



HEALTH ALERT

EXTREME COLD EVENT

February 6th-8th, 2026

Guidance for Hospitals, Diagnostic and Treatment Centers, Nursing Homes, Adult Care Facilities, Homecare, Hospice and Dialysis Centers

Additional extreme cold events are expected to impact the state with many areas seeing wind chills **-15 or more** starting Friday, February 6th, 2026 and continuing through the weekend.

Many areas of the State will be under Extreme Cold Watches/Warnings for much of the weekend starting Friday. The latest information on active weather watches, warnings, and advisories can be found on the [National Weather Service Website](#) and entering your zip code on the top left of the screen.

In anticipation of this event, health and residential care providers are strongly encouraged to review the winter storm guidance previously distributed, (and your) facility emergency response plans, and ensure backup systems are functioning properly. Additionally, facilities should report any disruption of services or infrastructure to the Department's State Medical Operations Coordination Center.

KEY POINTS

- In the Western Region, 3-5" of snow are forecasted through Saturday. Extreme cold will arrive Friday night, with **forecasted wind chill forecasts 15 to 30 degrees below zero (-15 to -30)** overnight and remaining at or below zero during the daytime Saturday and Sunday.
- For Central New York, Capital District and the upper Hudson Valley, extremely cold temperatures are forecasted through the end of the weekend, with **forecasted wind chills 15 to 35 degrees below zero (-15 to -35)** overnight.
- In the Lower Hudson Valley and NYC/Long Island region, wind chills are **forecasted 5 to 15 degrees below zero (-5 to -15)** throughout the weekend.
- Temperatures as forecasted through the weekend can be dangerous for both patients and staff, but also for critical infrastructure. Exposure to extreme cold at these temperatures can cause frostbite and hypothermia in a little as 10-30 minutes; it is critical that staff and patients/residents who must go outside be properly clothed, including wearing multiple layers and covering as much exposed skin as possible. Additionally, these extreme temperatures can cause pipes to freeze and burst in unoccupied or below-ground sections of a building or residence. Facilities are strongly encouraged to collaborate with physical plant staff to ensure temperatures in facilities are maintained properly for the safety of residents, patients and staff, as well as the integrity of water pipes.
- Pursuant to Public Health Law (PHL) section 2803(1)(g) and 10 NYCRR 405.9, all patients are entitled to an appropriate discharge plan. Comparable discharge-planning requirements apply to OMH-licensed psychiatric programs under Mental Hygiene Law 29.15 and 14 NYCRR Parts 580 and 590. Sending any patient, including those who are unhoused, to the street during Code



Blue Extreme Cold events is not an appropriate discharge plan. A discharge plan that includes an arrangement for an individual to return to and be housed in a shelter for an unhoused patient may be an appropriate discharge outlet during inclement weather. Please ensure that the discharge planning staff in your hospital(s) are informed of this.

- Please report disruption of services or infrastructure to the New York State Department of Health State Medical Operations Coordination Center at (917) 909-2676. Emergency requests for assistance should go through County Emergency Management Offices.