

Sanders Declares an Emergency for Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding on or About April 2, 2025

TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

DR 25-04: EMERGENCY DECLARATION FOR SEVERE STORMS, TORNADOES, AND FLOODING ON OR ABOUT APRIL 2, 2025

WHEREAS: On April 2, 2025, severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding began in Arkansas, and are expected to continue, causing danger, hardship, and suffering throughout the state, which in turn, warrants this executive action;

WHEREAS: Great hardship has fallen upon citizens and properties in the State of Arkansas;

WHEREAS: The weather-related damage includes numerous downed power lines, creating the need for commercial vehicles to haul heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment to line crews for the purpose of restoring power to the citizens of Arkansas;

WHEREAS: It is important to maintain a safe distance from these downed power lines, line crews, and related equipment;

WHEREAS: Pursuant to 49 CFR §390.23, a motor carrier or driver operating a commercial motor vehicle shall be exempt from 49 CFR §§ 395.3 and 395.5 for up to fourteen (14) days following the declaration of an emergency by the Governor of a State, so long as the motor carrier or driver is providing direct assistance in response to the declared emergency; and

WHEREAS: Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §12-75-114(e)(1), the Governor is authorized to suspend any regulatory statutes or rules that in any way prevent, hinder, or delay actions necessary in coping with an emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS, acting under the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Arkansas and pursuant to Act 511 of 1973, as amended, do hereby declare that:

1. A state of emergency exists in the State of Arkansas as applied to commercial vehicles hauling heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment for the purpose of restoring service to citizens and properties in Arkansas;
2. A state of emergency exists in the State of Arkansas as applied to emergency response vehicles, such as, but not limited to, utility vehicles, bucket trucks, and electric utility supply trucks responding to the storms and related damage;
3. Emergency response vehicles are authorized to bypass all Arkansas Department of Transportation weigh station facilities through April 16, 2025. This authorization does not include vehicles that require permits to operate on Arkansas' roadways. This authorization does not relieve size and weight restrictions. This declaration applies only to weigh stations and to vehicles traveling in convoy;
4. This state of emergency shall remain in effect until April 16, 2025, unless terminated by an amendment to this order.

FURTHERMORE, I hereby invoke the emergency executive powers vested in me under Ark. Code Ann. §§12-75-101 et seq., as amended, and suspend the provisions of any regulatory statutes or rules that prevent, hinder, or delay actions necessary in coping with the emergency described herein. State agencies are directed to render maximum assistance to the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management in relation to actions necessary for the rapid and orderly response to this emergency.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed on this 2nd day of April, in the year of our Lord 2025.