

University Policy

Applies to: Faculty, staff, graduate associates, and student employees, excluding **Health System** employees (Staff who are members of a bargaining unit and are covered by a collective bargaining agreement are included in this policy. However, when this policy conflicts with specific terms in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, the language in the collective bargaining agreement will prevail.)

Responsible Office

Office of Human Resources

POLICY

Issued: 10/15/2007
Revised: 01/03/2021 (minor revision)

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 Emergency**. All university community members should familiarize themselves with their **unit's** 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](#).

Purpose of the Policy

To provide information to the university community about how to prepare for, and procedures to follow during, a University State of Emergency.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Alternate employee	One who has been designated to serve as a back-up to an essential employee.
Compensatory Time	1. Time off earned by nonexempt staff for hours worked over 40 hours during a given work week; and 2. Time/Time off used by nonexempt staff in lieu of being paid for overtime hours.
Employees	Faculty, staff, graduate associates, and student employees.
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.
Health System	University Hospital, East Hospital, Brain and Spine Hospital, Richard M. Ross Heart Hospital, Harding Hospital, Dodd Rehabilitation Hospital, Ambulatory Clinics and Services, and Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute and Outreach Sites.
Overtime compensation	Additional pay to nonexempt staff who work for more than 40 hours, excluding paid time off hours, in a work week.
Regular base pay	1. Nonexempt employees: the hourly rate of pay for hours worked and/or paid time off. 2. Exempt employees: the normal rate of pay for hours worked and/or paid time off.
Report for work	Refers to time spent engaging in approved university work activities from any approved location.
Standby employee	Any employee not designated as essential or alternate.
Student employee	An individual who meets all of the following requirements: 1. Enrolled, at the university on a full-time or part-time basis; 2. Associated with the university primarily in the pursuit of an academic degree; and 3. Working in a position designated as student employment.

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Term	Definition
Unit	College or administrative unit.
University State of Emergency	When the university president acts to declare such a state under the guidelines set forth in the university's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. 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 6.15 policy](#).
 - 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 6.28 policy](#).

- II. General Provisions
 - A. The university will make every effort to communicate broadly and repetitively throughout any University State of Emergency.
 - B. Units need to ensure that their business continuity plans are up-to-date and communicated on a regular basis. See [Business Continuity Management policy](#).
 - C. Units 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 unit 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 descriptions, 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, including temporary employees, may have the highest priority for retention to complete an academic term in progress.
 - G. Units need to be reasonable and flexible in responding to employee requests, and employees must make their best effort to comply with this policy.

- III. Employee Designations
 - A. The university has three employee designations for disaster preparedness during a University State of Emergency: **essential employee**, **alternate employee**, and **standby employee**.
 - B. Positions not designated as essential or alternate positions are considered to be standby during a University State of Emergency.

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

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- V. Other Human Resources Issues During a University State of Emergency
 - A. Employees may be mandated to work based upon unit and/or university needs, and their work schedules or assignments may change during a University State of Emergency.
 - B. Employees, including bargaining unit staff, may be required to work outside of classification as deemed necessary by the unit or the university. This includes employees with the necessary skills that are needed to work outside their units.
 - C. Employees funded by external grants must be paid according to the specific requirements and limitations of the grant. 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.
 - D. Graduate associates and student employees should make reasonable efforts to contact their units during a University State of Emergency and are to report for work as needed.
 - E. 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 are extended for the duration of the University State of Emergency or up to 60 work days, whichever is less.
 - G. The Office of Human Resources may implement expedited recruitment and selection processes, or suspend recruitment and selection processes, during a University State of Emergency as needed.

PROCEDURE

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- I. Declaring a University State of Emergency
 - A. The President is responsible for declaring a University State of Emergency.
- II. Communication and Support
 - A. Communication during a University State of Emergency will be challenging.
 - B. The President and Provost will set priorities and communicate changes to university standard processes and procedures.
 - C. The Office of Human Resources will assist in communicating changes to university standard processes and procedures.
 - D. Units will establish emergency plans and communicate their business continuity plans as appropriate.
- III. Essential, Alternate or Standby Employees
 - A. Designations of essential and alternate positions must be made by director or chair level appointments or their designees. The designation must be included in the position description.
 - B. Employees will receive an annual notification, generated by Workday, of whether they have been designated as essential, alternate, or standby.
 - C. Designations can be changed at any time depending on operational necessity.
 - D. Unless it is an operational necessity, intermittent and student employee positions may not be designated as essential or alternate. Depending upon the type of emergency, 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.
 - E. Individuals in positions not designated as essential may expect their unit to attempt to contact them, but should also attempt to contact their unit during a University State of Emergency, according to the unit's usual call-in procedures.
 - F. Essential positions

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1. Essential employees are expected to report for work during a University State of Emergency unless specifically directed by their unit not to report or if directed by civil emergency or medical authorities not to report for health and safety reasons.
2. 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.

G. Alternate positions

1. 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.
2. Alternate employees must contact their unit for instructions during a University State of Emergency.

H. Standby positions

1. Standby employees should not report to campus during a University State of Emergency.
2. Faculty and staff who can work from home or another location may do so only with prior approval from the unit or as directed by the university in accordance with the [Disaster Leave 6.28 policy](#).

IV. Working Outside of Classification and Home Unit

- A. When an employee is required to work outside of their classification or home unit, the university will notify these employees that they are designated as essential and when and where they must report for work.
- B. The unit for which the work is performed is responsible for funding and assuring compensation for this work.
- C. Unless other arrangements are approved by the Office of Human Resources, compensation for employees will be at their **regular base pay** for their original appointment.

V. Compensation

- A. Employees must submit time off and/or leave or timekeeping records as directed by the unit.
- B. Employees and units must follow the directions in the matrix below.
- C. At their discretion, university leadership may determine different compensation levels given the specific circumstances of the University State of Emergency.
- D. 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 unit to ensure where to work (campus location, home, or other designated location). • Report for work as directed by the unit • If contact with the unit 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 unit 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"> ○ Unit or ○ Civil emergency or medical authorities for health and safety reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not receive regular base pay. • Unless otherwise directed by the president, or president's designee, may be granted paid or unpaid time off at the discretion of their unit, provided that established unit call-off rules and procedures are followed. • May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave 6.28 policy.
Alternate To essential position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact unit to inquire as to whether you are needed and if so, where to report for work (campus location, home, or 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
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave 6.28 policy.
Standby Able to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact unit to determine if you are needed to work. • If you cannot make contact with your unit, 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"> • If pre-approved to work by the unit, will be paid according to usual practice for time worked. • If not pre-approved to work by the unit or if approved to work fewer than regularly scheduled hours, will be granted paid or unpaid time off 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 6.28 policy.
Standby Able to work but not approved by unit to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact unit to determine if you are needed to work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not receive regular base pay. • May be granted sick, vacation, compensatory, or unpaid time off, consistent with Human Resources policies. • May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave 6.28 policy.
Standby Not able to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact unit to communicate your status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not receive regular base pay. • May be granted sick, vacation, compensatory, or unpaid time off, consistent with Human Resources policies. • May receive disaster leave at the discretion of university leadership. See Disaster Leave 6.28 policy.

VI. Graduate Associates and Student Employees

- A. Student employees are ineligible for paid time off and will only be paid for hours they have been required to work.
- B. Graduate associates may request approval for paid time off or unpaid leave consistent with Graduate School leave guidelines.

VII. Unit Responsibilities

- A. Determine essential, alternate, and standby designations. Ensure position descriptions reflect designations. Unless it is an operational necessity, do not designate student employees as essential or alternate.
- B. Refer to the unit's business continuity plan and communicate the plan to employees. See the [Business Continuity Management policy](#).
- C. Communicate work expectations to faculty, staff, graduate associates, and student employees regularly and repetitively.
- D. Ensure that employees are trained and well informed regarding emergency procedures.
- E. Provide timekeeping instructions to employees.
- F. Provide workforce with ongoing status updates regarding the emergency and the status of the unit.
- G. Facilitate unit support networks to the extent possible and as appropriate (e.g., care for property, family or pets; sharing rides; sharing jobs; etc.).
- H. Maintain confidentiality of emergency contact information to the extent allowed by law.

VIII. Faculty and/or Staff, Graduate Associates and Student Employee Responsibilities

- A. Ensure contact information is current.
- B. For the duration of the disaster or University State of Emergency, contact unit to determine whether to report to work, and report to work when able and appropriate.
- C. Discuss with your unit whether alternative work arrangements are available, such as working from home or another location in case of a University State of Emergency.

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- D. Seek approval from your unit as to meaningful work you can perform during a University State of Emergency.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use employee self-service to keep emergency contact information current. 2. Discuss with your unit alternative work arrangements such as working from home or another location in case of a University State of Emergency. 3. Seek approval from your unit as to whether you can perform meaningful work during a University State of Emergency. 4. Contact your unit to determine need to report for work. 5. If approved by the unit, report for work when able and appropriate, whether on campus, at home or at another location. 6. If unable to report for work, update unit as to the reasons you are unable to report to work, and when you will report to work. 7. Communicate specific requests and needs to unit.
Office of Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide guidelines and consultation on human resource issues such as compensation, flexible scheduling, benefits, job sharing, etc. 2. 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. 3. Communicate changes to standard processes and procedures.
President, Provost and Executive Vice President Shared Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Declare a University State of Emergency as appropriate. 2. Communicate regularly and repetitively to the campus and neighboring communities. 3. Communicate changes to standard processes and procedures. 4. Ensure that disaster planning and preparedness is a priority within the university community and that units are prepared to implement their disaster plans and this policy. 5. Ensure, to the extent possible, that units have the resources needed to carry out essential functions.
Unit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine essential, alternate, and standby designations. Ensure position descriptions reflect designations. 2. Refer to the Business Continuity Management policy (link) and communicate the plans to employees. 3. Plan for and provide flexible work arrangements in response to a variety of disturbances and individual needs 4. Communicate work expectations to faculty, staff, graduate associates, and student employees regularly and repetitively. 5. Ensure that employees are trained and well informed regarding emergency procedures. 6. Provide timekeeping instructions to employees. 7. Provide workforce with ongoing status updates regarding the emergency and the status of the unit. 8. Provide workforce with regular, repetitive information regarding the emergency, continued business operations, and the status of the unit. 9. Facilitate unit support networks to the extent possible and as appropriate (e.g. care for property, family or pets; sharing rides; sharing jobs; etc.) 10. Implement directives from university administrators and civil emergency or medical authorities. 11. Maintain confidentiality of emergency contact information to the extent allowed by law.

Resources

Governance Documents

- Business Continuity Management policy, busfin.osu.edu/sites/default/files/business-continuity-management.pdf
 Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, https://dps.osu.edu/sites/default/files/comp_2017.pdf
 Disaster Leave 6.28 policy, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy628.pdf

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Graduate School Handbook, gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook1.html
 Ohio State Emergency Management, dps.osu.edu/campus-status
 Paid Time Off 6.27 policy, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy627.pdf
 Scheduling Work and Overtime Compensation 6.10 policy, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy610.pdf
 Unpaid Leave 6.45 policy, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy645.pdf
 Weather or Other Short-Term Closing 6.15 policy, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy615.pdf

Additional Guidance

Benefits Eligibility by Appointment, hr.osu.edu/benefits/eligibility
 Counseling and Consultation Service, <https://ccs.osu.edu/>
 Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Leave FAQs, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/617disasterfaq.pdf
 Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, <https://osuhealthplan.com/programs-and-services/eap>
 U.S. Government Flu Website, www.flu.gov

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Benefits information	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@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/programs-and-services/eap OSUHealthPlanCS@osumc.edu
Payroll	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu
Policy questions	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu
Student counseling and support	Counseling and Consultation Service, Office of Student Life	614-292-5766	ccs.ohio-state.edu

History

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