



D 2021 064

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to Severe Winter Weather Conditions in Colorado and Authorizing Deployment of the Colorado National Guard

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 of the Colorado Constitution and the relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.*, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency due to the severe winter weather conditions in Colorado.

Further, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 of the Colorado constitution and pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, I authorize employing the Colorado National Guard to provide search, rescue, and shelter assistance related to the severe winter weather conditions in Colorado.

I. Background and Purpose

The Governor is responsible for meeting the dangers to the State and people presented by disasters. C.R.S. § 24-33.5-704(1). The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act defines a disaster as “the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural cause or cause of human origin” C.R.S. § 24-33.5-703(3).

On March 11, 2021, the National Weather Service predicted that up to 30 inches of snow may fall in portions of Colorado’s northern metropolitan area from March 12-15, 2021. Winter weather may also impact Colorado’s mountains and eastern plains. The Colorado Department of Transportation is encouraging people in Colorado to avoid driving during the storm because similar past winter storms have stranded vehicles and people in impacted areas.

Local first responder capabilities may be exceeded by the impacts of the storm, and such impacted localities may require State support. The Director of the Office of Emergency Management activated the State Emergency Operations Center to support and coordinate search and rescue activities and other requests from impacted jurisdictions. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Regional Field Managers are supporting local response efforts.

At approximately 11:50 AM on March 11, 2021, I verbally declared a disaster emergency for the severe winter weather conditions in Colorado and activated the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Plan. I also verbally authorized employment and use of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of providing search and rescue and shelter assistance related to

the severe winter weather conditions in Colorado from 12:00 PM on March 12, 2021 through 12:00 PM on March 15, 2021.

II. Declarations and Directives

- A. The severe winter weather conditions and associated impacts in Colorado constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My March 11, 2021 verbal order declaring a disaster emergency is memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if it were contained within this Executive Order.
- B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, my March 11, 2021 verbal order authorizing the employment and use of the Colorado National Guard to provide search, rescue, and shelter assistance related to the severe winter weather conditions in Colorado from 12:00 PM on March 12, 2021 through 12:00 PM on March 15, 2021 is memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if it were contained within this Executive Order.
- C. The State Emergency Operations Plan is activated. All State departments and agencies shall take whatever actions necessary as requested by the Director or Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Management pursuant to the Emergency Support Function 5 Annex of the State Emergency Operations Plan, including providing appropriate staff and equipment.
- D. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-706(4), the funds regularly appropriated to State and local agencies are insufficient to address this disaster emergency. Therefore, I order that two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) be transferred from the Controlled Maintenance Trust Fund to the Disaster Emergency Fund and that two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) be encumbered from the Disaster Emergency Fund to pay for the State-level response, recovery, and mitigation efforts related to this disaster emergency. These funds shall remain available for this purpose until six (6) months from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the Disaster Emergency Fund.
- E. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-705.4(5), the Director of the Office of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to allocate the funding to the appropriate government agencies and non-profit organizations and execute awards, purchase orders, or other mechanisms to effect the allocation of the funds.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from March 11, 2021, unless extended further by Executive Order, except as described in Section II.D above.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado, this twelfth day of
March, 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jared Polis
Governor