



THE STATE OF GEORGIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR:

STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR WINTER WEATHER

WHEREAS: The National Weather Service issued a Winter Storm Watch for North Georgia beginning late Friday, January 23, 2026, through Monday, January 26, 2026; and

WHEREAS: This Winter Storm Watch may be upgraded to either a Winter Storm Warning or a Winter Weather Advisory later this evening or tomorrow, and the impacted area may extend to parts of Central Georgia, including the Metro Atlanta area; and

WHEREAS: This major winter storm is forecasted to result in significant accumulations of snow, ice, freezing rain, and sleet; and

WHEREAS: Projected wind gusts of up to 30 miles per hour will exacerbate any potential damage to public and private property; and

WHEREAS: Due to the possibility of snow and ice accumulation, fallen trees, and downed power lines, Georgia's roadways will likely become hazardous or impassable, hindering access to essential public services; and

WHEREAS: Assistance from the State of Georgia is necessary to provide for the public's safety, protect public and private property, and restore the social and economic welfare of the State; and

WHEREAS: The Governor is vested with the emergency powers cited herein as the Chief Executive of this State; and

WHEREAS: The Governor, as Chief Executive, is tasked with declaring a state of emergency “[i]n the event of [an] actual or impending emergency or disaster of natural or human origin . . . within or affecting this [S]tate” under Code Section 38-3-51(a); and

WHEREAS: The Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations, 49 C.F.R. §§ 390, *et seq.*, limit the hours that operators of commercial motor vehicles may drive; and

WHEREAS: 49 C.F.R. § 390.23 allows the Governor of a State to suspend these regulations for commercial vehicles responding to an emergency for fourteen (14) days or until the emergency condition ceases to exist, whichever is less, if the Governor determines that an emergency condition exists; and

WHEREAS: Code Section 38-3-51 vests the Governor with the authority to bring emergency situations under control by issuing orders, rules, and regulations to protect the safety and welfare of the public; and

WHEREAS: Code Section 38-3-28 provides that “[a]ll orders, rules, and regulations promulgated by the Governor” have the full force and effect of law; and

WHEREAS: In consultation with state emergency preparedness officials, I have determined that the following actions are necessary and appropriate to protect the continued strength of Georgia’s economy and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of Georgia’s residents and visitors.

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO CODE SECTIONS 38-3-28 AND 38-3-51, AND THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY

ORDERED: That a State of Emergency exists in the State of Georgia due to the projected impact of this major winter storm.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That all resources of the State of Georgia be made available to assist in preparation, response, and recovery activities throughout the State, and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency shall activate the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan and the Georgia State Operations Center.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That state agencies shall coordinate all public and emergency information, activities, releases, and response efforts related to this emergency with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That the Georgia Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Public Safety shall take all necessary action to ensure the expeditious movement of utility vehicles, equipment, and personnel through the State to eliminate power outages.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That state agencies shall provide sufficient personnel required for the staffing of the Georgia State Operations Center or other command, control, and coordination points as may be designated by the Director of the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency and shall provide such personnel, vehicles, equipment, and other resources needed to protect life and property and to ensure continuation, restoration, and recovery of essential public services.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That the Georgia Department of Defense provide up to five hundred (500) Georgia National Guard troops to be used in preparation, response, and recovery efforts for this winter storm.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That said Georgia National Guard troops be called up to State Active Duty as necessary by the Adjutant General.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That weight, height, and length for any vehicle traveling through the State of Georgia for the purposes of providing relief related to this State of Emergency, which traverses roadways maintained by the State of Georgia, excluding interstates, shall not exceed the following:

- A. A maximum gross vehicle weight for vehicles equipped with five (5) weight-bearing axles, with an outer bridge span of not less than fifty-one (51) feet, shall not exceed a gross vehicle weight of ninety-five thousand (95,000) pounds, a maximum width of ten (10) feet, and an overall length of one hundred (100) feet. Continuous travel is authorized with the proper escorts.
- B. If the width of said vehicle exceeds eight (8) feet six (6) inches and is traveling after daylight, defined as thirty (30) minutes

before sunset to thirty (30) minutes after sunrise, the transporter is required to have a vehicle front and a rear escort/amber light when traveling on a two-lane roadway and a vehicle rear escort when traveling on a four-lane highway. Transporters are responsible for ensuring that they have proper oversize signs, markings, flags, and escorts as defined in the Georgia Department of Transportation Rules and Regulations.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That commercial vehicles operating outside the above-mentioned weight, height, and length restrictions for the purposes of providing relief related to this State of Emergency shall be issued permits by the Georgia Department of Public Safety. Said vehicles shall be subject to any special conditions the Georgia Department of Public Safety may list on applicable permits. Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed to allow any vehicle to exceed weight limits posted for bridges and like structures, nor shall anything in this Executive Order be construed to relieve compliance with restrictions other than those specified in this Order or from any statute, rule, order, or other legal requirement not specifically waived herein.

Oversize permits may be issued by the Georgia Department of Public Safety, Motor Carrier Compliance Division, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday by calling 404-624-7700 or through the Georgia Permitting and Routing Optimization System online portal at <https://www.gaprospermits.com/>.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That the Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations limiting the hours that operators of commercial vehicles may drive, 49 C.F.R. §§ 390, *et seq.*, are suspended to ensure the uninterrupted supply of goods and services necessary to respond to this State of Emergency, including petroleum products, for fourteen (14) days or until the emergency condition ceases to exist, whichever is less, pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 390.23. Nothing herein shall be construed as an exemption from the commercial driver's license requirements in 49 C.F.R. § 383 or the financial requirements in 49 C.F.R. § 387 or to require or allow an ill or fatigued driver to operate a commercial motor vehicle. A driver who notifies a motor vehicle carrier that he or she needs immediate rest shall be given at least ten (10) consecutive hours of off duty before being required to return to service, pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 390.23.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

Pursuant to Code Section 10-1-393.4, price gouging related to goods and services necessary for preparation, response, and recovery activities for this State of Emergency for Winter Weather, including, but not limited to, petroleum products, propane, and heating fuels, would be detrimental to the social and economic welfare of the citizens of this State and it therefore prohibited.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That if one or more of the provisions in this Order shall be held to be invalid, in violation of the Georgia Constitution, in violation of Georgia law, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, violation, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provisions of this Order, and, in such case, this Order shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained within the Order.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That no provision of this Order shall limit, infringe, suspend, or supplant any judicial order, judgment, or decree issued pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or constitution of the United States, nor shall any person use any provision in this Order as a defense to an action in violation of a judicial order, judgment, or decree by any court created pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or constitution of the United States.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

That this Order does not suspend operation of any state or federal law or regulation, except as specifically described herein.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

The Office of the Governor may continue to issue guidance on the scope of this Order as needed through communication media, including social media, without need for further Executive Orders.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED:

All provisions of the Order shall become effective upon signature and shall be valid for a period of seven (7) days, expiring Thursday, January 29, 2026, at 11:59 P.M. unless this State of Emergency is renewed by the Governor.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That this Order shall be effective upon signature.

This 22nd day of January 2026.



GOVERNOR