



Weather-Related Closing of the University Supplemental Frequently Asked Questions

What is defined as inclement weather?

Inclement weather can include any kind of extreme weather, usually snow or ice, which might create hazardous driving conditions or significantly impair normal operations. Inclement weather also may include severe thunderstorm activity, tornadoes, flooding or other natural perils.

How does the university respond to inclement weather?

In general, the university must continue certain operations during periods of inclement weather due to the needs of students, the requirements of ongoing research activities, and other factors. However, the university has a procedure on inclement weather, which clearly defines how such declared days impact faculty and staff (34.99.99.R0.01 Weather-Related Closing of the University). Generally, there are three possible responses to incidents of inclement weather:

- Delayed opening. During a delayed opening, university officials will publicly announce the specific time at which the university will open. This policy only affects students, classes, and "non weather or event essential" employees who will be allowed to report to work by the designated opening time.
- Early Dismissal. In the event of an early dismissal, the university will cease all academic classes and regular business operations at a publicly announced time. This policy only affects students, classes, and "non weather or event essential" employees who will be dismissed to go home.
- Closure of offices and business operations. In the event of a closure, all day and evening classes will be cancelled. All offices and regular business operations will be closed. Students, faculty and "non weather or event essential" employees should not report to campus that day.

What should employees know about declared inclement weather days?

Under a delayed opening, the delayed opening time will apply to university classes, offices and regular business operations and will be determined with each incident of inclement weather. Employees who are not identified as "weather or event essential personnel" are expected to arrive at work by the designated opening time; if they do so, they will not be charged for late arrival. Employees arriving after the designated time will be charged the full amount of time that they are late, and employees who do not come to work will be charged a full day's absence. Employees whose shift begins after the delayed opening time should report to work as regularly scheduled. Employees identified as "weather or event essential personnel" should report by their regularly scheduled start time regardless of the announced delayed opening, unless otherwise advised by their supervisor. "Weather or event essential personnel" arriving after their scheduled

start time will be charged the full amount of time that they are late, and employees not coming to work will be charged a full day's absence.

In the event of an early dismissal, the designated early dismissal time for university classes, offices and business operations will be determined with each incident of inclement weather and followed consistently. Employees who are not identified as "weather or event essential personnel" will be dismissed to go home and will not be charged any leave for the balance of the employee's work day. Employees who leave earlier than the designated dismissal time will be charged leave for the full amount of time that they are absent prior to the dismissal time, and employees who do not come to work will be charged a full day's absence. "Weather or event essential personnel" are expected to remain at work as regularly scheduled, unless otherwise directed by their supervisor. Employees who have not been identified as "weather or event essential personnel" who have shifts beginning after the designated early dismissal time should not report to work.

If inclement weather conditions warrant a decision to cancel classes and close offices and regular business operations, employees who have not been designated as "weather or event essential personnel" should not report to work. "Weather or event essential personnel" are expected to report to work as regularly scheduled, unless otherwise directed by their supervisor.

What is meant by "the full amount of time that they are late" when an employee arrives after the designated opening time?

The employee will be charged leave for their absence beginning at the designated opening time until the time they arrive. For example, if the designated opening time is 10:00 a.m. and the employee arrives at 10:30 a.m., he or she will be charged ½ hour leave.

How do I know if my position is defined as weather or event essential or non weather or event essential personnel?

Individual departments are responsible for designating "weather or event essential personnel" and ensuring that all such employees are aware of their responsibilities. These duty areas might include positions in facilities management who assist with snow and ice removal, personnel working in residence halls, or employees performing important services in the Student Center. Individual staff members who are uncertain of their designation as essential or non-essential during inclement weather should consult with their supervisor.

I live in an area that is particularly hazardous to drive through during inclement weather. What should I do if I can't make it into work?

Employees should make every attempt to get to work within the bounds of their personal safety. Faculty and staff who face particularly dangerous hazards in transit to work during inclement weather should consult with their supervisor before inclement weather strikes. Depending on the circumstances surrounding an individual's responsibilities on campus, it may be possible to arrange for making up lost time or using annual leave when weather conditions prohibit an individual from traveling to campus for a regularly scheduled shift.

Will the university make the decision to remain open, delay opening, or cancel weekend classes and business operations?

Yes. The procedures are the same as the decision-making process for Monday through Friday operations.

How do I find out if the university delays opening or cancels classes and closes business operations?

The university's primary means for communicating emergency information to students, faculty and staff - including information on weather-related delays, closure of non-essential offices and cancellation of classes - is described in section 2.3 of the Weather-Related Closing of the University procedure. This includes the university main web page, recordings on the university's weather hotline, area radio and television stations, public service announcements on KETR 88.9 FM radio (public radio station), and the KETR main web page. All students, faculty and staff who are enrolled in IRIS system will receive alerts on their home phones or cell phones.

In most cases where decisions on the university operating status can be made in the overnight and early morning hours, information on weather-related delays or closure of non-essential offices and cancellation of classes will be made via Inclement Weather Notification as soon as possible.

If the university cancels classes for the day and closes business operations, when does it officially resume normal operations again?

Normal university operations, including all academic classes and business operations, will usually commence at the regularly scheduled time on the next work day, unless inclement weather prevails. In such cases, the notification process will continue as described above.

Why doesn't the university close when local school districts close?

Local school districts build snow days into their annual schedules and must make decisions that involve the transportation of small children - often across rural bus routes. Universities, on the other hand, are essentially residential communities, where students depend on the campus to provide essential services like food and shelter. Because of this, the campus never actually "closes" since it must support the students who live in the residence halls.

Who is responsible for snow and ice removal on campus?

The Facilities Department spreads sand and ice-melt so that sidewalks, and building entrances are accessible.

Are there other weather-related emergency procedures I need to know, such as severe thunderstorms and tornadoes?

It is not uncommon for severe thunderstorms to produce tornadoes and strong straight-line winds. In the event of a tornado threat, the campus is equipped with sirens that will go off if a tornado has been reported in the area. If a siren is heard in connection to a weather emergency, individuals should follow the tornado drill procedures appropriate for their location at the time. If an individual does not know the tornado drill procedure for their workplace, they should consult with their instructor or supervisor.

General tornado safety tips include:

- Do not go outside;
- Seek shelter immediately in an interior hallway or a lower floor, away from windows;
- Get under sturdy furniture if available;
- Stay indoors until the all-clear signal is transmitted through the campus siren or other emergency notification system.

Approved by the President's Advisory Council, March 21, 2011