



Applies to: Faculty, staff, graduate associates and student employees. Does not apply to Health System employees.*

POLICY

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The university recognizes the need to prepare for unexpected catastrophic events such as natural or human made disasters or the outbreak of pandemic illnesses, as well as the need to return the university as quickly as possible to its normal operations should such events occur. Our preparation, response and recovery will be informed by local, state and federal agencies and experts. To prepare and support leaders, managers and employees, this policy provides information related to human resource practices in the event of a University State of Emergency¹. All university community members should familiarize themselves with their department and college/VP unit plans (Business Continuity Plan, Building Emergency Action Plan (BEAP) and/or Department Emergency Operations Plan), as well as the university's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

***Health System** employees are not covered by this policy. Health System includes employees of University Hospitals, University Hospital East, James Cancer Hospital, Ross Heart Hospital, OSU Harding Hospital, Ambulatory Services and Shared Services. Health System employees should contact their human resource department for further information.

***College of Medicine** employees are covered under this policy.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Employee	Employee refers to faculty, staff and student employees. Graduate associates are employees for purposes of this policy.
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, university and/or building(s) closure or 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 allowed to work from home. Essential employees must be notified in writing of their status as essential 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.
Overtime compensation	Overtime pay or compensatory time off provided to nonexempt staff that are required by unit management to be in an active pay status for more than 40 hours in a work week.
Regular base pay	For nonexempt employees it is the hourly rate of pay for hours worked and/or in an active pay status. For exempt employees it is the normal rate of pay for hours worked and/or in an active pay status.

¹ **Policy 6.15** Weather or Other Short-Term Closing addresses closures of five days or less due to severe weather such as snow days or partial or full day closures due to utility failure or other reasons. A weather or other short-term closing has neither the catastrophic effect nor the duration and impact on the university community as a University State of Emergency. Weather or other short-term closings and University States of Emergency are clearly identified as such when they are declared.



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Term	Definition
Report for work	Refers to time spent engaging in approved university work activities from any approved location.
Student-employee	Nonexempt graduate and professional students and all undergraduate students, who work for the university. Graduate associates are not included as student employees in this policy.
University State of Emergency	A University State of Emergency is in effect when the university president acts to declare such a state under the guidelines set forth in the university's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The University State of Emergency may be Columbus or regional campus specific, restricted to particular areas of any campus or may be campus or university-wide, depending on circumstances at the time.

Policy Details

I. When This Policy is in Effect

- A. This policy will become active and remain in effect when a University State of Emergency is declared, as defined in this policy.
- B. If a University State of Emergency is not declared, closure of university offices is governed by the Weather or Other Short-Term Closing, policy 6.15.
- C. Only the university president can declare a university state of emergency. The president will make the decision in consultation with the provost, vice president for human resources and other senior leaders as appropriate. Units cannot make the decision to declare a university state of emergency.
- D. This policy works in tandem with the Disaster Leave policy 6.28.

II. Guiding Principles

- A. The university will make every effort to communicate broadly and repetitively throughout any University State of Emergency.
- B. College/VP units need to ensure that business continuity plans are up-to-date and communicated on a regular basis.
- C. Departments should be as flexible as possible to enable all faculty, staff, graduate associates 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.
- D. Unless directed otherwise, individuals who are able to work should report for work and support the department or university in whatever capacity is needed. The university can assign any kind of work to faculty, staff, graduate associates or student employees, regardless of regular duties or position description, in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- E. In the event of a pandemic, to minimize the spread of the disease, employees may be directed not to report to the workplace. If so directed, employees must not report to the workplace.
- F. Employees who are engaged in teaching and research may have the highest priority for retention to complete an academic term in progress, including temporary employees.
- G. Departments need to be reasonable and flexible in responding to employee requests and employees must make their best effort to comply with this policy.

III. Essential, Alternate and Standby Positions

- A. Positions not designated as essential or alternate positions are considered to be standby during a University State of Emergency. Depending upon the type of emergency or disaster, position designations may change during the emergency. Any position may be designated as essential at any point during a University State of Emergency, even if not designated essential or alternate to an essential position prior to the University State of Emergency.



