

Applies to: Faculty, staff, student employees, and students.

Responsible Office

Human Resources

POLICY STATEMENT

To ensure continuity of services to students and the public, it is the policy of the college to remain open. However, during extreme conditions due to severe weather, major utility failure, or other reasons, the college may close part or all of a campus or campuses on a short-term basis, with limited campus operations. In certain situations, the president may declare a college state of emergency. Short-term closings and college states of emergency will be clearly identified as such when declared.

Purpose of the Policy

To provide guidance on and promote consistent application of procedures during short-term extreme conditions.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Exempt employee	Employee ineligible for overtime pay or compensatory time off under federal and state law.
Non-exempt employee	Employee eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time off under federal and state law.
Essential employee	One who has been designated as critical to the operation of the unit, whose presence is required regardless of the existence of an emergency condition, college and/or building(s) closure, canceling of classes, and whose absence from duty could endanger the safety and well-being of the campus population and/or facilities. Employees may be designated as essential on a situational basis, e.g., in the event of a snow emergency only, or in the event of a public health crisis. Depending on the nature of their work, essential employees may be required to report to work on campus or may be able to work from home. Essential employees must be notified in writing of their status as essential and the location from which they can perform their duties on an annual basis. Designations can be changed at any time depending on need.
Alternate employee	One who has been designated to serve as a back-up to an essential employee. Alternate employees must be notified in writing of their status as alternate on an annual basis. Designations can be changed at any time depending on need.
Standby employee	Any employee not designated as essential or alternate. Standby employees must be notified in writing of their status as standby on an annual basis. Designations can be changed at any time depending on need.
Report for work	To perform assigned duties as directed by the employee's supervisor, either by physically reporting to the designated worksite or by working remotely when authorized. For essential employees, "report to work" generally requires reporting onsite unless the employee has been explicitly designated or instructed to work remotely.
Short-term Closing	Official temporary shutdown of designated units of the college due to severe weather, major utility failure or other critical reason, generally lasting for five days or less. During such a closing, many administrative offices may be closed and some or all classes may be canceled or moved to remote. Student Life, emergency and facilities support, and other operations designated as essential will remain open and essential employees must report to work.
College State of Emergency	A college state of emergency is in effect when the college president declares such a state, which may be college-wide or restricted to particular areas depending on circumstances. A college state of emergency typically will involve a catastrophic event such as natural or human made disaster or the outbreak of pandemic illnesses.

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PROCEDURE

I. Canceling Classes and Closing Offices

- A. A decision to close the college or cancel in-person classes will be done on a location-by-location basis, e.g., Newark campus, extended campuses, specific buildings, etc.
- B. If weather (or other short-term emergency such as a power outage) warrants cancellation of classes, closing of offices, or limiting the hours of operation of the college, a decision will be made to assure the safety of the campus community. Options include:
 1. Classes are canceled or moved to remote where possible.
 2. Only essential services remain open, such as those that provide safety and security; meal preparation and service; utilities including, but not limited to, light, heat, and water to campus buildings and properties; law enforcement and public safety; snow removal; and others determined as essential.
 3. Other options as conditions warrant.
- C. In the event of severe weather or other conditions that could affect safety, health or access to the college, the president, in consultation with the Ohio State Newark dean and director (regarding the Newark campus) and the superintendent of facilities and support services, will have the final authority to make the decision to cancel in-person classes, move to limited campus operations and/or close offices.
- D. Impacted areas will be consulted as soon as possible prior to making the decision to close or cancel in-person classes or activities and move to limited campus operations, including remote work and classes where possible, to determine the effect on classes, business operations, employment matters, special events, conferences and other college activities.
- E. The president or authorized designee will make the decision to cancel classes whenever possible by 5 a.m. (communicated by 7:30 a.m.) for day classes and by 1 p.m. (communicated by 3 p.m.) for evening classes. If classes are canceled, they will resume the next class day unless otherwise notified.
- F. If offices are closed during the day, in most scenarios, they will remain closed until the beginning of the next workday unless otherwise instructed. Faculty, staff and student employees may be directed to work at an alternate location, directed to telework (work remotely), or assigned alternate work.
- G. If limited campus operations are extended more than 24 hours, the president or authorized designee may re-evaluate the availability of certain services including, but not limited to, the library and recreation centers.
- H. A decision to move to limited campus operations may be based on weather information gathered from the local authorities, official weather reports and forecasts, and in consultation with Facilities Operations and Development Public Safety and/or local law enforcement. Some factors taken into consideration in the decision to cancel classes and/or close offices are:
 1. Existence of Level 3 snow emergencies,
 2. Hazardous roadways,
 3. Presence of extreme ice and/or snow,
 4. Excessive wind,
 5. Weather forecast, and
 6. Severe cold.

