

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2026-03

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2026, the undersigned issued Executive Order No. 2026-02, declaring a State of Emergency due to the threats posed by severe winter weather, which was forecasted to impact the southeastern region of the United States and did, in fact, produce hazardous conditions that disrupted essential utility services and other critical systems in certain areas of the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, beginning January 30, 2026, while the aforementioned State of Emergency remained in effect, a second winter storm produced additional hazardous conditions and disrupted essential utility services and other critical systems in certain areas of the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, due to the aforementioned State of Emergency and the forecasted hazardous weather conditions and resulting impacts associated with the same, and in accordance with the directive set forth in Section 1(H) of Executive Order No. 2026-02 for state government offices, with the exception of state government offices located in Richland and Lexington Counties, to follow county government closure determinations, state government offices in numerous counties throughout the State were closed or operated on an abbreviated schedule on one or more days during the period from January 26, 2026, through February 3, 2026, to ensure the safety of state employees and the general public; and

WHEREAS, section 8-11-57 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, provides, in pertinent part, that “whenever the Governor declares a state of emergency or orders all or some state offices closed due to hazardous weather conditions he may authorize up to five days leave with pay for affected state employees who are absent from work due to the state of emergency or the hazardous weather conditions.”

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of South Carolina and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of this State and the powers conferred upon me therein, I hereby order and direct as follows:

Section 1. Authorizing Leave with Pay Due to Winter Weather Conditions

A. I hereby authorize leave with pay for affected state employees, as set forth below, who were absent from work during the State of Emergency and due to the aforementioned hazardous weather conditions, and in accordance with the directive set forth in Section 1(H) of Executive Order No. 2025-02 for state government offices, with the exception of state government offices located in Richland and Lexington Counties, to follow county government closure determinations, in the following counties or offices on the following dates:

January 26, 2026:

Closed: Abbeville County, Anderson County, Barnwell County, Cherokee County, Chester County, Chesterfield County, Greenville County, Greenwood County, Kershaw County, Lancaster County, Laurens County, Lee County, Marlboro County, McCormick County, Newberry County, Oconee County, Pickens County, Richland County, Saluda County, Spartanburg County, Union County, York County.

Abbreviated Schedule: Aiken County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Allendale County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Calhoun County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Dillon County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Edgefield County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Fairfield County (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Florence County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Lexington County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Lexington County State Government Offices (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Richland County State Government Offices (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Williamsburg County (opened at 10:30 a.m.).

January 27, 2026:

Closed: Anderson County, Cherokee County, Spartanburg County.

Abbreviated Schedule: Abbeville County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Greenville County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Lancaster County (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Laurens County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Oconee County (opened at 11:30 a.m.), Union County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), York County (opened at 10:30 a.m.).

February 2, 2026:

Closed: Anderson County, Beaufort County, Cherokee County, Chesterfield County, Colleton County, Darlington County, Dillon County, Fairfield County, Florence County, Georgetown County, Hampton County, Horry County, Kershaw County, Lancaster County, Lee County, Lexington

County State Government Offices, Marion County, Marlboro County, McCormick County, Newberry County, Richland County, Richland County State Government Offices, Saluda County, Spartanburg County, Sumter County, Union County, Williamsburg County.

Abbreviated Schedule: Abbeville County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Aiken County (opened at 1:00 p.m.), Allendale County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Bamberg County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), Barnwell County (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Berkeley County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Calhoun County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Charleston County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), Chester (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Clarendon County (opened at 1:00 p.m.), Dorchester County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Edgefield County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), Greenville County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Jasper County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), Laurens County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), Lexington County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Orangeburg County (opened at 12:00 p.m.), York County (opened at 11:00 a.m.).

February 3, 2026:

Abbreviated Schedule: Cherokee County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Chesterfield County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Dillon County (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Horry County (opened at 10:00 a.m.), Kershaw County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Lancaster County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Lee County (opened at 9:30 a.m.), Marlboro County (opened at 11:00 a.m.), Union County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), Williamsburg County (opened at 10:30 a.m.), York County (opened at 10:00 a.m.).

B. In the event that county government offices in a county not listed above were closed or operated on an abbreviated schedule during the State of Emergency due to the aforementioned hazardous weather conditions, I hereby authorize the South Carolina Department of Administration to grant leave with pay for affected state employees who were absent from work as a result of such closure of state government offices and to administratively add any such county to the list of covered closures without the need for further Orders.

Section 2. General Provisions

A. This Order is not intended to create, and does not create, any individual right, privilege, or benefit, whether substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the State of South Carolina, its agencies, departments, political subdivisions, or other entities, or any officers, employees, or agents thereof, or any other person.

B. This Order shall be implemented consistent with and to the maximum extent provided by applicable law and shall be subject to the availability of appropriations. This Order shall not be interpreted, applied, implemented, or construed in a manner so as to impair, impede,

or otherwise affect the authority granted by law to an executive agency or department, or the officials or head thereof, including the undersigned.

C. This Order is effective immediately.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS 6th DAY OF
FEBRUARY, 2026.**

HENRY DARGAN MCMASTER
Governor

ATTEST:

MARK HAMMOND
Secretary of State