



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Andy Beshear  
GOVERNOR

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April 30, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D. C. 20502-0001

Through: Robert Samaam  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV  
3005 Chamblee Tucker Road  
Atlanta, GA 30341

Re: Request for Major Disaster Declaration

Dear President Biden:

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), as implemented by 44 C. F. R. § 206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the Commonwealth of Kentucky in response to a severe weather event that occurred beginning on April 2, 2024, that caused power outages, damages to public and private properties, disruption of government services, debris, and multiple injuries. The system spawned a total of 19 destructive tornadoes and damaging straight-line winds.

**States of Emergency**

In response to the severity of this event, I declared a State of Emergency in Executive Order 2024-269, effective April 2, 2024. On the same day I issued another Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency to prohibited price gouging. Executive Order 2024-269 activated the State Emergency Operation Center and the State Emergency Operations Plan.

The event significantly impacted numerous counties across the Commonwealth. Fourteen counties and 13 cities experienced such serious damages that local states of emergency were declared. (See Attachment 1).

## Weather Event

Eerily, this weather event occurred on the eve of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1974 Super Tornado Outbreak, during which Louisville was hit by an EF4 tornado. The 1974 event caused the death of more than 60 people in Louisville and surrounding counties.

The April 2, 2024, tornado event began in the predawn hours in the Mississippi Valley and spread through the Ohio Valley. There were two waves of tornado threats, starting with a tornado touchdown in McCracken County in far western Kentucky. A subsequent squall line crossed the entire state; exiting in the eastern county of Boyd and crossing into West Virginia before noon.

The second wave, which generated multiple tornadoes, formed on the north side of the Ohio River in Indiana, and crossed the river into Louisville/Jefferson County. The county was impacted with an EF2 tornado which tracked over 11.5 miles into Oldham County with winds in excess of 120 mph, causing tremendous structural damage and 22 injuries. The storm also produced an EF1 tornado in Oldham County which crossed into Henry County. Tornadoes confirmed by the National Weather Service are:

- Anderson
  - EF-1: 90 mph
- Bath (verbal confirmation)
  - EF-0: mph unknown
  - EF-0: mph unknown
- Bourbon/Clark
  - EF-1: 105 mph
- Boyd
  - EF-1: 110 mph
  - EF-2: 120 mph
- Bracken (verbal confirmation)
  - EF-0: mph unknown
- Clark
  - EF-1: 104 mph
- Henry
  - EF-1: 109 mph
- Jessamine
  - EF-1: 110 mph
- Jefferson/Oldham\*
  - EF-2: 120 mph
- Mason
  - EF-1: 100 mph
- McCracken
  - EF-1: 90 mph
- Nelson
  - EF-1: 95 mph
- Oldham
  - EF-2: 115 mph
- Woodford/Jessamine
  - EF-1: 110 mph
- Union
  - EF-1: 100 mph
  - EF-1: 105 mph
  - EF-2: 120 mph

As the storm system moved into the central Kentucky counties of Fayette, Woodford, Jessamine, Mercer, and Spencer, straight-line winds with velocities of up to 80 mph created significant damages. The winds damaged structures, fell trees, and downed power lines. (See Attachment 2).

## Injuries/Fatalities

There was a weather-related vehicle crash in Campbell County which caused one fatality. Authorities report that storm-driven rain created zero-visibility conditions leading to a vehicle

crash that resulted in the death of a 19-year-old from Corbin, KY. Also, there were 22 official reports of injuries caused by flying debris, falling trees, and strong winds.

### **Event Impact**

**Power:** At the height of the event there were 32,732 customers without power. Tornadoic activity fell power transmission poles in addition to the falling of trees and limbs onto power lines. The majority of customers were restored within 72 hours. Some reconnection efforts were delayed due to mast electrical connectors being ripped from impacted houses. (See Attachment 3).

**Government Services:** The system and timing were well predicted. Advance warnings gave government officials adequate time to protect employees and the general public. All state office buildings in Frankfort were closed on April 2 at 1:00 pm., sending all nonessential state workers home. At the University of Kentucky (UK) and Northern Kentucky University, classes and nonessential employees were dismissed. At UK, only the university's hospital remained operational. Many local school districts dismissed early to ensure students could return home before the arrival of storms. Other government services such as garbage pick-up and mail delivery were halted. Six counties reported the closure of their courthouses in advance of the storm.

**Transportation:** Impacted counties reported scores of impassable roads due to vegetative debris and downed power lines. Many required detours that impacted thousands of citizens.

On a positive note, the event did not create significant damage to infrastructures of state and local governments or eligible private nonprofits. Consequently, the state is not seeking assistance under the Public Assistance Program. (See Attachment 4).

