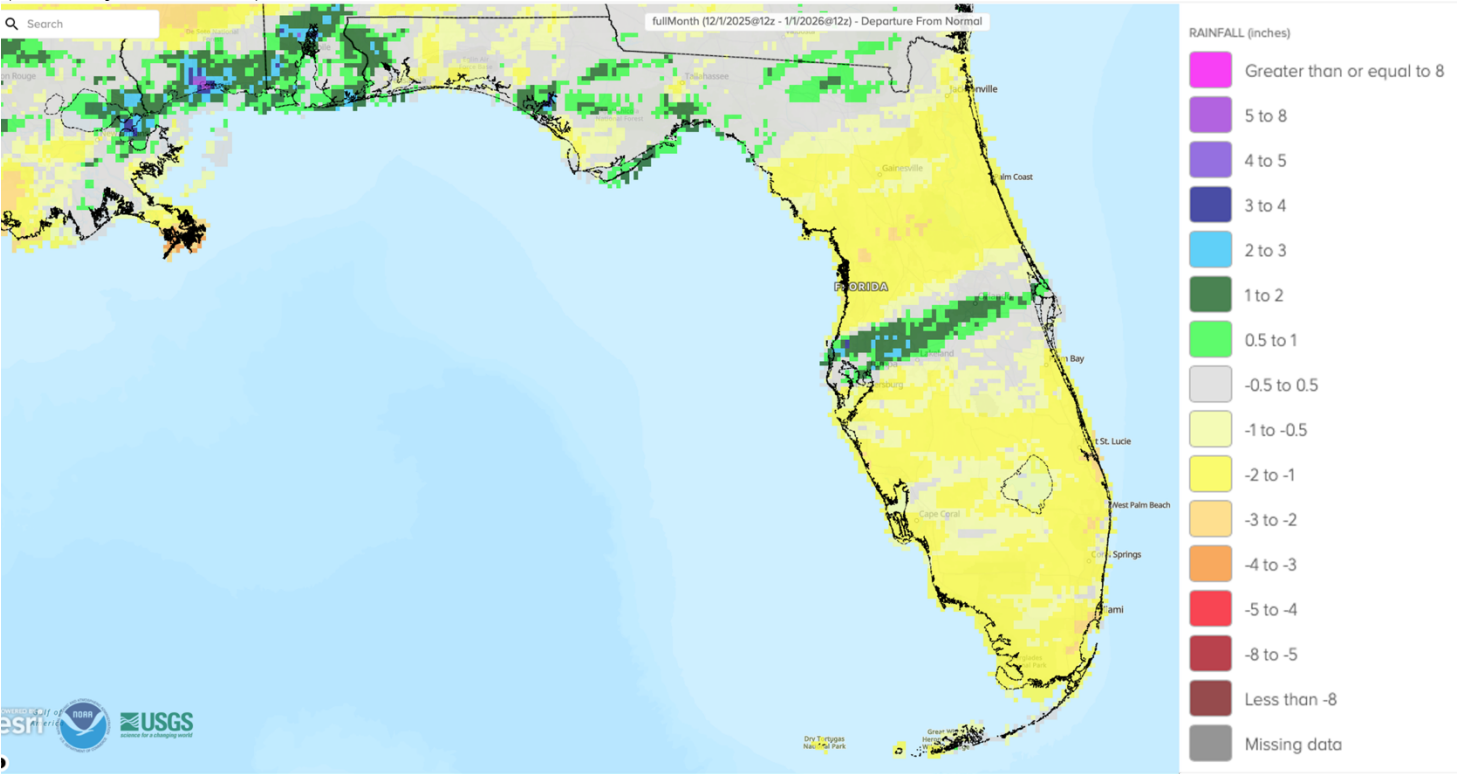


Monthly precipitation totals in December were generally below normal, with the exception of parts of central Florida and the Panhandle. The monthly precipitation departures from normal ranged from -2.65 inches in West Palm Beach to +0.65 inches in Orlando (see Table 2 and Appendix 1 for select locations). Widespread rainfall during the early part of the month helped ease drought conditions in northern Florida, which led to the removal of exceptional drought (D4) by mid-month. Dry conditions set in during the second half of the month, and below-normal rainfall combined with above-average temperatures led to the expansion of moderate (D1) to severe drought (D2) in the Peninsula.