II. Partial Campus and Building Closings

- A. Based on the event, a decision may be made to close specific buildings, sections of buildings or parts of a campus.
- B. For partial campus and building closures, all employees in the impacted area must call in or otherwise contact their supervisor to receive instructions, regardless of their designation as essential, alternate or standby.
- C. Employees may be directed to work at alternate locations, directed to telework (work remotely), or assigned alternate work during partial closings. In these instances, employees will receive their regular rate of pay.
- D. If telework is not an option or alternate locations are not available, employees must be compensated in accordance with Procedure VI of this policy.

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III. Class Continuance and Attendance During Severe Weather

- A. Faculty are encouraged to notify their students on how class may continue with alternative teaching methods during a college closure.
- B. When in-person classes are not canceled and students are unable to reach the campus due to living in or traveling through a Level 3 snow emergency county, students are encouraged to contact the faculty member to report an absence due to a Level 3 snow emergency. Students who contact their faculty member or faculty member's designees will not be penalized for an absence when unable to attend in-person classes due to a Level 3 snow emergency.

IV. Employee Designations

- A. Cabinet members, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, are responsible for ensuring proper designations of faculty and staff as essential, alternate and standby employees.
- B. Employees will receive an annual notification from the Office of Human Resources of whether they have been designated as an essential, alternate or standby employee.
 1. Designations can be changed at any time depending on operational necessity.
 2. Student employees and intermittent employees should not be designated or utilized as essential or alternate employees unless operationally necessary.
 3. Employees may be designated as essential on a situational basis, e.g., in the event of a snow emergency only or in the event of a public health crisis. Depending on the nature of their work, essential employees may be required to report to work on campus or may be able to work from home.
- C. Employees designated as essential are required to report to work, remain at work, or contact their department when classes are canceled and offices are closed. All departments must maintain an updated list of individuals designated as essential depending on the nature of the closure.

V. Communication Regarding Class Cancellation and Closure Decision

- A. Communications regarding class cancellations, limited campus operations, and closure of select units of the college will be handled by the Office of Public Safety and the Facilities Department. Efforts will be made to notify faculty, staff and students by 7:30 a.m. for day classes and/or office closings and by 3 p.m. for evening classes and work shifts.
- B. Upon receipt of notification, the Office of Marketing and Public Relations will post web and social media announcements.

VI. Responsibilities

A. Departments

1. Designate operations which are essential and that will remain open or in effect during a weather or other short-term closing.
2. Develop and communicate a backup plan in case essential employees are unable to report to work.
3. Prepare to and make alternative work arrangements for faculty and staff during closures as feasible, depending on the nature of the event, duration, nature of work, faculty/staff position responsibilities, etc.
4. Confirm with essential faculty and staff their duties and responsibilities during the weather or other short-term closing. Designate faculty and staff to perform duties as needed, which may be outside of their regular classification.

B. Faculty, Staff and Student Employees

1. Check the college website to be fully informed about the weather and college closing.
2. Contact supervisor for further instructions.

