

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

September 23, 2020

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

Through: Ms. Gracia B. Szczech, Regional Administrator
DHS FEMA Region IV
3005 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA, 30341

Re: Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Isaias

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 C.F.R. §206.36, I request you declare a major disaster for the State of North Carolina as a result of the impacts of Hurricane Isaias, which made landfall around 11:10 p.m. on August 3, 2020 near Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina. The significant amount of damage and other impacts associated with Hurricane Isaias have exceeded the local and state capacity to effectively and wholly recover. Accordingly, I am requesting all categories of Public Assistance (PA) for fifteen (15) counties and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) assistance statewide.

Hurricane Isaias spurred tornadoes, caused major flooding to several significant river basins, ignited structural fires and also produced strong damaging winds. Effects from this storm were felt statewide and resulted in widespread power outages, damage to roads and bridges, and damage to water supply lines. Additionally, the storm placed increased strain on fire departments, emergency medical services and other critical infrastructure and services. Multiple deaths have been attributed to the storm. Many rivers and streams crested at devastating levels, and tornadoes left some people homeless.

I am requesting that you declare a Major Disaster Declaration for the following fifteen (15) North Carolina counties for Public Assistance, including direct Federal assistance:

Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Carteret, Chowan, Columbus, Craven,
Hertford, Hyde, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender and Pitt.

ACTIONS UNDER STATE LAW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.36, I took appropriate action under state law to respond to this situation. I declared a state of emergency on July 31, 2020 and directed all state and local government entities and agencies to cooperate in the implementation of the declaration and the execution of the State Emergency Operations Plan. The emergency area under the declaration included all North Carolina counties.

Based on the National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center's forecast, the Division of North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) activated the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and created a WebEOC event on July 31, 2020. NCEM also took proactive measures by reaching out to the counties in the state to warn them of the impending severe weather, and inform them of the agency's readiness to assist with any needs that may result from the severe weather.

NATURE AND AMOUNT OF STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES THAT HAVE BEEN, OR WILL BE USED, TO ALLEVIATE THE IMPACT OF THIS INCIDENT. (SEE ALSO FEMA FORM 010-0-13)

Preliminary rain accumulation records from the National Weather Services showed that some areas received nearly four inches of rain due to Hurricane Isaias. The EOC via WebEOC lists multiple confirmed tornadoes and many coastal counties were under flood and tornado watches and warnings for nearly fifteen (15) hours as Hurricane Isaias traversed the State of North Carolina.

More than eighty (80) local governments issued States of Emergencies for their areas in response to the State's and The National Weather Service's warnings of dangerous conditions. Shelters were opened by counties, the American Red Cross and the State of North Carolina. More than 500 residents sought shelter during the storm and subsequent devastating effects.

The American Red Cross assisted the State with operating shelters for individuals needing assistance and distribution of emergency meals and supplies. Extraordinary efforts were taken to ensure the safety of the general public during the most dangerous hours of the storm. Even though several mandatory evacuation orders were issued,

rescues were necessary across coastal North Carolina. The Cape Fear River in Wilmington saw record high water levels during Hurricane Isaias at 8.48 feet above flood level; this was the highest level since records began being kept in 1935. Many swift water rescue crews were deployed to assist coastal North Carolina counties to prevent resources from being overwhelmed. Efforts were taken to locate missing persons during the event, in both land-based and aquatic conditions. During the event there were four confirmed deaths. Additionally, damage resulted in multiple gas and oil leaks and the conditions of the storm resulted in tornadoes, fires, flooding and power outages affecting over 360,000 residents.

JOINT FEMA/STATE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Given the social distancing requirements to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), initial Preliminary Damage Assessments (hereafter PDAs) were conducted in a virtual manner in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Isaias. Further in person FEMA and State PDAs were conducted between August 17, 2020 and September 14, 2020. North Carolina Emergency Management and FEMA agree on the results of the PDAs. All requested counties have met their minimum threshold for declaration, with a statewide total of \$29,202,277. Removing any potential costs related to beach re-nourishment, the PDA numbers still reflect a total of \$19,535,250 in damage in the requested counties. This exceeds the minimum state total of \$14,589,288.99 by \$4,945,961.01.

