
EMERGENCY SUNY BUFFALO STATE CLOSINGS POLICY

Category: Human Resource Management
Responsible Office: Finance and Management, VP Office

Date Established: 11/19/1966
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POLICY SUMMARY

This policy identifies the procedures followed during snow emergencies and other extraordinary circumstances and enumerates the leave procedures.

POLICY

Policy Statement

Offices and other facilities operated by the State of New York may be closed only by order of the Governor. Although pursuant to NYS Executive Law, Article 2-B, a Chief Executive of a county, city or village may declare a state of emergency, such declaration has no authority over the closure of state offices or facilities.

However, the SUNY Buffalo State president or his/her designee has the authority to declare a weather emergency and cancel classes, and recommend that all but essential service employees not report to work. The president has delegated the authority to cancel classes to the vice president for finance and management. The University Police Department is responsible for monitoring all relevant weather conditions and reporting to the vice president for finance and management.

Applicability

This policy applies to all New York State employees. As a non-public employer, the Research Foundation and Buffalo State College Foundation are not covered by the state's emergency policy, but treat employees on the campus similarly to SUNY employees with respect to closings, directed absences and accruals in snow and other emergency situations.

Definitions

Essential Service Employees – Essential services are those that must be maintained to ensure the well-being and protection of those who reside on campus, as well as the maintenance and security of college property. The following functions are considered essential services and employees assigned to these areas are required to report to work under emergency conditions: University Police, Campus Services and Facilities Operations (all employees); Student Health Services (designated staff only); Residence Life (designated staff only); the Dean of Students; and staff responsible for the care and feeding of animals or maintenance of greenhouse facilities. All employees who are designated as essential service will be notified in writing by their department heads.

Directed Absences – Any employee who has reported to work and because of extraordinary circumstances beyond the employee's control (e.g., extremely hazardous conditions or physical plant breakdown) is directed by the college president or his/her designee to leave work shall not be required to charge this absence to leave accruals. Any such release of employees shall not create the right to equivalent time off for employees who are not directed to leave work. Supervisors, regardless of their good intentions, may not direct such absences.

Procedure

If the decision to close and cancel classes is made before the start of the workday, the vice president for finance and management will inform the University Police Department and the College Relations Office. If the decision to close and/or cancel is made once classes are in session, the vice president for finance and management will consult with the vice president for academic affairs and notify the University Police Department and College Relations Office of the decision. In either case, the College Relations Office will activate the Buff State Alert emergency notification system, send a campuswide e-mail, share notifications via the college's Facebook and Twitter accounts, and notify select radio and television stations including WBEN-AM 930, WBFO-FM 88.7, WKSE-FM 98.5, STAR-FM 102.5, WGRZ-TV Ch. 2, WIVB-TV Ch. 4, WKBW-TV Ch. 7, and Time Warner Cable News.

An early decision to close and cancel classes will be communicated by about 6:00 a.m. For information concerning cancelation of classes, please check the main Buffalo State web page suny.buffalostate.edu, or call the school closing information number, (716) 878-5000.

Instructions for Non-essential Service Employees Who Elect to Report for Work under Emergency Conditions

Note: Parking may be severely restricted during periods of temporary emergency. Employees who report to work under these conditions should park in any lot that has been cleared of snow.

1. Employees report to regular work locations and perform regular duties, even if supervisor is absent.
2. If the employee's regular work location is not accessible, he or she must report to the director of Campus Services and Facilities, Clinton Center, ext. 6111, or the director of Residence Life, Porter Hall, ext. 3000, for assignment.

Attendance Policy under Emergency Conditions

If classes are canceled before the workday begins, employees designated essential service are required to report. All other employees are excused under emergency conditions, but must charge the absence to appropriate leave accruals. Employees who elect to come to work may do so; however, the university cannot guarantee that they will be able to work at their usual locations or perform their normal duties. (See instructions below for employees who choose to report for work under emergency conditions.)

Should the closure occur during the workday, the vice president for finance and management will convey the decision to the other vice presidents who will ensure that the announcement is communicated throughout their respective areas. Again, essential service employees are required to remain on the job or report to work as scheduled in this instance. Following official closure, employees may leave their work sites and charge the remainder of their workdays to appropriate leave accruals or continue working until their regular departure time.

Absences that result from the cancelation of classes and services must be charged to appropriate leave accruals as described below:

1. Vacation, personal, compensatory, or holiday leave
2. Sick leave, but only in event of personal or family illness
3. Leave without pay (A written request must be submitted to the Human Resource Management Office no later than the end of the pay period in which the attendance record is due.)

RELATED INFORMATION

Related Links:

[Buff State Alert](#)

[New York State Attendance and Leave Manual Section 21.7](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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REVISION HISTORY

Date of change: 03/27/2015

Brief description of edit: Adapted to standard template. Minor revisions to reflect current procedure.

APPROVAL

Approved prior to 2016