### **State Response Efforts**

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) began monitoring activities on April 1, and activated to a Level 2 on April 2. All local emergency management offices, KYEM staff, and emergency support function representatives received a warning order in advance of the storms. On April 8, the SEOC returned to a Level 5 - Normal Operations.

The SEOC received and fulfilled over two dozen requests for assistance. KYEM deployed an additional four Area Managers into the hardest hit areas to serve as liaison officers. They assisted local emergency management directors with response and recovery efforts. Search and rescue and incident management teams were immediately dispatched into the hardest hit areas. Due to the large number of displaced citizens, the SEOC distributed cots to local shelters and deployed state debris clearance teams to several counties.

Several counties needed assistance with conducting preliminary damage assessments. Upon completion of lifesaving efforts, the KYEM Area Managers provided assistance to conduct preliminary damage assessments for both the Individuals and Households Assistance and Public Assistance programs.

The Commonwealth provided non-congregate sheltering of impacted families at the General Butler State Park for the duration of two weeks.

**Local Response Efforts**

The state and local emergency operation centers were activated in response to the event.

Lifesaving efforts took primacy, with over 30 fire departments, police departments, mutual aid search and rescue teams, and emergency management offices organizing and conducting search and rescues and extractions from destroyed buildings, wellness checks, and transport of survivors to shelters.

Local governments established ten shelters in the counties of Henry, Wolfe, Gallatin, Laurel, and Owen.

Local government crews cleared emergency routes that were blocked by debris and downed electrical lines and poles. Multiple counties used work release inmates to assist with debris clearance. Both state and local road crews barricaded roads that were impassable due to debris and downed utility lines. Road closures and detours remained in place for approximately 36 hours.

**Volunteer Response Efforts**

The Kentucky Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters closely monitored the event, held coordination calls, and various organizations deployed, conducting damage assessments, tarping roofs, and assisting with debris removal.

Relief assistance was provided by the following organizations:

**Southern Baptist Disaster Relief - April 3-16, 2024, Tree and Debris Removal**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Vol Days</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Assessments</b>	<b>Chainsaw Jobs</b>	<b>Heavy Equip Hours</b>	<b>Roofs Tarpred</b>
<b>Maysville</b>	1	8	1	0	0	0
<b>Minerva</b>	6	48	2	2	3	2
<b>Ashland</b>	6	48	3	0	0	3
<b>Prospect</b>	50	266	20	7	20	0
<b>TOTALS =</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>

**Minuteman Disaster Response Team – April 4-7, 2024, Tree and Debris Removal**

1 day in Newcastle / 3 days in Prospect

7 Volunteers = 224 Hours

4 Volunteers to haul heavy equipment to KY = 64 Hours.

**Total = 11 Volunteers, 288 Hours**

### **American Red Cross**

The American Red Cross conducted damage assessments.

26 cases were opened across the impacted counties. As of 04/16/24, two cases were still open.

No sheltering

No feeding

No requests

25 cots provided to Henry County for shelter use.

### **Team Rubicon**

Team Rubicon dispatched two debris removal teams to the hard-hit cities of Prospect and Buckner to clear roads and driveways.

### **Disaster Histories**

The frequency of disasters in Kentucky is unrelenting. Routinely, every region of the Commonwealth is faced with the challenges associated with disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. Both state and local governments are constantly dealing with the fiscal realities of disasters as disasters continue to occur.

### **Five-year Kentucky Disaster History**

<b>DR</b>	<b>Event Type</b>	<b>Number of Counties</b>	<b>Incident Start Date</b>	<b>Estimated Disaster Value</b>	<b>Number of Applicants</b>	<b>Number of Damages Claimed</b>
4711	Severe Storms	22	2/15/23	\$15,000,000	39	632
4702	Severe Storms	88	3/3/23	\$55,000,000	115	533
4663	Flooding	20	7/26/2022	\$602,699,412	129	8,338
4643	Flooding	13	12/31/2021	\$24,320,916	24	601
4630	Tornado	17	12/10/2021	\$313,292,709	105	873
4595	Flooding	49	2/27/2021	\$164,410,251	84	3,276
4592	Winter Storm	45	2/8/2021	\$68,894,917	68	361
4540	Flooding	27	2/3/2020	\$81,574,096	47	1,155
4497	COVID	120	1/20/2020	\$459,254,935	515	171
4428	Flooding	60	2/6/2019	\$110,905,411	100	2,526
4361	Flooding	35	2/21/2018	\$38,440,001	67	1,125
4358	Flooding	22	2/9/2018	\$38,913,750	43	692

Grand Total			2018-2023	1,972,706,398	1,182	19,118
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The five-year major disaster declaration history of impacted counties, for which a declaration is now requested, is shown in the following data.