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- B. Designations of essential and alternate positions must be made by director or chair level appointments or their designees or higher. The designation must be included in the position description.
 - C. Departments must communicate designations to employees annually.
 - D. Departments will determine if there is meaningful work for employees to do, what are acceptable alternative work arrangements and must give prior approval to those who wish to work from home or another location during a University State of Emergency. To the extent possible, such arrangements should be agreed upon in advance of any University State of Emergency. Individuals in positions not designated as essential may expect their department to attempt to contact them and should attempt to contact their department during a University State of Emergency, according to the department’s usual call-in procedures.
 - E. Essential Positions. Essential employees are expected to report for work during a University State of Emergency unless specifically directed by their department not to report or if directed by civil emergency or medical authorities not to report for health and safety reasons.
 - F. Alternate Positions. Employees in positions designated as alternate positions whose designations are changed to essential during a University State of Emergency must report for work upon notification of their changed designation. Alternate employees must contact their departments for instructions during a University State of Emergency.
- IV. Standby Positions. Standby employees should not report to campus during a University State of Emergency. Faculty and staff who can work from home or another location may do so only with prior approval from the department or as directed by the university in accordance with the Disaster Leave policy 6.28.
- V. Compensation
- A. Employees and departments must follow the directions in the matrix below. Departments and individuals must remember that communication during a University State of Emergency will be challenging.
 - B. University leadership may determine different compensation levels given the specific circumstances of the disaster, at their discretion,
 - C. Individuals who refuse a work assignment will not receive compensation unless the individual demonstrates a substantial hardship as reason for the refusal.

Position Designation	What To Do	Compensation And Leave Time
Essential Working at any location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact department to ensure where to work (campus location, home, other designated location). • Report for work as directed by the department. • If contact with the department cannot be made, report for work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will receive regular base pay and overtime compensation as applicable.
Essential Not working at any location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact department to communicate specific reasons for inability to work and seek approval for absence (see FAQ). • Do not need to report to work if specifically directed not to report by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department ○ Civil emergency or medical authorities for health and safety reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not receive regular base pay. • May be granted paid or unpaid leave at the discretion of their department provided that established departmental call-off rules and procedures are followed. • May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28.
Alternate To essential position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact department to inquire as to whether you are needed and if so, where to report for work (campus location, home, other designated location). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If designated as essential, see essential employee information. • If not designated as essential, see standby employee information.



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Position Designation	What To Do	Compensation And Leave Time
Standby Able to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact department to determine if you are needed to work. If you cannot make contact with your department, do not come to work. Work from home or another location if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-approved prior to the University State of Emergency or Upon approval during the University State of Emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28. If pre-approved to work by the department, will be paid according to usual practice for time worked. If not pre-approved to work by the department or if approved to work fewer than regularly scheduled hours, will be granted paid or unpaid leave consistent with Human Resources Policies. If working outside of classification will receive regular base pay for original appointment unless other arrangements are approved by the Office of Human Resources. May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28.
Standby Able to work but not approved by department to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact department to determine if you are needed to work. Complete eLeave for use of paid leave time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will not receive regular base pay. May be granted sick leave, vacation leave, compensatory time or unpaid leave consistent with Human Resources Policies. May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28.
Standby Not able to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact department to communicate your status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will not receive regular base pay. May be granted sick leave, vacation leave, compensatory time or unpaid leave consistent with Human Resources Policies. May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28.

VI. Paid and Unpaid Leave During A University State of Emergency

- A. Disaster leave may be granted at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave policy 6.28.
- B. Faculty and staff may request approval for use of sick leave, vacation leave or compensatory time, consistent with the [Paid Leave Programs policy](#) 6.27 and the [Scheduling Work and Overtime Compensation policy](#) 6.10.
- C. When paid leave options have been exhausted, faculty and staff may apply to use unpaid leave, consistent with the [Unpaid Leave policy](#) 6.45 or [Disaster Leave policy](#) 6.28.

VII. Other Human Resource Issues During A University State of Emergency

Employees may be mandated to work based upon unit and/or university needs.

A. Working outside of classification and home college/VP unit.

Employees may be required to work outside of classification as deemed necessary by the department or university. This includes employees with the necessary skills that are needed to work outside their colleges/VP units. In these cases, the university will notify these employees that they are designated as essential and when and where they must report for work. The college/VP unit for which the work is performed is responsible for funding and assuring compensation for this work. Compensation will be at the individual's regular base pay for their original appointment unless other arrangements are approved by the Office of Human Resources.

B. Grant-Funded Employees.

Employees funded by external grants must be paid according to the specific requirements and limitations of the grant. Employing units and principal investigators are encouraged to work with funding agencies to determine how grant-funded employees will be paid in advance of any University State of Emergency.



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C. Bargaining Unit Staff.

Staff 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 university.

D. Graduate Associates and Student Employees.

Graduate associates and student employees should make reasonable efforts to contact their departments during a University State of Emergency and are to report for work as needed. student employees are not eligible for paid leave and will be paid only for hours worked. Graduate associates may request approval for leave consistent with Graduate School leave guidelines.

E. Compensatory Time Off.

The university reserves the right to award compensatory time off in lieu of overtime to eligible staff during a University State of Emergency.

F. Probationary Periods.

Probationary periods are extended for the duration of the University State of Emergency or up to 60 work days, whichever is less.

G. Recruitment and Selection.

The Office of Human Resources may implement expedited recruitment and selection processes during a University State of Emergency as needed.

H. Timekeeping.

Employees must submit eLeave or timekeeping records as directed by the department.