Table 2. December precipitation totals and departures from normal (inches) for select cities.

Station	Total Rainfall	Departure from Normal
Pensacola	5.21	-0.19
Tallahassee	3.45	-0.79
Jacksonville	2.18	-0.60
Orlando	3.13	+0.65
Tampa	2.88	+0.32
Miami	0.72	-1.72
Key West	0.97	-1.19

Figure 2. A graphical depiction of the monthly rainfall departure from normal (in inches) for December 2025 (courtesy of NOAA).



La Niña Advisory

La Niña conditions persisted over the past month in the tropical equatorial Pacific Ocean. Below-average sea surface temperatures continued across the east-central region of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. The latest weekly Niño-3.4 index was -0.5°C and the Niño-3 and Niño-1+2 indices were -0.8°C and -0.7°C, respectively. Subsurface temperature anomalies became slightly positive, and atmospheric anomalies across the tropical Pacific remained consistent with La Niña. A transition to ENSO-neutral is expected during January-March 2026 (75% chance). ENSO-neutral is likely to continue through the Northern Hemisphere late spring 2026.

Hazardous Weather Events in December.

According to the Local Storm Reports issued by the local National Weather Service offices serving Florida, there were 48 individual local reports of hazardous weather events recorded across the state during the month of December (see Table 3 for a breakdown by event type). Multiple reports of strong wind gusts and heavy rain were reported on the 7th and 8th along a frontal boundary in central Florida, stretching from Pasco to Brevard County. Overall it was another relatively quiet month for severe weather.

Table 3. Breakdown of storm reports submitted in Florida during the month of December (compiled from Iowa State University/Iowa Environmental Mesonet).

Report Type	Number of Reports
Heavy Rain	19
Dense Fog	2
Marine Thunderstorm Wind	5
Non-Thunderstorm Wind Gust	11
Thunderstorm Wind Damage	1
Thunderstorm Wind Gust	10
Tornado/Waterspout/Funnel Cloud	0 / 0 / 0

Daily Record Events in December.

Table 4. Summary of daily records **broken** in Florida in December (source: NCEI Daily Weather Records).

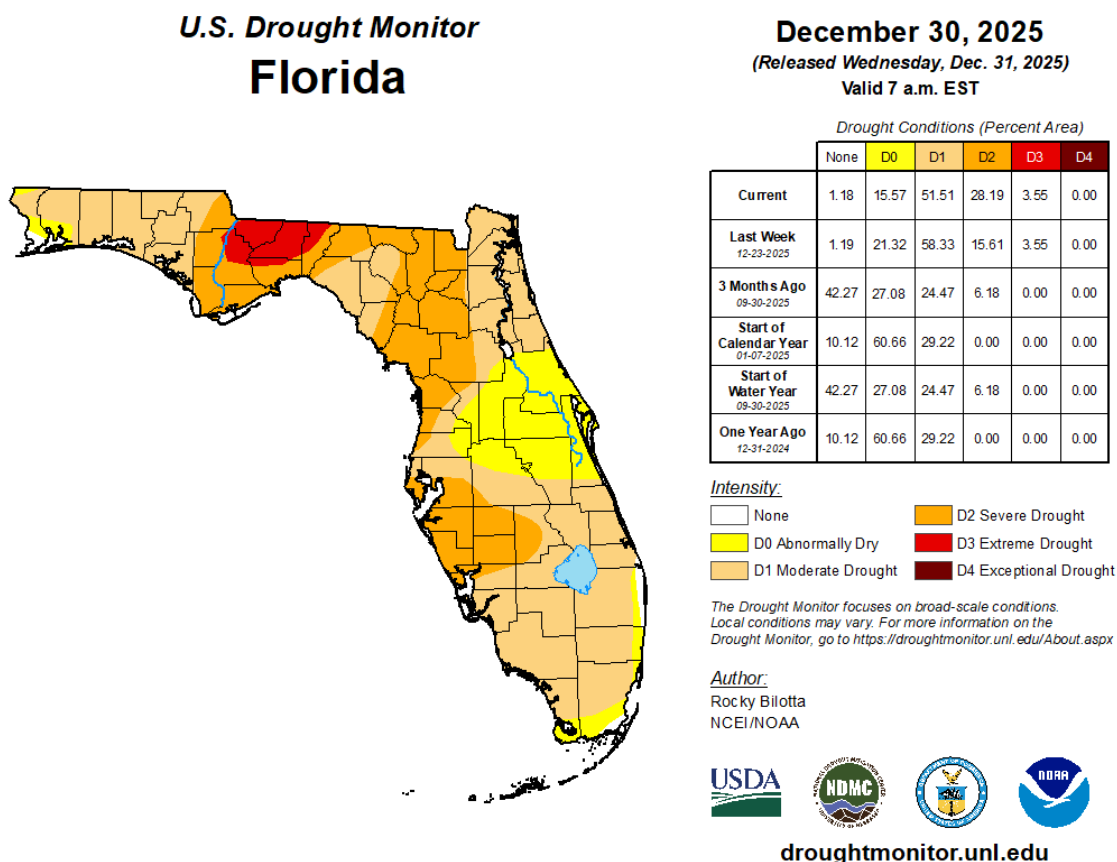
Category	Number of Records
Highest daily max. temp.	14
Highest daily min. temp.	5
Lowest daily max. temp.	0
Lowest daily min. temp.	0
Highest daily precipitation	21
Total	40

