

## REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION

**April 4, 2025**

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Through: George A. Robinson  
Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region 6  
800 North Loop 288  
Denton, TX 76209

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR §206.35, I respectfully request that you declare an emergency for the State of Arkansas as a result of Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding that began April 2, 2025, and continuing. In response to this event, I took appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the Arkansas Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan on April 2, 2025, and declared a State of Emergency on April 2, 2025. Nineteen county judges have declared an emergency in advance of the event. The local governments and the State of Arkansas are bearing the cost for response to this disaster.

I have determined this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary. A significant long-duration severe and potentially historical flooding event developed over Arkansas on April 2, 2025. The event started on April 2 with an extremely rare Storm Prediction Center High Risk for Severe Weather that included a 30% chance of significant (EF2+) tornadoes over most of eastern Arkansas. This outlook proved to be accurate with over 46 tornado warnings issued throughout the state. The total number of confirmed tornadoes is not yet known, as survey teams are currently ongoing. Seven individuals sustained injuries in Craighead County after a large tornado hit Lake City on April 2. An EF-2 tornado impacted the town of Almyra in Arkansas County with several residences incurring damage. This event also started the major flooding event that will be seen over the state through April 6 with 14 Flash Flood warnings issued April 2-3.

This historic rainfall event that has only just started is likely to exceed a 50 to 100-year Annual Recurrence Interval Flooding event, indicating that in any particular year this type of rainfall is only seen 1 to 2% of the time. The coverage and intensity of this event can be seen in the next three images which show the Weather Prediction Center's Excessive Rainfall Outlook forecasting a High Risk for Arkansas for three consecutive days. This is extremely rare and the highest level of flooding threat that the National Weather Service can issue. The NWS Little Rock and Memphis Weather Forecast Offices have also issued a rare Potentially Dangerous Situation Flood Watch that encompasses the entire state.

This generational amount of forecasted rainfall has caused multiple River Flood Warnings to be issued over a large portion of the state. Rivers will reach major and moderate stages throughout the state, with some areas of the White River forecasted to come within feet of the gage records. This level of river flooding, combined with the short-term flash flooding, has the potential to become one of the largest flooding events in the state of Arkansas. The city of Hardy in Sharp County has already issued evacuation orders to the residents along the Spring River in anticipation of major flooding cresting at 23 feet on Saturday, April 5, 2025. The normal river levels for the Spring River in Hardy is typically below 4 feet. There is high confidence that the railroad tracks and residences along the Spring River in Imboden in Lawrence County will be inundated as the river is expected to crest at 29 feet on Saturday, April 5, 2025, when the normal river levels for this area of the river is typically 5 feet.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is currently activated to Level 1 (Full Activation) with support from all 16 Emergency Support Functions. ADEM Area Coordinators are supporting the local EOCs with technical and logistical support; ADEM Public Information Officer is supporting the local EOCs with all media relations, conducting rumor control, and providing safety messages through press releases and social media. ADEM is hosting daily response coordination calls with all Emergency Management partners at the local, state, and federal levels, and continues to partner with the USACE to conduct levee monitoring/inspections and sandbagging operations. The Arkansas National Guard is coordinating with the National Guard Bureau for satellite imagery and the 188th Wing UPAD to conduct real-time identification of risks and vulnerabilities; four high-water rescue units are pre-staged in Jonesboro and Mountain Home for emergency evacuations. The State of Oklahoma is currently standing by in the event that their 10 Swift Water Rescue teams are requested by Arkansas through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) continues to monitor the state highways and providing logistical support to the SEOC with the movement of sandbags and other equipment. They are preparing for possible highway closures and detours as the rivers continue to rise.

ARDOT District 3 cleared debris in the southern part of the district. District 7 reported tornado damage and debris west of Magnolia that had been cleared and expressed concerns over potential flooding of the Ouachita River. District 10 reported tornado

