



**D 2024 017**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER**

**Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to Hurricane Milton and Authorizing  
Employment 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 Hurricane Milton, enabling State and Federal agencies to coordinate hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida.

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 assisting with response and recovery efforts in Florida as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety as a result of Hurricane Milton.

**I. Background and Purpose**

As a party to the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (Compact), C.R.S. § 24-60-2901, *et seq.*, the State of Colorado is able to provide assistance to states enduring a disaster emergency. The State of Florida is also a party to the Compact. The purpose of the Compact "is to provide for mutual assistance among the states entering into [the Compact] in managing any emergency disaster that is duly declared by the Governor of the affected state," arising from a natural disaster, among other emergencies. C.R.S. § 24-60-2902.

On October 7, 2024, national weather outlets predicted a large, once in a generation storm, Hurricane Milton, to make landfall in Florida and other Gulf states in the following days. Hurricane Milton made landfall in Florida on October 9, 2024, as a category 3 storm and triggered tornadoes across the state. On October 10, 2024, as Hurricane Milton moved away from Florida, millions were left without power as streets were flooded and homes were damaged. At least 11 individuals died as a result of the storm.

On October 7, 2024, at approximately 7:10pm, I verbally declared a disaster emergency in preparation for Hurricane Milton and activated the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Plan. At that time, I also verbally authorized employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of assisting with response and recovery efforts as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety. The State sent a Chinook Helicopter

(1CH47) and its eight crew members to Florida to assist with preparation and relief efforts for Hurricane Milton. Colorado also sent over 200 emergency assistance specialists to Florida, including firefighters, paramedics, physicians, structural engineers, hazardous materials technicians, heavy rigging specialists, and canine handlers to assist federal emergency response teams.

## **II. Declarations and Directives**

- A. Hurricane Milton and associated impacts constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of October 7, 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 within this Executive Order.
- B. Further, pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, my verbal order of October 7, 2024, authorizing employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of responding to Hurricane Milton, 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.
- C. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701(1)(f), as acting Governor of the State of Colorado, I hereby authorize personnel from Colorado to assist State and Federal agencies to coordinate hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida.
- D. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-60-2901, *et seq.*, I hereby implement the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. The State of Colorado shall provide personnel to assist State and Federal agencies to coordinate hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida.
- E. My verbal order of October 7, 2024, activated the State Emergency Operations Plan. All State departments and agencies are authorized to take whatever actions may be required and requested by the Director or Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Management pursuant to the State Emergency Operations Plan, including provision of appropriate staff and equipment, as necessary to assist State and Federal agencies to coordinate hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida.
- F. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-706(4)(b), funds in the Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF) are insufficient to pay for hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida. Therefore, I order that

two hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$285,000) be transferred from the State Emergency Reserve Cash Fund (SERCF) to the DEF. I encumber two hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$285,000) in the DEF to enable State and Federal agencies to coordinate hurricane response support, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts in Florida.

- G. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-705.4(6), 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(F) above shall remain available for this purpose until 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 October 7, 2024, unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in Section II(F) 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 thirty-first  
day of October, 2024.

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

Jared Polis  
Governor