

D 002 99

EXECUTIVE ORDER

**Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Columbine High School Tragedy
And Ordering to State Active Duty Part of the Colorado National Guard**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency and ordering to state active duty part of the Colorado National Guard.

1. Background & Need

On April 20, 1999, a violent criminal act caused death, severe injuries and massive property damage at Columbine High School in Jefferson County. This incident was the largest and most lethal school shooting incident in U.S. history. The Columbine High School tragedy has placed an extraordinary burden on the community and Jefferson County.

The loss of life, injuries and property destruction have caused severe emotional stress on victims and their families, faculty, students, emergency medical personnel, the law enforcement community and others. The conditions created by this disaster require extensive, immediate as well as extended follow-up treatment. Extraordinary measures are necessary to protect the public health, investigate the criminal acts, ensure public safety and welfare, and render relief for those most severely impacted by the Columbine High School violence.

The aforementioned conditions constitute an occurrence of severe injury and loss of life in the meaning of the Disaster Emergency Act, 24-32-2103(1), C.R.S. By signing this Executive Order, I do hereby declare that a state of disaster emergency has existed since approximately 11:30 a.m. on April 20, 1999, when I first gave the verbal order to the Colorado National Guard requesting assistance and activated the State of Colorado Emergency Operation Plan.

2. Mission and Scope

This Executive Order also orders the following:

- A. The State activation of elements of the Colorado National Guard as may be determined from time to time by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management.
- B. The expenditure of funds from the State Disaster Emergency Fund and the transfer of unexpected surplus from all state departments and agencies as required to meet emergency needs.
- C. The authorization of all state departments and agencies to take whatever actions are required and requested by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management, within the Colorado State Emergency Operation Plan, to meet the emergency needs.
- D. All funds currently held in the State Disaster Emergency Fund shall remain within that fund beyond the termination of the state fiscal year on June 30, 1999 and shall remain within that fund until expended or until further Executive Order.
- E. The Director of the Colorado Office of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to coordinate application to the federal government for funds for mental health and stress counseling and for other funding related to the disaster emergency.
- F. All previous and future verbal orders, until memorialized in a written order amending this Executive Order, which I may make in reference to this state disaster emergency shall have the full force and effect as if they were contained within this Executive Order.

3. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from its date of signature unless extended by Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado the 21st of April, 1999.

Bill Owens
Governor

