



**An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála  
agus Rialtais Áitiúil**

Department of Housing, Planning  
and Local Government

## **Statement from the National Emergency Coordination Group on Severe Weather**

The National Emergency Coordination Group (NECG) for severe weather met this morning (26 February, 2018) to review national and local preparedness in advance of the forthcoming severe weather which Met Éireann is forecasting for this week. The meeting was convened by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in its role as Lead Government Department for the response to severe weather events, and was attended by Minister Eoghan Murphy, T.D.

The meeting was given an update from Met Éireann on the weather outlook for the week ahead. Met Éireann has indicated that for Tuesday and Wednesday there will be cold daytime temperatures and some snowfall. An Orange Level weather warning is in place for 15:00hrs Tuesday to 11:00hrs Wednesday for Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Laois, Louth, Meath and Wicklow for scattered snow showers leading to accumulations of 4-6cm by Wednesday morning, with widespread frost and icy conditions forecast also.

From Thursday evening wind speeds will pick up, possibly reaching gale force. This will be accompanied by heavy snowfall in most parts of the country. This is predicated to be a disruptive weather event impacting multiple sectors.

The public is advised to visit the website [www.winterready.ie](http://www.winterready.ie) for advice on preparing for the oncoming weather and is advised also to check on vulnerable and isolated neighbours over the next couple of days.

Local authorities have been preparing for this week's weather since last Friday and have activated local coordination. Winter road maintenance programmes are ongoing with salting being conducted twice daily on prioritised routes.

Local authorities in the main urban centres of Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford will keep all cold weather initiatives for rough sleepers in place and additional capacity has been put in place to ensure that there are additional bed spaces available for rough sleepers that would not normally avail of homeless

services. In Dublin, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) has secured an additional 104 beds and 'one night only' beds will remain open on a 24 hour basis. To provide for additional contingency beds, the DRHE has also arranged that a city centre sports hall will be available to accommodate up to 60 additional bed spaces. Two Housing First outreach teams will be working on the streets to encourage rough sleepers to come into shelter.

Members of the public are also being asked to contact their local authority to report any rough sleepers that they have concerns about and any such cases will be followed up. In the Dublin region, members of the public can report cases of concern through the following weblink; <http://www.homelessdublin.ie/report-rough-sleeper#1>

Public transport operators have all activated their severe weather plans, and contingency arrangements are in place for clearing snow and operating in snow and icy conditions.

Critical infrastructure providers have also been monitoring the developing weather situation and relevant contingency plans and procedures are in place to deal with any potential disruption.

Defence Forces personnel are ready to assist local authorities upon request.

The Department of Education & Skills is continuing to monitor the developing weather situation and decisions regarding school closures schools will be made locally.

The focus of the NECG for the week ahead will be on maintaining public safety, keeping transport systems operational where possible, keeping society functioning and keeping the country open for business. Individuals, communities and businesses are being urged to use the next couple of days to review preparedness arrangements for the oncoming weather.

People are advised to monitor national and local media, including social media, over the coming days to keep up to date with information regarding the developing weather situation.