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VII. Compensation

A. Employees must be compensated during a short-term closure as outlined in this section and the table below.

1. Employees whose duties are designated as essential and who are unable to perform work due to factors that preclude the college from operating (not due to individual circumstances) may receive their regular base pay at the discretion of college leadership.
2. Employees with pre-approved sick or vacation time, as applicable, during the time of the closure will not be charged for usage.
3. Employees represented by unions will be compensated in accordance with the terms of their collective bargaining agreements for time worked and may be required to work out of classification as deemed necessary by the department or college.
4. When working due to operational necessity, teleworking, or working at an alternative work location, standby/alternate non-exempt temporary or student employees will be paid their regular base rate of pay for hours worked.

Exempt/Non-Exempt Status	Compensation	Comments
Non-exempt essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee required to report for work, and • Employee reports for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee will receive regular base pay, and • Hours worked count toward overtime compensation as applicable, and • Employee will receive hour for hour compensatory time as applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensatory time under this policy is a benefit, and • The amount of compensatory time must be manually noted in the comments section of the timesheet in the HR System, with an explanatory comment and date for audit purposes.
Non-exempt essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee required to report to work, but • Employee does not report for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee will not receive regular base pay, but • Employee may request vacation/compensatory time based on circumstances (e.g. live in or must drive through Level 3 snow emergency, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee must comply with call-off procedures, and • Employee may request to make up hours not worked, only within the same work week, and • If flex time is approved it must be incurred within the same work week, and • Unit may consider corrective action as applicable
Non-exempt alternate/standby <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee not required to report for work, and • Employee does not report for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee will receive regular base pay, and • Hours recorded during the college closing will count toward overtime compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees do not need to contact their department or report to work if the college is closed
Non-exempt alternate/standby <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee not required to report for work, but • Employee reports for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit notifies employee that the college is closed and employee is sent home, or • If the unit asks the employee to remain at work, employee will receive regular base pay and hour for hour compensatory time, or • If the unit sends the employee home but employee remains at work, employee will be paid for hours worked but will not receive hour for hour compensatory time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the employee is asked to remain at work, the amount of compensatory time must be manually noted in the comments section of the timesheet in the HR System, with an explanatory comment and date for audit purposes. • Unit may consider corrective action as applicable for employees who do not leave work as directed

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Exempt/Non-Exempt Status	Compensation	Comments
Exempt essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee required to report for work, and Employee reports for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee will receive regular base pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee does not earn overtime or compensatory time, but At the discretion of the unit, flex time may be granted, or Unit notifies employee that the college is closed, and if not needed, the employee is sent home
Exempt essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee required to report to work (includes employees working an alternate schedule), but Employee does not report for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee will not receive regular base pay, but Employee may request to use vacation or flex time based on circumstances i.e., live in or must drive through Level 3 snow emergency area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee must comply with call-off procedures Unit may consider corrective action as applicable
Exempt alternate/standby <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee is not required to report to work, and Employee does not report for work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee will receive regular base pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees do not need to contact their department or report to work if the college is closed
Non-exempt temporary alternate/standby Employee is not required to report for work and employee does not report for work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee will not receive regular base pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee may request to make up hours not worked, only within the same work week If flex time is approved, it must be incurred within the same work week
Student Employees Student employee is required to report for work and student employee reports for work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student employees will be paid their regular hourly rate for hours worked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student employees must be notified by their supervisors that unless, due to operational necessity, they are required to report for work, they will not be paid under/pursuant to this policy.

VIII. College State of Emergency

A. Guiding principles

- The college will make every effort to communicate broadly and repetitively throughout any **college state of emergency**.
- Departments should ensure that business continuity plans are up-to-date and communicated on a regular basis.
- Departments should be as flexible as possible to enable all faculty, staff and student-employees to work, including facilitating working from home and other remote locations; allowing full-time employees to work part-time; using flexible work schedules; and other appropriate solutions depending on circumstances and to meet the needs of the college.
- Unless directed otherwise, individuals who are able to work should report for work and support the department or college in whatever capacity is needed. Faculty, staff and student-employees can be required to work outside their usual classifications.
- Employees may be directed not to report to the workplace. If so directed, employees must not report to the workplace.