damage and debris in Lake City and Monette and cleared roadways of initial debris. The Arkansas Department of Human Services is maintaining situational awareness and coordinating any mass care needs with local jurisdictions and volunteer agencies. The Red Cross is conducting preliminary damage assessments where conditions will allow. The City of Hardy requested the Red Cross to open a shelter in anticipation of the flooding and evacuated residents. The Red Cross has volunteers in Craighead County offering cleanup supplies to the tornado survivors in Lake City and Monette. The Department of Finance and Administration is supporting procurement needs in the SEOC and currently ordering additional sand, sandbags, and locating two sandbagging machines and trailers for future operations. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) reported the Lakeside Nursing Center in Lake City is operational but under generator power with enough fuel for 24-48 hours and an unknown restoration timeframe. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission continues to monitor the river areas and is prepared to support local jurisdictions with any swift water rescue missions. Arkansas State Police (ASP) Emergency Response Teams are monitoring the event and are capable of response if necessary. They are prepared to support local law enforcement and ARDOT with road closures and traffic control points. State Police in Troops A, B, C, D, E, I, J, and K will be heavily impacted by flood waters. The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment and Arkansas Public Services Commission continue to monitor the flooding situation with potential impacts to Hazardous Materials and Energy. Historic sandbagging efforts are currently taking place throughout the state. Volunteer, inmate, and county labor are currently being utilized around the clock to battle the historically unparalleled river flooding levels. Sandbagging machines and countless sandbags are being sent to Arkansas, Garland, Greene, Independence, Jackson, Saline, Sharp, and Woodruff Counties are racing the rising of the rivers to prevent devastation from the record-breaking water levels.

Due to the unknowns associated with this event, and the amount of rain and changing conditions, it is difficult to estimate the level of Direct Federal Assistance required. The activities listed below are our current estimate based on experience:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers - sandbags, self-contained pumps, damage assessment teams, power generation, technical assistance, mapping, GIS support, and inundation mapping
- Federal Emergency Management Agency- Urban Search and Rescue
- United States Coast Guard - air transportation assets, technical assistance
- Civil Air Patrol - air assets, aerial imagery
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service - wildlife management assistance and technical assistance
- United States Department of Agriculture - crop damage assessment, technical assistance water management and inundation mapping
- Federal Highway Administration - Emergency Relief Program
- Environmental Protection Agency - damage assessments, technical assistance, water sampling

The nature of this record-breaking flood event will significantly impair the ability to travel in the affected areas of the state. The flooding will cause excessive debris and could possibly wash out bridges. ARDOT and local road crews are continuously monitoring flood waters, setting up barricades, and making emergency repairs as needed.

The following counties and ARDOT are reporting several roads closed and expecting many others. At this time, ARDOT is reporting the following state highways closed due to flooding, downed trees, and downed power lines:

Arkansas	State Highway 130	Downed Power Line	Both Lanes
Columbia	State Highway 344	Downed Tree	Both Lanes
Jackson	State Highway 37	High Water	Both Lanes
Lafayette	State Highway 160	Downed Power Line	Both Lanes
Lee	State Highway 79	High Water	Both Lanes

Downed power lines in Arkansas County have required ARDOT to close State Highway 130 for both directions of travel, and traffic must find alternate routes. Columbia County has closed both lanes on State Highway 344 due to downed trees, of which there is no detour available for through traffic. High Water caused State Highway 37 in Jackson County to close with no detour available for traffic. Lafayette County has State Highway 160 closed due to the storm downing power lines and breaking power poles. Water on State Highway 79, in Lee County, has caused ARDOT to shut the highway down and prevent travel in both directions.

Since January 2015, there have been 37 gubernatorial declarations for the State. Although Arkansas has a State Public Assistance Program, it would be difficult for the State to bear all of the financial responsibilities and properly recover from the current event without the assistance of a Presidential Emergency Declaration for the current event. In addition to the state disasters declared since January 2015, Arkansas continues to recover from 14 presidentially declared disasters since 2015. Many of the same counties in Arkansas are continually inundated with severe weather, which has put a burden on not only the local jurisdictions but also the State's ability to effectively continue to respond to, and recover from, such events.

In conclusion, I have determined that these storms and flooding are and will be of such severity and magnitude, that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically requesting Category A and B, limited to Direct Federal Assistance, statewide. Arkansas is both experiencing and expecting significant and widespread impacts on and near the Buffalo River, Spring River, Little Red River, Cache River, Black River, Saline

River, Ouachita River, Eleven Point River, Mississippi River, Petit Jean River, Little River, and White River and additional rainfall this week will prolong major flooding and will add additional pressure to river levees. Your favorable consideration for this declaration is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Sarah Huckabee Sanders  
Governor of Arkansas

Enclosures:

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

Enclosure C

Governor's Executive Order

National Weather Service Data