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| <b>UT Health Science Center:</b>                        |                                     |
| <b>COM116 Inclement Weather - COM Medical Education</b> |                                     |
| <b>Version 1</b>                                        | <b>Publication Date: 05/26/2022</b> |

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| <b>No./Title:</b> COM116 - Inclement Weather                              | <b>Resp. Office:</b> Medical Education<br><b>Approval Body:</b> CUME                           | <b>Effective Date:</b> 4/19/21                                                                                                             |
| <b>Category:</b> COM/UME                                                  | <b>Last Review:</b> N/A                                                                        | <b>Next Review:</b> 4/18/24                                                                                                                |
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| <b>Related Policy:</b><br>COM106 – Excused Absence and Wellness Days      | <b>Program:</b> Medicine (M.D.)                                                                |                                                                                                                                            |

## POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) College of Medicine (COM) that provision be made for the potential disruption of learning activities due to inclement weather.

## RATIONALE AND PROCEDURE

1. The administration of each campus determines if it is to be closed during an inclement weather event. Students should monitor UTHSC email and campus emergency communication systems for information regarding potential closures.
  - a) Since conditions will vary across the state, students are only excused from educational activities taking place at the particular campus impacted by a closure.
  - b) Students will be responsible for making up any academic work missed during an absence due to severe weather conditions.
2. In the context of preclinical and didactic education, closure of the school implies that classes and scheduled meetings are cancelled, unless they can take place virtually.
  - a) Students should monitor communications regarding the availability of virtual educational activities.
  - b) Individual students who may be unable to participate in required virtual education (e.g., due to local power outage or loss of internet access) should complete a Limited Leave Request (LLR, available on OLSEN) to document the absence.
3. During the clinical years, management of a weather event must balance the demands of patient care and personal safety.
  - a) Students and faculty with clinical responsibilities are professionally obligated to maintain inpatient care even though a particular campus may be closed.
  - b) Students on clinical services are expected to continue to provide care for their patients, provided students feel that traveling would not place them at risk of injury.
  - c) In all such situations students should immediately contact their supervising resident or attending regarding about potential risks associated with travel, to report any anticipated absence or delay in arrival, and to make appropriate alternative arrangements.
  - d) Students who are unable to travel to the ambulatory sites should contact preceptors as soon as possible to advise them of the individual situation and whether the student could reach the site later in the day.
  - e) Students should also immediately report an inability to participate in patient care to the

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Clerkship Coordinator and/or Clerkship Director.

4. Clinical experience missed due to inclement weather is considered an Excused Absence.
  - a) This is to be documented by submission of the LLR form, indicating 'weather' as the reason for the absence. A single form can be submitted for a series of days missed during the same weather event.
  - b) The LLR form should be submitted even if an ambulatory clinical site had been closed for the day, or if a student had been excused from clinical activities by the resident supervisors.
  - c) In accordance with policy on [Excused Absence and Wellness Days](#), a student missing more than 2 days of a rotation may be required to make up the missed time, at the discretion of the Clerkship Director. This is to ensure that the student has had sufficient exposure to obtain a fair and accurate clinical evaluation and acquire sufficient clinical experience.
5. Students should make every effort to fulfill their patient responsibilities. However, they should not place themselves at undue risk and should not be subject to harassment for choosing to avoid travel under conditions perceived to be unsafe. Any such behavior should be reported directly to the Clerkship Director, Sr. Asst. Dean or Assistant Dean of the Clinical Curriculum, or anonymously in the course evaluation.

## **APPROVAL HISTORY**

Effective: 4/19/21

Revised: N/A