<b>Five Year Disaster Involvement of Impacted Counties 2018 - 2024</b>	
<b>County</b>	<b>Number of Declarations</b>
<b>Boyd</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Carter</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Fayette</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Greenup</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Henry</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Jefferson</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Jessamine</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Mason</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Oldham</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Union</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Whitley</b>	<b>2</b>

**Socioeconomic References**

This event was unique in that both of Kentucky’s two largest urban areas were significantly impacted. In contrast, six of the 11 requested counties have fewer than 50,000 citizens. The data provided exhibits the wide spectrum of socioeconomic diversity among the impacted counties.

As evidenced by the attached U.S. Census data, the socioeconomic vulnerability of the affected communities to the impact of disasters is serious. All but one of the requested counties have disability levels that exceed the national average. Only one of the requested counties has a per capita income level that exceeds the national average. Attached are county financial statements which demonstrate the meager resources of the local governments of Boyd, Carter, Greenup, Henry, Jessamine, Mason, Union, and Whitley. The financial status of the Louisville/Jefferson Metro Government, Lexington/Fayette Metro Government, and Oldham are stronger than the other impacted counties. Kentucky’s economy has significantly improved over the past four years, when compared to the seven other states in FEMA Region IV, but only Alabama and Mississippi have a smaller Per Capita Index, and only Mississippi’s Total Taxable Resources, in dollars, is less than Kentucky. (See Attachment 5).

Since December 2021, Kentucky has experienced the two largest disasters in its history. Recent declarations include the December 2021 tornado outbreak, a flood event in February 2022, the July 2022 flooding in eastern Kentucky, and two severe damaging storms in early 2023. Employees of FEMA, the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management, and applicants have been working nonstop since the 2021 tornadoes on recovery efforts.

Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments indicate that only 65.4% of the homes damaged by the tornadoes are insured. Given the extremely low inventory of available housing in the impact areas, homeowners need assistance to repair or replace their residences.

### **Program Requests**

The state and impacted local governments, as they try to recover from yet another disaster, do not have the capacity or authority to aid citizens. I ask that you declare a Major Disaster Declaration for this event which includes the Federal Emergency Management Agency Individuals and Households Assistance Program for the counties of Boyd, Carter, Fayette, Greenup, Henry, Jefferson, Jessamine, Mason, Oldham, Union, and Whitley. The impacted citizens need help. I also request statewide availability of the Hazard Mitigation Program. Damage assessments have been performed in the requested counties and can be accessed in Enclosure A.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. The Commonwealth will be grateful to work again with our federal partners to assist with the recovery of its impacted citizens.

Sincerely,

  
Andy Beshear  
Governor

cc: Eric Gibson  
Samantha Pope  
Geni Jo Brawner

#### Enclosures:

OMB No.1660-009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

A. Individuals Assistance

B. Public Assistance

C. Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs

D. Historic Snowfall

Attachment 1: States of Emergency and Kentucky Revised Statute 39A.100

Attachment 2: Weather Analysis

Attachment 3: Power Outages

Attachment 4: Media Reports

Attachment 5: Socioeconomics/Fiscal Data

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

OMB Control Number 1660-0009  
Expires 06/30/2026  
1. Request Date April 30, 2024

**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.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.  Commonwealth of Kentucky	2b. Population (as reported by 2020 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>4,505,836</u>
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3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name Andy Beshear	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number Eric Gibson                      502.607.1827
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number  
 Eric Gibson                      502.607.1827

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

7. Incident Period:    Beginning Date                      End Date                      or     Continuing

Apr 1, 2024                      Apr 2, 2024

*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  
 (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.

The weather system of April 1, 2024, produced two waves of severe storms containing straight-line winds, tornadoes, intense rain, and hail. The system severely impacted eleven counties, causing damages to residences and businesses, large amounts of debris, power outages, and disruption of government services.

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.

Emergency Operations Centers were activated both at state and local levels. Lifesaving resources were deployed, conducting search and rescues and evacuations. Local governments established shelters and voluntary agencies assisted with recovery efforts.



10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment\*

Individual Assistance    Dates Performed    Requested Apr 11, 2024    Start Apr 16, 2024    End Apr 18, 2024

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

Public Assistance    Dates Performed    Requested Apr 19, 2024    Start Apr 23, 2024    End Apr 26, 2024

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).

Counties of:  
Boyd  
Carter  
Fayette  
Greenup  
Henry  
Jefferson  
Jessamine  
Mason  
Oldham  
Union  
Whitley

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

N/A

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.

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.

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 October 26, 2028 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\*.

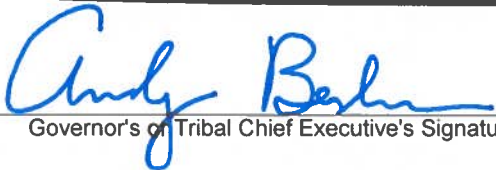
14. Findings and Certifications

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 April 2, 2024 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 Attachments 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

  
Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

4/30/24

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