County	Threshold	PDA Findings	Difference
Beaufort	\$ 183,394.56	\$ 281,135.00	\$ 97,740.44
Bertie	\$ 81,722.88	\$ 391,932.00	\$ 310,209.12
Brunswick	\$ 412,535.04	\$ 15,393,591.00	\$ 14,981,055.96
Carteret	\$ 255,240.96	\$ 515,810.00	\$ 260,569.04
Chowan	\$ 56,805.12	\$ 87,759.00	\$ 30,953.88
Columbus	\$ 223,096.32	\$ 337,342.00	\$ 114,245.68
Craven	\$ 397,489.20	\$ 886,512.00	\$ 489,022.80
Hertford	\$ 94,728.96	\$ 125,718.00	\$ 30,989.04
Hyde	\$ 22,310.40	\$ 35,373.00	\$ 13,062.60
Jones	\$ 38,987.52	\$ 76,777.00	\$ 37,789.48
New Hanover	\$ 778,241.28	\$ 5,135,901.00	\$ 4,357,659.72
Onslow	\$ 682,644.48	\$ 721,335.00	\$ 38,690.52
Pamlico	\$ 50,472.96	\$ 167,237.00	\$ 116,764.04
Pender	\$ 200,513.28	\$ 3,331,383.00	\$ 3,130,869.72
Pitt	\$ 645,688.32	\$ 692,816.00	\$ 47,127.68
Total	\$4,123,871.28	\$ 28,180,621.00	\$ 24,056,749.72

*State PDA results

DISASTER HISTORY

The State of North Carolina has a strong Emergency Management Division, with both an Individual and Public Assistance recovery program. However, the state has been inundated with a number of federal and state declared disasters which have strained its capabilities and resources on top of combating a global pandemic. Not taking into consideration the statewide COVID-19 declaration, over three quarters of the state is recovering from federally declared events that are still open with active Joint Field Operations. The damages for those events are far into the billions.

EVENTS:

- a. Hurricane Matthew devastated over half of the state in 2016, resulting in a Stafford Act declaration requiring in excess of \$100 million dollars of State cost share for both Public and Individual Assistance.
- b. In the fall of 2016, western North Carolina suffered from multiple wild fires, two of which were declared for assistance under FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Grant. The state share cost was over \$9,085,144.00.
- c. In May 2017, there was a straight-line winds and severe weather event in Sampson County, which resulted in a US Small Business Administration (hereafter SBA) and State Type I Individual Assistance declaration for that County. Estimated Cost - \$650,000.
- d. On August 16, 2017, a State Type I disaster was declared for the Town of Windsor, from the effects of Tropical Storm Julia. Estimated Cost - \$66,704.66.
- e. On November 15, 2017, a State Type I disaster was declared for the City of Eden for a straight-line wind event. Estimated Cost - \$186,301.
- f. On November 22, 2017, a State Type I disaster was declared for Ashe, Avery, Caldwell, Watauga and Wilkes counties for flooding and heavy winds. This also resulted in an US SBA disaster declaration. Estimated Cost - \$87,084.
- g. On April 24, 2018, a State Type I disaster was declared for the Village of Cedar Creek, and the Town of Tryon for the effects of Tropical Storm Nate. Estimated Cost - \$44,410.69.
- h. On May 08, 2018, tornadoes and severe storms impacted the State resulting in a Major Disaster Declaration. The State cost share for Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation was over \$101,000.00.

