

# STATE OF FLORIDA

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 24-49

#### (Emergency Management – Impacts of Crisis in Haiti)

**WHEREAS**, a protracted civil crisis, raging in Haiti since 2018, has escalated in severity resulting in several armed gang attacks on Haitian prisons, airports, governmental infrastructure, elected officials, and innocent residents across Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, the armed gangs in Haiti have maimed and murdered over 8,400 innocent civilians in the last year, demanding the resignation of the acting Haitian Prime Minister, Ariel Henry; and

**WHEREAS**, the acting Haitian Prime Minister has been prevented from reentering Haiti, and on March 3, 2024, the Haitian government, under its Minister of Economy and Finance Michel Patrick Boisvert, declared a 72-hour state of emergency and curfew in an unsuccessful attempt to curb the widespread violence, kidnapping, and murder by the various armed gangs across Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 10, 2024, the United States Department of State issued a Travel Advisory on its website for Americans living in Haiti acknowledging that its “ability to assist U.S. citizens is severely limited” and that it is “unable to facilitate travel out of the country” for Americans trapped in Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, over the last several days, the United States and other nations have airlifted and evacuated their essential and non-essential diplomatic staff from their respective embassies in Haiti, confirming the severity of this humanitarian crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 11, 2024, amidst the launch of an armed rebellion fueled by widespread murder, rape, and kidnapping by gangs that now control eighty percent of the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, the acting Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, has resigned from his position; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no semblance of any governmental structure or law and order in Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the Florida State Guard, the Florida National Guard, and State law enforcement agencies have deployed over 250 additional officers and soldiers and over a dozen air and sea craft to the southern coast of Florida to protect the State from a potential immigration influx due to this crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida has a large Haitian population; and

**WHEREAS**, there are Floridians in Haiti who wish to return home but have been prevented from doing so because of the U.S. embassy closure, commercial flight cancellations, and other travel and logistical disruptions due to the ongoing armed rebellion in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 14, 2024, the Florida Division of Emergency Management launched an online assistance portal to collect information from Floridians stranded in Haiti; and

**WHEREAS**, the Division has received numerous requests from distressed Floridians stranded in Haiti seeking evacuation assistance from the State of Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to section 252.34(4), Florida Statutes, any occurrence, or threat thereof, whether natural, technological, or manmade, in war or in peace, which results or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population of Florida is an emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to section 252.36(1)(a), Florida Statutes, and as the Governor of Florida, I am responsible for meeting the dangers presented to the people of Florida by any emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, as the Governor of Florida, I am responsible for ensuring the safety, security, and general welfare of all Floridians.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS**, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article IV, Section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution and by the Florida Emergency Management Act, as amended, and all other applicable laws, promulgate the following Executive Order, to take immediate effect:

Section 1. Because of the foregoing conditions, which are expected to constitute a major disaster, I declare that a state of emergency exists in the State of Florida.

Section 2. I designate the Executive Director of the Division of Emergency Management (“Director”) as the State Coordinating Officer for the duration of this emergency and direct him to execute the State’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and other response, recovery, and mitigation plans necessary to cope with the emergency, including any logistical, rescue or evacuation operations. Pursuant to section 252.36(1)(a), Florida Statutes, I delegate to the State Coordinating Officer the authority to exercise those powers delineated in sections 252.36(6)-(12), Florida Statutes, which he shall exercise as needed to meet this emergency, subject to the limitations of section 252.33, Florida Statutes. In exercising the powers delegated by this Executive Order, the State Coordinating Officer shall confer with the Governor to the fullest extent practicable. The State Coordinating Officer shall also have the authority to:

A. Invoke and administer the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (“EMAC”) (sections 252.921-252.9335, Florida Statutes) and other compacts and agreements existing between the State of Florida and other states, and the further authority to coordinate the allocation of resources from such other states that are made available to Florida under such compacts and agreements so as to best meet the dangers presented by this emergency.