PROCEDURE

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Position or Office	Responsibilities
President, Provost and Vice President Shared Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Declare a University State of Emergency as appropriate. B. Consult and collaborate with government and emergency relief agencies. C. Communicate regularly and repetitively to the campus and neighboring communities. D. Communicate changes to standard processes and procedures. E. Ensure that disaster planning and preparedness is a priority within the university community and that departments are prepared to implement their disaster plans and this policy. F. Ensure, to the extent possible, that departments have the resources needed to carry out essential functions.
Office of Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Provide guidelines and consultation on human resource issues such as compensation, flexible scheduling, benefits, job sharing, etc. B. Provide an emergency employee placement service to match up employees willing and able to work with units that have a particular need for their skills. C. Communicate changes to standard processes and procedures.
College/VP Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Maintain confidentiality of emergency contact information to the extent allowed by law. B. Provide workforce with regular, repetitive information regarding the emergency, continued business operations and the status of the college/VP unit and its departments. C. Facilitate advance planning for emergencies; communicate such plans to employees and students.



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Position or Office	Responsibilities
	<p>D. Ensure that employees are trained and well informed regarding emergency procedures. E. Communicate business continuity plans.</p>
Department	<p>A. Determine essential, alternate and standby designations. Ensure position descriptions reflect designations. Communicate designations to employees annually. B. Encourage supervisors and their employees to define, document and keep up to date a list of meaningful work in preparation for a University State of Emergency for each employee. C. Provide timekeeping guidelines in the department's business continuity plans. D. Communicate business continuity plans. E. Maintain confidentiality of emergency contact information to the extent allowed by law. F. Provide employees, supervisors and leaders with regular, repetitive updates using a variety of communication mechanisms. G. Plan for and provide flexible work arrangements in response to a variety of disturbances and individual needs. H. Communicate your work expectations to faculty, staff, graduate associates and student employees regularly and repetitively. I. Provide timekeeping instructions to employees. J. Facilitate department support networks to the extent possible and as appropriate (e.g. care for property, family or pets; sharing rides; sharing jobs; etc.). K. Refer employees to the Ohio State Employee Assistance Program (OSU EAP) or other support resources as needed and appropriate. L. Implement directives from university administrators and civil emergency or medical authorities.</p>
Employee	<p>A. Use employee self-service to keep emergency contact information current. B. Discuss with your supervisor alternative work arrangements such as working from home or another location in case of a University State of Emergency. C. Seek approval from your supervisor of meaningful work you can perform during a University State of Emergency. D. Contact your department to determine need to report for work. E. If approved by the department, report for work when able and appropriate, whether on campus, at home or at another location. F. If unable to report for work, update department of your condition or whereabouts as soon as possible. G. Communicate specific requests and needs to your department.</p>

Resources

- Benefits Eligibility by Appointment, hr.osu.edu/benefits/eligibility
- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, dps.osu.edu/sites/default/files/cemp_2012.pdf
- Counseling and Consultation Service, ccs.ohio-state.edu/
- eLeave, eleave.osu.edu
- Frequently Asked Questions, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/617disasterfaq.pdf
- Ohio State Emergency Management, dps.osu.edu/campus-status
- Ohio State Employee Assistance Program (Ohio State EAP) 800-678-6265, osuhealthplan.com/members/ohio-state-employee-assistance-program-eap
- Sample Annual Disaster Status Notification Letter, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/disasterannualnotice.pdf
- U.S. Government Flu Website, www.flu.gov



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- Work Life Guidance, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/disasterguide617.pdf

Related Policies

- Disaster Leave, Policy 6.28, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy628.pdf
- Graduate School Handbook, gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook1.html
- Paid Leave Programs, Policy 6.27, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy627.pdf
- Scheduling Work and Overtime Compensation, Policy 6.10, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy610.pdf
- Unpaid Leave, Policy 6.45, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy645.pdf
- Weather or Other Short-Term Closing, Policy 6.15, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy615.pdf

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy questions	Employee and Labor Relations, Office of Human Resources	614-292-2800	hr-elr@osu.edu
Medical center faculty and staff consultation	Medical Center Human Resources	614-293-4988	
Benefits information	Benefits Customer Service, Office of Human Resources	614-292-1050 800-678-6010	hr.osu.edu/benefits hr@osu.edu
Emergency Updates	Emergency Management Office of Administration and Planning	614-247-4911	emergencymanagement@dps.ohio-state.edu emergency.osu.edu
Faculty and staff counseling and support	Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, The OSU Health Plan	800-678-6265	osuhealthplan.com/members/ohio-state-employee-assistance-program-eap
Payroll	Payroll Services, Office of the Controller	614-292-2311	payrolloffice@osu.edu controller.osu.edu/pay/pay-home.shtm
Student counseling and support	Counseling and Consultation Service, Office of Student Life	614-292-5766	ccs.ohio-state.edu

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