- i. The State of North Carolina declared disasters for four towns that suffered from the effects from Hurricane Alberto on or about May 30, 2018, which caused flooding and mudslides in the Western part of the State. Estimated Cost – \$1.38 million
- j. Hurricane Florence, which has been referred to as a 'Historic Storm,' made landfall in the State of North Carolina on September 14, 2018. A major Stafford Act disaster declaration for Individual and Public Assistance was declared. After insurance Public Assistance estimated costs - \$1.32 billion.
- k. On October 10, 2018, Tropical Storm Michael resulted in a Major Disaster Declaration under the Stafford Act for Public Assistance on February 1, 2019. The storm affected twenty-one (21) counties. Estimated Non-Federal Costs - \$4.7 million.
- l. On September 6, 2019, Hurricane Dorian devastated the Outer Banks, and led to twenty-eight counties receiving a Stafford Act Public Assistance Declaration. Hyde County and the contiguous counties received a Type I State Individual Assistance Declaration as a result of damages from Hurricane Dorian. Much of the damage affected areas that were still trying to recovery from Hurricane Florence. Estimated Non-Federal Costs - \$25.5 million.
- m. On March 13, 2020, an Emergency Declaration under the Stafford Act was issued for COVID-19 followed quickly on March 25, 2020 by a Major Disaster Declaration under the Stafford Act. COVID-19, a global pandemic, has completely upended everyday life and how North Carolina can effectively recover from disasters. The incident period has been extended indefinitely and costs are growing accordingly.
- n. As a result of a severe weather event on or about February 6, 2020, the State received a Public Assistance declaration under the Stafford Act on May 8, 2020. Eighteen (18) counties were declared given the amount of flooding and damage that resulted. Estimated Costs are still being evaluated.
- o. An earthquake occurred near the town of Sparta, North Carolina in Alleghany County on August 9, 2020. It had a magnitude 5.1 which resulted in both a Type I State Declaration and an SBA declaration for Alleghany County as well as the contiguous counties. Estimated Costs are still being evaluated.
- p. Bertie County, as well as the contiguous counties, received an SBA disaster declaration and a Type I State Declaration on August 21, 2020 for Individual Assistance as a result of Hurricane Isaias and the severe weather and tornadoes that it prompted. Estimated Costs are still being evaluated.

COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS:

The State of North Carolina utilizes ARGIS tools to track demographic information. This data is an average of the previous two years of data and was last evaluated in February of 2020. Given the monumental change the COVID-19 pandemic has caused, the numbers below are not a current screenshot of the economic state of the affected area. Actual numbers would likely show a more economic distress than can accurately be reported at this time. However, according to the US Census Bureau, the State of North Carolina has 14% of its people living below the poverty level. A table provided below shows the demographics of the requested counties. The average percentage of persons living below the poverty level pre-pandemic surpassed the current National Average by six percent. Additionally, the median household income is well below both the National and State Median income for the affected counties, which creates an additional hardship for those communities and individuals living in areas impacted by Hurricane Isaias.

	Average Persons Below Poverty Level	Median Household Income	Percent Elderly (aged 65 or older)	Percent of Persons with Disability	Percent Pre- Disaster Unemployment
<i>National Average</i>	13.1%	\$ 61,937.00	15.2%	12.6%	4.9%
<i>State Average</i>	14.0%	\$ 53,855.00	16.3%	13.9%	3.7%
Beaufort	19.1%	\$ 24,657.00	22.1%	18.7%	9.0%
Bertie	22.0%	\$ 18,319.00	20.1%	21.5%	12.7%
Brunswick	14.1%	\$ 29,707.00	28.1%	17.2%	7.7%
Carteret	12.5%	\$ 30,903.00	22.8%	19.9%	7.8%
Chowan	22.8%	\$ 23,542.00	22.6%	15.4%	11.8%
Columbus	23.6%	\$ 21,849.00	18.5%	20.1%	7.0%
Craven	15.4%	\$ 26,830.00	17.4%	17.4%	7.0%
Hertford	23.3%	\$ 18,383.00	18.2%	20.5%	10.0%
Hyde	20.3%	\$ 19,181.00	17.6%	18.5%	11.0%
Jones	26.4%	\$ 21,058.00	20.4%	23.8%	11.3%
New Hanover	18.0%	\$ 31,708.00	16.2%	12.6%	7.0%
Onslow	14.1%	\$ 23,141.00	8.5%	16.9%	6.9%
Pamlico	15.1%	\$ 25,461.00	26.8%	20.6%	8.1%
Pender	15.8%	\$ 25,997.00	17.3%	16.7%	8.2%
Pitt	24.3%	\$ 25,462.00	12.0%	12.4%	10.1%
County Averages	19.1%	\$ 24,413.20	19.2%	18.1%	9.0%