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Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Faculty, staff, and student employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check college website to be fully informed about the weather and college closing. 2. Contact dean or supervisor for further instructions. 3. For partial campus and building closures, all employees in impacted area must call in or otherwise contact supervisor to receive instructions. 4. Employees designated as essential are required to report to work, remain at work, or contact their department when in-person classes are cancelled, and offices are closed. 5. Non-essential staff should not report to campus and should plan to work from home, where possible, and remain available during normal business hours.
Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify students of alternative teaching methods when in-person class meetings are cancelled. Classes scheduled to meet online will occur as planned. 2. Hold virtual synchronous classes, where feasible. Alternative teaching methods can include virtual, synchronous, class meetings, or asynchronous activities, including but not limited to videos, podcasts, supplemental readings, or discussion posts. In situations where synchronous instruction is not feasible, asynchronous activities are encouraged. It is at the discretion of the instructor as to which alternative method of teaching will occur when in-person classes have been cancelled. 3. Be as flexible as possible with students.
Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are encouraged to contact their faculty member to report an absence due to a Level 3 snow emergency. 2. When in-person classes are cancelled, check in with their faculty for guidance regarding alternative teaching methods. 3. Students participating in practicums, internships, student teaching, or other experiential learning are expected to follow the program's policies which can be found in the program handbook.
Executive leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure proper designation of faculty and staff as essential, alternate and standby employees. Notify Human Resources of designations. Designations may be changed at any time. Unless it is an operational necessity, do not designate student employees as essential or alternate. 2. Maintain an updated list of individuals designated as essential depending on the nature of the closure. 3. Designate operations which are essential and that will remain open or in effect during a weather or other short-term closing. 4. Develop and communicate a backup plan in case essential employees are unable to report to work. 5. Prepare to and make alternative work arrangements for employees during closures as feasible. 6. Confirm with essential employees their duties and responsibilities during the weather or other short-term closing. 7. Designate faculty and staff to perform duties as needed.
Human Resources Director	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify employees of their status (i.e. essential, alternate, standby) in writing on an annual basis.
Essential employees	When in-person classes are canceled and/or offices closed due to a short-term closing or a college state of emergency closing, essential employees are required to report to work, remain at work, or contact their supervisor.
Alternate and standby employees	Regular faculty and staff members whose duties are not designated as essential and who are scheduled to work are not required to call in or report when the college is closed, unless otherwise instructed by their departments.
Non-essential staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not report to campus when the campus is closed. 2. Plan to work from home, where possible, and remain available during normal business hours.
Departments	Notify affected employees already at work that the college is closed and that they should leave.
Office of Public Safety	Notify the college community of short-term closing, limited campus operations, and/or state of emergency using the campus emergency broadcast system of text messages to registered users.
Office of Marketing and Public Relations	Update website and social media regarding notice of short-term closing, limited campus operations, and/or state of emergency.

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Position or Office	Responsibilities
President and Superintendent of Facilities and Support Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The president, in consultation with the superintendent of facilities and support services and the dean and director of Ohio State Newark, determine when conditions warrant a weather or other short-term closing or limited campus operations at the Newark campus. 2. For locations other than the Newark campus, the superintendent of facilities must consult with the facilities personnel at those locations and makes recommendations to the president regarding weather or other short-term closing or move to limited campus operations. 3. The president or authorized designee may re-evaluate the availability of certain services if in-person class cancellation or office closure is extended more than 24 hours.

Resources

- Campus Emergency Operations and Evacuation Plan (EOEP), Contact Doug Warthen in Facilities Planning and Operations.
- [Public Safety Emergency Procedures website](#)

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Facilities Planning and Operations	Reese Center	740-366-9363	https://go.cotc.edu/facilities
Human Resources	Hodges Hall 1110	740-755-7345	https://go.cotc.edu/hr
Public Safety	Warner Center 105	740-366-9237	https://go.cotc.edu/publicsafety
COTC Homepage			www.cotc.edu

History

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