B. Seek direct assistance and enter into agreements with any and all agencies of the federal government as may be needed to meet this emergency.

C. Direct all state, regional, and local governmental agencies, including law enforcement agencies, to identify personnel needed from those agencies to assist in meeting the response, recovery, and mitigation needs created by this emergency, and to place all such personnel under the direct command and coordination of the State Coordinating Officer to meet this emergency.

D. Direct the actions of any state agency as necessary to implement the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Disaster Recovery Framework.

E. Designate Deputy State Coordinating Officers and Deputy State Disaster Recovery Coordinators, as necessary.

F. Suspend the effect of any statute, rule, or order that would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay any mitigation, response, or recovery action necessary to cope with this emergency. In accordance with section 252.3611(1), Florida Statutes, any such order, declaration, or other action shall specify each statute or rule being amended or waived, if applicable, and the expiration date for the order or action.

G. Enter orders as may be needed to implement any of the foregoing powers; however, the requirements of sections 252.46 and 120.54(4), Florida Statutes, do not apply to any such orders issued by the State Coordinating Officer. No such order shall remain in effect beyond the expiration of this Executive Order, including any extension thereof.

Section 3. I order the Adjutant General to activate the Florida National Guard, as needed, to deal with this emergency. I further order the Director of the State Guard to activate the Florida State Guard, as needed, to respond to this emergency.

Section 4. I find that the special duties and responsibilities resting upon some state, regional, and local agencies and other governmental bodies in responding to this emergency may require them to suspend or waive certain statutes, rules, ordinances, and orders they administer. Therefore, I issue the following authorizations:

A. Pursuant to section 252.36(6)(a), Florida Statutes, the Executive Office of the Governor may suspend all statutes and rules affecting budgeting to the extent necessary to provide budget authority for state agencies to cope with this emergency. The requirements of sections 252.46 and 120.54(4), Florida Statutes, do not apply to any such suspension issued by the Executive Office of the Governor. No such suspension shall remain in effect beyond the expiration of this Executive Order, including any extension thereof.

B. Each state agency may suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or the orders or rules of that agency, if strict compliance with the provisions of any such statute, order, or rule would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to suspend any and all statutes, rules, ordinances, or orders which affect leasing, printing, purchasing, travel, and the condition of employment and the compensation of employees. In accordance with section 252.3611(1), Florida Statutes, any agency order, declaration, or other action suspending a statute or rule shall specify each statute or rule being amended or waived, if applicable, and the expiration date for the order or action. The requirements of sections 252.46 and 120.54(4), Florida Statutes, shall not apply to any such suspension issued by a state agency. No such suspension shall remain in effect beyond the expiration of this Executive Order, including any extension thereof.

C. All state agencies entering emergency orders, emergency rules, or other emergency actions in response to this emergency shall advise the State Coordinating Officer

contemporaneously or as soon as practicable thereafter, and, pursuant to section 252.36(3)(b), Florida Statutes, shall file the order or declaration with the Division of Administrative Hearings within five days of issuance.


Section 5. I find that the demands placed upon the funds specifically appropriated to state and local agencies for disaster relief or response are unreasonably great and that such funds may be inadequate to pay the costs of coping with this emergency. In accordance with section 252.37(2)(b), Florida Statutes, I direct that sufficient funding be made available, as needed, by transferring and expending moneys from the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund created under section 252.3711, Florida Statutes.

Section 6. All actions taken by the Director of the Division of Emergency Management with respect to this emergency before the issuance of this Executive Order are ratified, and he is directed to continue to execute the State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and other response, recovery, and mitigation plans necessary to cope with this emergency.

Section 7. This Executive Order is effective immediately and shall expire sixty (60) days from this date unless extended.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 15th day of March, 2024.

  
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RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

  
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SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED  
2024 MAR 15 PM 5:57  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
TALLAHASSEE, FL