Drought-Related Impacts.

Drought conditions improved but persisted in the Panhandle, with sufficient rainfall early in the month to remove exceptional drought (D4). Meanwhile, moderate to severe drought expanded in the Florida Peninsula. In mid-December, approximately 4% of the state was in extreme drought (D3), 14% was in severe drought (D2), and 51% was in moderate drought (D1); about 19% of the state was abnormally dry (D0), according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. By month's end, roughly 4% of the state was in extreme drought (D3), 28% was in severe drought (D2), 52% was in moderate drought (D1), and 16% of the state was abnormally dry (D0) (Figure 2 below).

As of December 31, the Lake Okeechobee water level was 13.35 ft. above sea level (Feet-NGVD29), which is below average for this time of year. At the first of December, the water level was 13.66 ft. above sea level.

Figure 3. A graphical depiction of the latest drought conditions in Florida according to the U.S. Drought Monitor (courtesy of the National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska Lincoln).



Agriculture-Related Impacts.

By the end of the month, 83% of the state was in some level of drought (D1-D3). The continuation of dry conditions in most areas slowed forage growth and delayed the planting of cover crops. Rainfall varied greatly across the state during the month, but areas that received rain saw beneficial improvements to topsoil conditions that allowed for further planting and foraging. Reduced pasture conditions led to supplemental hay feeding as needed, while conditions were good for sugarcane planting and harvesting. Crops that were planted and harvested included strawberries, green beans, tomato, squash, sweet corn, and other vegetables and some tropical fruits. For more information, consult the [Crop Progress - State Stories](#), which are published by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service from December – March.

Appendix 1. Additional December departures from normal data for select Florida locations (source: NWS).

Station	Average Temperature (°F)	Departure from Normal (°F)	Total Rainfall (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)
Gainesville	59.8	+2.5	1.75	-1.13
Sarasota	68.1	+2.9	1.71	-0.62
Melbourne	66.6	+1.9	1.28	-1.08
Fort Myers	69.6	+2.3	0.64	-1.26
West Palm Beach	72.1	+3.1	0.83	-2.65

Appendix 2. Christmas Day maximum temperatures, departures from normal, and all-time daily records for select locations (source: NWS).

Station	Max Temperature Dec. 25, 2025 (°F)	Departure from Normal (°F)	Warmest Christmas on Record (°F)
Pensacola	78	+14	78 in 2023, 1974, 1955
Tallahassee	80	+15	82 in 2016
Jacksonville	80	+14	82 in 2015
Gainesville	81	+13	83 in 2015
Tampa	80	+7	86 in 2016, 2015
Orlando	79	+6	86 in 2015
Melbourne	79	+4	83 in 2015
Miami	81	+4	85 in 2016, 1941
Sarasota/Bradenton	81	+8	85 in 2016, 2015
Fort Myers	82	+6	88 in 2016
Key West	77	+0	83 in 2015