



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Executive Department

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NUMBER NINE (2024)**

#### **ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF HURRICANE HELENE RECOVERY AND REBUILDING WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I hereby issue this Executive Directive to establish the Office of Hurricane Helene Recovery and Rebuilding within the Office of the Governor to advise on efforts to coordinate and lead recovery and rebuilding efforts in areas affected by Hurricane Helene.

#### **Importance of the Initiative**

In the wake of the devastating impact of Hurricane Helene affecting Southwest Virginia, it is imperative to create a dedicated office to support the coordination of long-term recovery and rebuilding efforts.

As the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and other state agencies support the communities damaged by Hurricane Helene in restoring infrastructure, housing, and essential services, the Office of Hurricane Helene Recovery and Rebuilding (“the Office”) shall ensure executive level engagement and coordination.

The Office will maximize collaboration with VDEM and other state agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Health, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Forestry, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Wildlife Resources, the Virginia Department of Energy, the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Tourism Corporation, and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Under the direction of the Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security, VDEM will provide all support required to the Office to facilitate the restoration of Southwest Virginia.

#### **Directive**

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor by Article V, Sections 1 and 7 of the Constitution of Virginia, and by the *Code of Virginia*, I direct the following:

**1. Establishment of the Office of Recovery and Rebuilding**

The Office of Hurricane Helene Recovery and Rebuilding (“the Office”) is hereby established within the Office of the Governor. The Office shall coordinate with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to (i) support the coordination of long-term recovery efforts across the Commonwealth; (ii) amplify and support communication between local, state, and federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and (iii) lead a comprehensive approach to recovery and rebuilding in the damaged communities. The Office will be led by a director appointed by the Governor.

**2. Coordination of Resources**

The Office will support VDEM in facilitating relevant state resources effectively and equitably in damaged areas and will support all relevant agencies as they restore essential infrastructure such as roads, power, and water systems in affected areas.

**3. Support for Local Governments and Communities**

Working with VDEM, the Office will communicate directly with local governments to assess needs, support the disbursement of federal disaster recovery funds, and engage in necessary planning and implementation of rebuilding efforts. The Office shall prioritize facilitating vulnerable populations in rebuilding infrastructure and accessing essential services.

**4. Collaboration with Private and Non-Governmental Organizations**

The Office will engage with private sector partners, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and community groups to leverage additional resources for recovery efforts and support economic recovery and revitalization in regions heavily damaged by disasters.

**5. Transparency and Accountability**

The Office shall implement comprehensive mechanisms to promote transparency and accountability in the administration and uses of recovery funds. The Office shall assist in regular audits, detailed reporting, and public disclosures to facilitate adherence to state and federal guidelines. The Office shall engage in independent oversight and communicate with stakeholders to contribute to the public’s trust and confidence in the efficient and legal administration of recovery funds.

**6. Reporting Requirements**

The Office shall provide regular status reports to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the public, including progress on recovery efforts, challenges encountered, and long-term planning.

**7. Transition from Immediate Response to Long-Term Recovery**

The Office shall coordinate with and assist VDEM and the Virginia Emergency Support Team to transition from immediate disaster response to long-term recovery and rebuilding, prioritizing housing solutions and debris management.

**Effective Date**

This Executive Directive shall take effect upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect until October 17, 2025, unless amended or rescinded by future executive order or directive. Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 17th day of October, 2024.



  
Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:



Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth