Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER ELEVEN (2026)

DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY DUE TO SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

Importance of the Issue

On January 22, 2026, I declare a state of emergency to exist for the Commonwealth of Virginia based on National Weather Service forecasts that indicate a severe winter storm with significant snow, along with sleet, ice, freezing rain, and temperatures below freezing for several days that could cause transportation difficulties and power outages.

The Virginia Emergency Operations Center ("VEOC") has been actively monitoring the movement of severe winter weather heading toward Virginia, with the anticipated arrival of the most severe impacts on Saturday, January 24, 2026, and into Sunday, January 25, 2026. Accordingly, the pre-positioning of response assets and supplies will be necessary to assist our local and state partners. The Virginia Emergency Support Team will activate for this incident.

The health and general welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth require that state action be taken to help alleviate the conditions caused by this situation. The effects of this storm constitute a disaster wherein human life and public and private property are imperiled, as described in § 44-146.16 of the *Code of Virginia*. Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article V, Section 7 of the Constitution of Virginia, and §§ 44-146.17 and 44-75.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, as Governor and Director of Emergency Management and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth's Armed Forces, I proclaim a state of emergency. Accordingly, I direct state and local governments to render appropriate assistance to prepare for this event, 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. Emergency services shall be conducted in accordance with § 44-146.13 et seq. of the *Code of Virginia*.

Following a declaration of a local emergency pursuant to § 44-146.21 of the *Code of Virginia*, if a local governing body determines that evacuation is deemed necessary for the preservation of life or other emergency mitigation, response, or recovery, pursuant to § 44-146.17(A)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, I direct 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. Notwithstanding the foregoing, I reserve the right to direct and compel evacuation from the same and different areas and determine a different timetable both where local governing bodies have made such a determination and where local governing bodies have not made such a determination. Violations of any order to citizens to evacuate shall constitute a violation of this Executive Order and are punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

This Executive Order also covers preparatory actions for this event that began on January 22, 2026.

Directive

In order to marshal all public resources and appropriate preparedness, response, and recovery measures, I order the following actions:

1. Implementation by state agencies of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan, as amended, along with other appropriate state plans.

2. Activation of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center and the Virginia Emergency Support Team, as directed by the State Coordinator of Emergency Management, to coordinate the provision of assistance to state, local, and tribal governments and to facilitate emergency services assignments to other agencies; activation of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact § 44-146.28:1 of the *Code of Virginia* as needed.

3. Authorization for the heads of executive branch agencies, on behalf of their regulatory boards as appropriate, and with the concurrence of their Cabinet Secretary, to waive any state requirement or regulation, and enter into contracts without regard to normal procedures or formalities, and without regard to application or permit fees or royalties. All waivers issued by agencies shall be posted on their websites.

4. Activation of § 59.1-525 et seq. of the *Code of Virginia* related to price gouging.

5. Authorization of a maximum of $2,750,000 in state sum sufficient funds for state and local government mission assignments and state response and recovery operations authorized and coordinated through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, allowable by The Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121 et seq. Included in this authorization is $1,000,000 for the Department of Military Affairs.

6. Activation of the Virginia National Guard to State Active Duty.

Effective Date of this Executive Order

This Executive Order shall be effective January 22, 2026, and shall remain in full force and effect for 30 days pursuant to § 44-146.17(A)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*, unless sooner amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Termination of this 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 22nd day of January 2026.

Abigail D. Spanberger

Abigail D. Spanberger, Governor

Attest:

Jennifer B. Moon

Jennifer B. Moon, Secretary of the Commonwealth