



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER SEVEN (2018)

DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER

Importance of the Issue

On April 16, 2018, I declared a state of emergency to exist for the Commonwealth of Virginia based on the severe storms and tornadoes that impacted the Commonwealth on April 15, 2018.

The health and general welfare of the citizens require state action to help alleviate the conditions caused by this situation. The effects of this situation constitute a disaster wherein human life and public and private property are, or are likely to be, imperiled, as described in § 44-146.16 of the *Code of Virginia*.

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me by § 44-146.17 of the *Code of Virginia*, as Governor and as Director of Emergency Management, and by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article V, Section 7 of the Constitution of Virginia and by § 44-75.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the Commonwealth, and subject always to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby proclaim a state of emergency. Accordingly, I direct state and local government agencies to render appropriate assistance, to prepare for potential severe weather impacts, to alleviate any conditions resulting from the situation, and to implement recovery and mitigation operations and activities so as to return impacted areas to pre-event conditions as much as possible.

In order to marshal all public resources and appropriate preparedness, response, and recovery measures to meet this threat and recover from its effects, and in accordance with my authority in § 44-146.17 of the *Code of Virginia*, I hereby order the following:

- A. Implementation by state agencies of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP), as amended, along with other appropriate state plans.

- B. Activation of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST), as directed by the State Coordinator of Emergency Management, to coordinate the provision of assistance to local governments and emergency services assignments of other agencies as necessary and determined by the State Coordinator of Emergency Management and other agencies as appropriate.
- C. Evacuation of areas threatened or stricken by effects of the severe weather, as appropriate. Pursuant to § 44-146.17(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, I reserve the right to direct and compel the evacuation of all or part of the populace therein from such areas and upon such timetable as the local governing body, in coordination with the VEOC, acting on behalf of the State Coordinator of Emergency Management, shall determine. I authorize the control of ingress and egress at an emergency area, including the movement of persons within the area and the occupancy of premises therein upon such timetable as the local governing body, in coordination with the State Coordinator of Emergency Management and the VEOC, shall determine. Violations of any order to citizens to evacuate shall constitute a violation of this Executive Order and are punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.
- D. Activation, implementation, and coordination of appropriate mutual aid agreements and compacts, including the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), and the authorization of the State Coordinator of Emergency Management to enter into any other supplemental agreements, pursuant to § 44-146.17(5) and § 44-146.28:1 of the *Code of Virginia*. The State Coordinator of Emergency Management is hereby designated as Virginia's authorized representative within the meaning of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, § 44-146.28:1 of the *Code of Virginia*.
- E. This Emergency Declaration implements limited relief from the provisions of 49 CFR §§ 390.23 and 395.3 for purpose of providing direct relief or assistance as a result of this disaster.
- F. Authorization of appropriate oversight boards, commissions, and agencies to waive and/or ease building code restrictions, permitting requirements, and to allow for emergency demolition, hazardous waste disposal, debris removal, emergency landfill siting, and other operations and activities necessary to address immediate health and safety needs without regard to time-consuming procedures or formalities and without regard to application or permit fees or royalties. All appropriate executive branch agencies are to exercise their discretion to the extent allowed by law to address any pending deadlines or expirations affected by or attributable to this emergency event.
- G. Authorizing of the heads of executive branch agencies, acting when appropriate on behalf of their regulatory boards, to waive any state requirements or regulation for which the federal government has issued a waiver of the corresponding federal or state regulation based on the impact of events related to this situation.
- H. Provision of appropriate assistance, including temporary assignments of non-essential state employees to the Adjunct Emergency Workforce, be rendered by agencies of state government to respond to this situation.

- I. Activation of the statutory provisions in § 59.1-525 *et seq.* of the *Code of Virginia* related to price gouging.
- J. Authorization of a maximum of \$600,000 in state sum sufficient funds for state and local government's mission assignments authorized and coordinated through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management that are allowable as defined by The Stafford Act. 42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.* This funding is also available for state response and recovery operations and incident documentation.
- K. Implementation by public agencies under my supervision and control of their emergency assignments as directed in the COVEOP, without regard to normal procedures pertaining to performance of public work, entering into contracts, incurring of obligations or other logistical and support measures of the Emergency Services and Disaster Laws, as provided in § 44-146.28(b) of the *Code of Virginia*. Section 44-146.24 of the *Code of Virginia* also applies to the disaster activities of state agencies.
- L. During this declared emergency, any person who holds a license, certificate, or other permit issued by any U.S. territory, state, or political subdivision thereof, evidencing the meeting of qualifications for professional, mechanical, or other skills, may render aid involving that skill in the Commonwealth during a disaster, without compensation other than reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses, and such person shall not be liable for negligently causing the death of, or injury to, any person or for the loss of, or damage to, the property of any person resulting from such service as set forth in *Code of Virginia* § 44-146.23(C). Additionally, members and personnel of volunteer, professional, auxiliary, and reserve groups identified and tasked by the State Coordinator of Emergency Management for specific disaster-related mission assignments as representatives of the Commonwealth engaged in emergency services activities within the meaning of the immunity provisions of §§ 44-146.23(A) and (F) of the *Code of Virginia*, shall not be liable for the death of, or injury to, persons or damage to property as a result of the performance of their specific disaster-related mission assignments.

Upon my approval, the costs incurred by state agencies and other agents in performing mission assignments through the VEOC of the Commonwealth as defined herein and in § 44-146.28 of the *Code of Virginia*, other than costs defined in the paragraphs above pertaining to the Virginia National Guard and pertaining to the Virginia Defense Force, in performing these missions shall be paid from state funds.

Effective Date of this Executive Order

This Executive Order shall be effective April 16, 2018, and shall remain in full force and in effect until June 30, 2018, unless sooner amended or rescinded by further executive order. Termination of the Executive Order is not intended to terminate any federal type benefits granted or to be granted due to injury or death as a result of service under this Executive Order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 17th day of April, 2018.



Handwritten signature of Ralph S. Northam in black ink.

Ralph S. Northam, Governor

Attest:

Handwritten signature of Kelly Thomasson in black ink.

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth