Canceling Classes and Closing Offices

1. Who decides whether classes will be canceled, and offices will be closed?
The president, in consultation with, the executive vice president and provost, senior vice president for human resources, senior vice president for business and finance or their designees, and other vice presidents and deans as appropriate, will have the final authority to make the decision to cancel classes and/or close offices. The decision may be done on a location by location basis, e.g., Columbus campuses, regional campuses, extension offices, research stations, specific buildings etc.

2. If classes are canceled and offices are closed during the day, what happens?
They will remain closed until the beginning of the next workday.

3. Can there be a partial closing? What will happen then?
Yes, depending on the event, a decision may be made to close specific buildings, sections of a building, or parts of campuses. If there is a partial building or campus closure, no matter what your designation may be, you should call in to your unit to receive instructions. You may be directed to work at an alternate location or assigned alternate work. If that happens, you will get your regular rate of pay.

4. I'm a student, what should I do if there's a closing or class cancellation? How will I know when to come back?
Faculty may use alternative teaching methods when classes are canceled, including, but not limited to, web casts, e-mail, and supplemental readings. If classes are canceled, they will resume the next day unless you hear otherwise.

5. What is a snow emergency, and what are the levels?
Each County’s Sheriff Department is responsible for designating the level of safe driving conditions during the winter months. Each county designates their roadway conditions using the following ratings:
- **Level 1** – Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Caution should be used when driving.
- **Level 2** – Roadways are extremely hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those persons who feel it is necessary to drive should be on the roadways.
- **Level 3** – Roadways are closed to all non-emergency traffic. No one should be driving in these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel. Those traveling may be subject to arrest.

6. I've been designated as an essential employee, but I live in a county that has a level 3 emergency and I'm not allowed on the roads, do I still have to report to work?
If you cannot report to work, you have the option of taking vacation or compensatory time to cover your absence provided you follow your unit’s call-off policies and procedures.

7. I'm a student and I live in, or have to travel through, a city or county that has a Level 3 snow emergency. What should I do?
You should contact your professor to let them know that you cannot attend class due to a Level 3 snow emergency. If you have otherwise not had irregular attendance, you should not be penalized for your absence from class when you can't attend due to a snow emergency.

8. How can I find out whether classes have been canceled or offices have been closed?
Information should be available via local media, an email to your name.#, and/or the university's website by 7:30 a.m. on the day that classes will be cancelled and/or offices closed. Another source for notification is WOSU 89.7 FM Radio or wosu.org.
9. **How can I find out whether the university has officially re-opened?**
   The university is officially re-opened at the regular time established by your unit or the first shift. Check the university's website (osu.edu) for announcements about when the university is closed and when it will re-open. For 24/7 operations, contact the supervisor and/or the unit’s website to determine when to report to work.

**Designation**

1. **What are the employee designations?**
   Essential, alternate, and standby.
2. **How do I know my employee designation?**
   Your unit is responsible for ensuring that you have the proper designation. You will receive annual notification of your designation via Workday.
3. **Can my designation be changed?**
   Yes, your designation can be changed based on operational necessity. You may also be designated as essential on a situational basis e.g., only in the event of a snow emergency, or only in the event of a public health crisis.
4. **I've been designated as essential. What are my responsibilities?**
   You are required to report to work, remain at work, or contact your unit when classes are canceled and offices are closed.
5. **I'm a student, is there a student designation?**
   No, but you should be designated as standby. You should not be designated or utilized as essential or alternate unless it is operationally necessary.

**Responsibilities**

1. **I'm a unit manager or supervisor, what are my responsibilities?**
   - Designate operations which are essential and that will remain open or in effect during a weather or other short-term closing.
   - Develop and communicate a backup plan in case essential employees are unable to report to work.
   - 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.
   - 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.

2. **I'm a Faculty or Staff member, or a Graduate Associate or Student Employee, what are my responsibilities?**
   - Check university website, radio, and television to be fully informed about the weather and university closing.
   - Contact unit or chair for further instructions.
   - Faculty who intend to use alternative teaching methods when classes are canceled should notify the students, using, webcasts, podcasts, email, supplemental readings etc.
   - Students should communicate with their professors to find out whether they are going to use alternative teaching methods. If a student lives or must travel through a city or county with a Level 3 emergency in order to get to campus, they should notify their professor that they will be absent.
3. I am an employee who teleworks, or my job does not require me to report to a location e.g., Columbus campus, regional campuses, extension offices, research stations, specific buildings, etc. what are my responsibilities during a closure?
   You should ensure to get work related responsibilities from your supervisor. Please keep in mind that when the university evokes a closure pursuant the policy, you may still be expected to work. Employees who telework during a closure will receive their regular pay.

   **Compensation/Leave**

1. I'm a faculty or staff member and I've been designated essential, but I cannot perform my work because of the university closure/class cancellation—will I be compensated during the closure?
   Yes, as long as you cannot work due to the closure, and not due to your individual circumstances or choice, you will receive your regular base pay, at the discretion of university leadership.

2. I'm a faculty or staff member, and I had pre-approved sick/vacation time during the closure. Do I have to report to work, and if I don't have to report to work, will I be charged for using that time? Is the answer different if I'm designated as an essential employee?
   No, you will not have to report to work and the time will not be charged to the employee’s vacation or sick leave account balances. No, if you are designated as an essential employee, you will still not have the time charged.

3. I'm an essential employee. What if I was required to report to work and I did not report to work and I didn't call off properly?
   If you failed to follow established unit attendance and/or call off policies and procedures, you should not be paid for the day.

