



# News Release

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## Charleston County Leaders Release Statements on Tragic Passing of Joe Coates

Today, Charleston County officials released the following statements on the tragic passing of Emergency Management Director Joe Coates following a courageous battle with cancer. Coates passed away peacefully surrounded by family.

"Today, our hearts are heavy as we mourn the passing of Joe Coates, who was not just an exceptional Emergency Management Director but a good man and a cherished friend. Joe's leadership and dedication to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our community were second to none, and his loss will be felt by all who had the great privilege of knowing him. Our prayers are with his family and loved ones during this unimaginably difficult time." –Charleston County Council Chairman Herb Sass

"Joe's passing is a profound loss for the Charleston County community and all who were touched by his strength, kindness, and compassion. His leadership was not just about protocols and procedures, it was about forging connections, instilling hope, and navigating crises with equal parts calm and resolve. May his memory be a blessing that inspires us all to serve with the passion that he embodied each and every day." –Charleston County Public Safety Committee Chair Jenny Costa Honeycutt

"The impact that Joe had on Charleston County not just as an organization, but as a community, cannot be overstated. For years, I had the privilege of working alongside him during times of both crisis and calm and saw first-hand how his steady leadership and trusted expertise shaped our Emergency Management program into one of the best in the nation. Joe's legacy will endure through the countless lives he positively impacted, and he will be greatly missed by all." – Charleston County Administrator Bill Tuten

On May 16, 2024, during a special meeting of County Council attended by Joe and his family, friends, and colleagues, members of Council voted unanimously to rename the Emergency Operations Center the Joe Coates Emergency Operations Center. The resolution commending Joe for his service and formally renaming the EOC is attached.

Coates began working for Charleston County in 2008. He was named Interim Director of Emergency Management in July 2021 and Director in January 2022.

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