



D 2019 018

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions in Northeast 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, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency due to the severe winter weather and blizzard conditions in Larimer, Weld, Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, Boulder, Morgan, Washington, Yuma, Clear Creek, Adams, Broomfield, Jefferson, Denver, Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert, Lincoln and Kit Carson counties (“Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions”), enabling State agencies to coordinate response efforts, and making resources available to State agencies for response activities.

Further, pursuant to the Colorado Constitution, Article IV, Section 5, and pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, I also hereby authorize employing the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of responding to the Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions.

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 November 25, 2019, meteorologists predicted that an extremely powerful winter storm would affect Colorado—particularly counties along and north of Interstate 70 and east of Interstate 25. The National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning for a large portion of the highly-affected areas. Based on experience with similar storms in March and April 2019, the State expected that stranded travelers on roadways would require sheltering. The Colorado National Guard is the most effective available resource to support search and rescue operations in these conditions.



By November 26, 2019, some areas of the State received over 30 inches of snow and experienced wind gusts up to 40 miles per hour that created blowing and drifting snow. This storm forced closures of major highways and cancellation of passenger flights. 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 and Division of Fire Prevention and Control Snow Taskforce supported local response efforts.

At 5:24 p.m. on November 25, 2019, I verbally declared a disaster emergency for the Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions and activated the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Plan. At the same time, I verbally authorized deployment and use of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of search and rescue operations resulting from the Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions.

II. Declarations and Directives

- A. The Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions and associated impacts constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of November 25, 2019, declaring a disaster emergency is hereby 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 verbal orders of November 25, 2019, authorizing deployment and use of the National Guard for search and rescue operations associated with the Northeast Colorado Counties Severe Winter Weather and Blizzard Conditions are hereby memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if they were contained within this Executive Order.
- C. The State Emergency Operations Plan is hereby activated. All State departments and agencies shall take whatever actions required and 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 provision of appropriate staff and equipment as necessary.
- 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 twenty-one thousand dollars (\$21,000) from the Disaster Emergency Fund

to be encumbered to pay for response efforts related to this disaster emergency. This amount is currently available 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 allocate the funds. 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.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from November 25, 2019, unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in Section II(C) above shall remain available for the described purposes for six (6) months from the date of this Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this twentieth day of December, 2019.

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

Jared Polis
Governor