4. Can an employee who is deemed essential be granted vacation or compensatory time if they cannot make it to work because their car won’t start or is stuck?
   Employees who are deemed essential should try to make other arrangements to get to work if they are having transportation issues. They may be granted vacation or compensatory time to cover their absence provided they follow their unit’s call-off policies and procedures.

5. I'm an essential employee, and I work an alternate schedule, such as four 10 hour days, and I'm scheduled to work on a day the university closes. Do I get paid for the full 10 hours?
   Yes, but only if you report to work. The exception to this is if you follow call in procedures and the unit determines that you have a legitimate reason why you are unable to report.

6. I'm not an essential employee, and I did not receive approval to work. What if I report to work anyway, will I receive compensatory time?
   No. The unit may tell you that the university is closed, and send you home. If you are asked to remain at work, you will receive their regular base rate of pay for the hours scheduled.

7. Do regular exempt salaried employees earn compensatory time off if required to report to work on a day the university closes?
   No. Exempt salaried employees do not receive overtime pay and cannot accumulate compensatory time off; a flexible work schedule may be arranged for those staff required to report to work on a day the university closes.(Link to flexible work policy.)
8. Do regular staff who work an alternative schedule and were not scheduled to work on a day the university closes get paid for the day?
No. If a regular full or part-time employee’s schedule does not normally include the day the university closes, the employee is not paid for the day.

9. I'm an alternate/standby regular staff member, and I work an alternative schedule, such as four 10 hour days, and I'm scheduled to work on a day the university closes. Do I get paid for the full 10 hours?
Yes. You are paid for the number of (non-overtime) hours for which you were scheduled on that day.

10. **What happens if an employee calls in sick on a day the university closes?**
Essential employees who follow their unit’s policies and procedures regarding the reporting of an absence will have the time charged to their sick leave balance. All alternative and standby employees will have their time recorded as regular hours.

11. If the university closes for a partial day, such as at 1:30 p.m., and I had to stay home to take care of a child or because I couldn’t come in due to road conditions, how does my pay work?
You would need to take vacation or compensatory time off if applicable for your regular shift up until the 1:30 p.m. time, at which point, your time at home will be paid. However, if you are designated as an essential employee and you cannot report to work you will need to follow the unit’s call off procedures and use vacation time to cover the remaining hours.

12. **What if I’m on an unpaid leave of absence on a day the university closes. Will I be paid for that day?**
No. In addition, if you were scheduled to begin a leave of absence on a day the university closes, you should not be paid for the day. If you were scheduled to return to work on a day the university closes following an unpaid leave, you should be paid for the day.

13. **Do non-exempt temporary, term, and student employees who are not required to report to work on a day the university closes get paid for the day?**
No. They will not be paid.

14. **If shift hours are adjusted based upon weather conditions, and if I only work 8 hours that day, and only a total of 40 hours that week, do I get overtime?**
No. Overtime is based on hours worked. You’re only paid overtime for the hours worked over 40 hours in a week.

15. **How should the compensatory time off, on an hour-for-hour basis, be handled for regular non-exempt hourly employees who are required to report to work on a day the university closes?**
Nonexempt employees should select the Time Type of Short-Term Closure Worked instead of Regular on the time calendar and enter the hours worked on that day. They will see the hour for hour comp time hours automatically added as Come Time Earned.

16. **How do I enter into the system the time of non-essential, non-exempt regular staff who don’t come in to work on an emergency closing day?**
Employees should select the Time Type of Short-Term Closure Benefit and enter their eligible hours based on the policy.

17. **What if a non-exempt employee works over eight hours on an emergency closing day, plus overtime for that week?**
The following example demonstrates how to calculate overtime and university closing hour-for-hour compensatory time for a non-exempt essential employee:
Jordan’s work hours for the week:
Monday, 8 hours
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Tuesday, 8 hours
Wednesday (emergency closure day), 11 hours
Thursday, 10 hours
Friday, 10 hours

Jordan’s total hours of work for the week:
40 hours of regular time pay
7 hours of overtime for the week
11 hours of hour-to-hour comp time for Wednesday, the emergency closure day.
The employee should enter the 11 hours into Workday as "Short Term Closure worked."

18. For non-exempt hourly employees who are scheduled to work on a day the university closes but who do not have to report, will hours recorded for that day count toward the total hours used to determine overtime compensation for the week?
Yes. Those hours for which the employee is paid on a day the university closes should be recorded as Short-term Closure Benefit hours and they will be treated as regular hours for all purposes.

19. Do non-exempt temporary, term, and student employees who are not required to report to work on a day the university closes get paid for the day?
No. They will not be paid.

20. If a new employee is scheduled to start work on a day the university closes, should he or she be paid for the day, or should the hire date be adjusted to the next business day?
Normally, a new employee should start work on a university common start date. If a common start date occurs on a day the university is closed due to weather, or another short term closing reason, then the unit should contact the Senior Director of Talent Acquisition for guidance on when the new employee can start their employment.

21. Is there a way to see how I will be compensated based on my status as an exempt or non-exempt employee, relative to my designation?
Refer to table in the policy.

Resources

1. Where can I obtain additional information?
Visit Weather or Other Short Term Closings, 6.15 hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy615.pdf.

Policy Questions: HR Connection, HRConnection@osu.edu, 614-247-myHR (6947)

Payroll questions: HR Connection, HRConnection@osu.edu 614-247-myHR (6947)