

Eisenhower State Office Building  
700 SW Harrison  
Topeka, KS 66603



phone: 785-296-3585  
fax: 785-368-7415  
[www.ksdot.org](http://www.ksdot.org)

Julie Lorenz, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**For more information:** Kim Stich, [Kim.stich@ks.gov](mailto:Kim.stich@ks.gov)

## Staffing shortages could impact KDOT winter operations

The Kansas Department of Transportation is committed to keeping the highways cleared whenever inclement weather impacts the state.

In line with workforce shortages across the nation, KDOT does not have enough equipment operators – the agency’s primary snowplow operators – in a number of areas across Kansas. These shortages create the potential for highways to not be cleared of snow and ice as quickly as in the past.

The agency has dealt with reduced staffing in the past, but the shortages are greater this year. KDOT is about 30% short of snowplow operators needed to be fully staffed in offices across the state.

“KDOT is facing significant staffing shortages in some areas and will work proactively to clear Kansas highways by shifting crews to affected areas and pretreating highways and bridges whenever possible,” said Secretary Julie Lorenz. “Our snowplow operators work 12-hour shifts and do their best to keep the roads open and the public moving.”

To help address the shortage, the agency will deploy all employees who have a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) to plow snow and hire seasonal employees. For people interested in working at KDOT, go to the state’s employment website at <http://jobs.ks.gov/> KDOT will assist selected applicants in obtaining a CDL upon hiring, including paying for training.

“We want motorists to understand why it could take longer this season to clear highways during storms,” said Secretary Lorenz. “Knowing this allows motorists to plan ahead, alter or even delay travel plans, which in turn helps them stay safe.”

Before traveling, motorists can check [www.KanDrive.org](http://www.KanDrive.org), KDOT’s road/weather condition website. It is updated 24/7 for highway conditions, overall weather information, short-term closures and general alerts.

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700 SW Harrison St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754 or phone 785-296-3585 (Voice)/Hearing Impaired – 711.

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