



# State of North Carolina

**JOSH STEIN**  
GOVERNOR

January 2, 2025

## EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 3

### REORGANIZING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO MEET THE NEEDS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

**WHEREAS**, Hurricane Helene (“Helene”) entered the State of North Carolina on September 26, 2024 as a tropical storm; and

**WHEREAS**, Helene has inflicted significant damage on public and private property; and

**WHEREAS**, impacts from Helene constitute a State of Emergency, as defined in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.3(19); and

**WHEREAS**, on September 25, 2024, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 315, which declares a State of Emergency and provides for the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors located in North Carolina (“Declaration of a State of Emergency”); and

**WHEREAS**, N.C. Sess. Law 2024-51 extended the State of Emergency until March 1, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 26, 2024, the President of the United States issued an emergency declaration, FEMA-3617-EM, for the State of North Carolina, providing, in part, for Public Assistance-Category B, including direct federal assistance to the State; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 28, 2024, the President of the United States approved an Expedited Major Disaster Declaration, FEMA-4827-DR, for the State of North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, several state agencies and organizations, including the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Commerce, among others, have initiatives and programs that address Helene relief and recovery efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina state government can better promote relief and recovery efforts by enhancing coordination across state agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article III of the North Carolina Constitution and N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 143A-4 and 143B-4, the Governor is the chief executive officer of the state and is responsible for formulating and administering the policies of the executive branch of state government; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-12, the Governor has the authority and the duty to supervise the official conduct of all executive officers; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.10(b)(7), the Governor may utilize the services, equipment, supplies, and facilities of existing departments, offices, and agencies of the State and of the political subdivisions thereof. The officers and personnel of all such

departments, offices, and agencies are required to cooperate with and extend such services and facilities to the Governor upon request; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.30(a)(1), the Governor may utilize all available state resources as reasonably necessary to cope with an emergency, including the transfer and direction of personnel or functions of state agencies or units thereof for the purpose of performing or facilitating emergency services; and

**WHEREAS**, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-12(a)(9) authorizes the Governor to appoint staff necessary to carry out his duties as Governor.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED**:

### **Section 1. The Governor's Recovery Office for Western North Carolina**

The Governor's Recovery Office for Western North Carolina ("GROW NC") is hereby established within the Office of the Governor.

GROW NC shall be responsible for:

- a. Creating the Executive Branch's cross-agency vision for Helene recovery efforts and developing strategies and plans related thereto;
- b. Overseeing, coordinating, and accelerating the western North Carolina revitalization efforts of the Executive Branch and its agencies;
- c. Developing and deploying the expertise and innovation necessary for a swift and robust recovery effort;
- d. Providing transparency regarding the progress of recovery efforts through updates to the public;
- e. Coordinating recovery-related intergovernmental communications, including liaising with the North Carolina General Assembly and federal officials regarding North Carolina's recovery-related needs;
- f. Satisfying the Executive Branch's reporting requirements regarding the use of disaster relief funds as set out in Parts VI and VII of N.C. Sess. Law 2024-51; and
- g. Staffing and providing administrative assistance to the Governor's Advisory Committee on western North Carolina Recovery.

GROW NC shall be led by a Director of GROW NC and shall have such additional staff as he or she or the Governor deem necessary.

### **Section 2. Division of Community Revitalization**

The North Carolina Department of Commerce ("Commerce") is hereby directed to establish the Division of Community Revitalization ("Division"). The Division shall be established with Commerce. The Division shall:

- a. Coordinate with divisions of Commerce, state agencies (including GROW NC, local governments, the federal government, and nonprofit organizations) to oversee the rebuilding of homes destroyed or damaged by Helene.
- b. Coordinate and lead efforts to revitalize the economy of western North Carolina.
- c. Any other recovery programs as assigned by the Governor or the Secretary of Commerce.

The Secretary of Commerce shall designate a director to lead the Division. The Division shall have such additional staff as the director or the Secretary deem necessary.

### **Section 3. Savings Clause**

If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.

**Section 4. Effect and Duration**

This Executive Order is effective immediately. It shall remain in effect until repealed, replaced, or rescinded by another applicable Executive Order.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh, this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of January in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-five.

  
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Josh Stein  
Governor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Elaine F. Marshall  
Secretary of State