*US Census, NC Census & NC ARGIS

I have determined that this incident is of such severity that effective recovery is beyond the capabilities of the state and local governments and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary. The State has expended an extraordinary amount of money on Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act disasters in the previous few years, as well as this current fiscal year.

President Trump
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Serious remaining impacts still need to be addressed; therefore, I am respectfully asking you to issue a Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance for the State of North Carolina. I certify that for this major disaster, the state and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal shares of cost required by the Stafford Act.

I have designated Michael A. Sprayberry as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for this recovery process and will provide further information or justification on my behalf.

I appreciate your support and recognition of the continued impact that this Hurricane poses to the state.

Sincerely,



Roy Cooper

RAC/swh

Enclosures: Executive Order No. 154
FEMA Form 010-0-13
Joint FEMA/State PDA Reports

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Emergency Management Agency
REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

OMB Control Number 1660-0009
Expires 09/30/2019
1. Request Date Sep 23, 2020

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

<p>2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.</p> <p>State of North Carolina</p>	<p>2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>9,535,483</u></p>
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<p>3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name</p> <p>Roy Cooper</p>	<p>4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number</p> <p>Michael A. Sprayberry 919-825-2500</p>
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number
Michael A. Sprayberry 919-825-2500

6. Declaration Request For: Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Jul 30, 2020 End Date Aug 8, 2020 or Continuing

If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought Earthquake Explosion Fire Flood Hurricane Landslide Mudslide
 Severe Storm Snowstorm
 (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning) (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) Straight-Line Winds
 Tidal Wave Tornado Tropical Depression Tropical Storm Tsunami Volcanic Eruption Winter Storm
 Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

Damage resulted in multiple gas and oil leaks and the conditions of the storm resulted in tornadoes, fires, flooding, and power outages affecting over 360,000 residents. There were four confirmed deaths attributed to the Hurricane. Additional information included in the cover letter.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

I took appropriate action under state law and declared a state of emergency on Friday, July 31, 2020. As part of that declaration, I directed the execution of the State Emergency Operations Plan in accordance with Section 401(a) of the Stafford Act. Additional information included in the cover letter.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

Individual Assistance Dates Performed Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance Dates Performed Requested Aug 14, 2020 Start Aug 17, 2020 End Sep 14, 2020

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance N/A Individuals and Households Program Crisis Counseling Program Disaster Unemployment Assistance
 All Disaster Case Management Disaster Legal Services Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance N/A Debris Removal (Category A) Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) Permanent Work (Categories C-G)* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Carteret, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender and Pitt.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold

harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Request for Direct Federal Assistance

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

Request for Snow Assistance

N/A I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* Statewide OR

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date April 24, 2023 b. Type of Plan Enhanced Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs** for additional information in support of this request*.

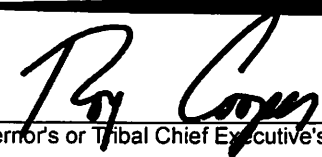
14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

- a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.
- b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on Jul 31, 2020 in accordance with the Stafford Act.
- c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

- Cover Letter Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*
- Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
- Additional Supporting Documentation Executive Order No.154, Joint FEMA/State PDA Reports



Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

September 23, 2020

Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request