



**DECLARATION OF A
STATE OF EMERGENCY IN DURHAM COUNTY, NC
(WINTER STORM EVENT JANUARY 2026)**

WHEREAS, a sustained winter storm is predicted to arrive in Durham County on or about January 24 and continue through January 26, 2026, causing significant impacts through a combination of snow, sleet, freezing rain, and extreme cold temperatures; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2026, due to the anticipated impact of this storm across the State, Governor Josh Stein, issued Executive Order 31, declaring a state of emergency in the State of North Carolina and issuing a temporary waiver and suspension of certain motor vehicle regulation; and

WHEREAS, the projected winter storm will likely damage public and private property, make travel hazardous, could seriously disrupt essential utility services and systems, and place lives at risk from the extreme cold within Durham County, all of which constitute an emergency under N.C.G.S. §166A-19.2(6); and

WHEREAS, it appears at this time that there is no need for the imposition of any specific restrictions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED THAT, in accordance with the powers invested in the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, by Durham County ordinance §10-50, a State of Emergency is Declared in Durham County, due to the anticipated impacts from the projected winter storm:

Section 1. The emergency area for this Declaration of State of Emergency is the geographic limits of Durham County, and pursuant to 166A.19-22 as requested by the Mayor, within the corporate limits of the City of Durham as well. It does not apply within the corporate limits of other municipalities in Durham County unless those municipalities either request or consent to have this Order apply within their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §166A-19.31 and Durham County ordinance §10-54 the Sheriff of Durham County is delegated the authority to close streets, roads, highways, bridges, public vehicular areas, and other areas ordinarily used for vehicular travel in order to maintain public order, services, and protection of lives, safety and property during this emergency.

- A. Notice of any such closures must be communicated to Emergency Management and North Carolina Department of Transportation as quickly as possible.
- B. This authority does not include restricting access to emergency responders and other persons necessary for recovery from the emergency.
- C. Even in the absence of a formal closure, Residents are encouraged to stay off the roadways and to limit travel so they do not put themselves at risk, nor interfere with the efforts of emergency responders and repair crews.



Section 3. The Emergency Operations Plan adopted by Durham County and all applicable mutual assistance compacts and agreements are in effect and shall remain so until this Declaration terminates. The Chief Emergency Manager is directed to implement the Emergency Operations Plan and perform her other assigned duties.

Section 4. I hereby order Durham County emergency management and emergency response personnel, and all other Durham employees subject to our control to cooperate in the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of this Order, all applicable local ordinances, state, and federal laws, and the Durham County Emergency Operations Plan. I further request the cooperation and support of the Sheriff's Office and Durham Police Department in enforcing the provisions of this Declaration and facilitating support and recovery efforts.

Section 5. A copy of this Declaration of State of Emergency in the County of Durham shall be provided to the County Clerk and posted at the County Courthouse. Reports of the substance of the Declaration shall be sent immediately to the mass communications media serving Durham County. As soon as practicable, the full text of this Declaration shall be distributed to the mass communications media serving Durham County. The Chief Emergency Manager is directed to provide a copy to North Carolina Emergency Management.

All provisions of this Declaration shall take effect at 5:00 p.m. on January 24, 2026. This Declaration shall remain in effect until January 31, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. unless extended or rescinded prior to that date and time.

This Declaration is electronically signed at this date and time: January 24, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

Dr. Mike Lee, Chair
Durham County Board of Commissioners