



## D 2024 002

### EXECUTIVE ORDER

#### **Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to Extreme Cold Temperatures Throughout 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 extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado, enabling State and federal agencies to coordinate response, consequence management, hazard mitigation, and recovery efforts.

Further, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 of the Colorado Constitution and C.R.S. § 28-3-104, I authorize employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of responding to and providing support during the extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout 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 damages, 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 January 9, 2024, and subsequent days, the National Weather Service predicted an arctic blast that would impact Colorado beginning on or before January 12, 2024, and continuing through at least January 15, 2024, with a dangerous mix of sub-zero temperatures, strong wind, extreme wind chills, and areas of snow. With these dangerous conditions, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with special medical needs, and people experiencing homelessness are especially vulnerable.

On January 11, 2024, at approximately 5:20 PM, I verbally declared a state of disaster emergency due to extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado, and authorized employing the Colorado National Guard in an unarmed capacity for the purpose of responding to and providing support during the extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado.

Beginning on January 11, 2024, and continuing through January 13, 2024, communities requested State support to augment staffing for shelters and to provide transportation for people experiencing homelessness to shelters. During this period, the State Emergency Operations Center provided 35 shelter staff and supported six cold weather transportation missions. The National Guard members were on standby to provide shelter staffing support when needed. Communities across Colorado were proactively contacted to ensure anticipated needs were met and minimize the risk to life. Voluntary agencies provided support in their communities to people with identified needs.

## **II. Declarations and Directives**

- A. The extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado and associated impacts constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of January 11, 2024, 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 in this Executive Order.
- B. Further, pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, my verbal order of January 11, 2024, authorizing employment and use of the Colorado National Guard in an unarmed capacity for the purpose of responding to and providing support during the extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado, is hereby memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if it were contained in this Executive Order.
- C. My verbal order of January 11, 2024, activated the State Emergency Operations Plan. All State departments and agencies were authorized to take whatever actions may be required and requested by the Director or their delegate of the Office of Emergency Management, pursuant to 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)(b), funds in the Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF) are insufficient to pay for response, consequence management, hazard mitigation, and recovery efforts related to the extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado. Therefore, I order that one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) be transferred from the State Emergency Reserve Cash Fund (SERCF) to the DEF. I encumber one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) in the DEF to pay for response, consequence management, hazard mitigation, and recovery efforts related to the extreme cold temperatures and winter weather throughout Colorado.

- 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 nonprofit organizations and execute awards, purchase orders, or other mechanisms to effect the allocation of funds. The funds described in Section II(D) above shall remain available for this purpose for seventy-two (72) months from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the DEF.

### III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from January 11, 2024, unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in Section II(D) above shall remain available for the described purposes for seventy-two (72) months from the date of this Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the  
Executive Seal of the State of  
Colorado this ninth  
day of February, 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis  
Governor