

UT Health Science Center:	
HR0320-H Administrative Closing and Inclement Weather	
Version 5	Publication Date: 01/08/2025

HR0320-H Administrative Closing and Inclement Weather

No./Title: 320 – ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSING

Resp. Office: HUMAN RESOURCES

Effective Date: 01/07/2025

AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Category: Human Resources

Last Review: 9/16/2024

Next Review: 01/7/2028

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Related

Policies:

OBJECTIVE

To designate days of administrative closing at the UT Health Science Center (“UTHSC”) set forth by the Chancellor or their Designee.

Administrative Closing Days Declared in Advance

University policy states, “Certain days, such as the Friday after Thanksgiving Day and during the week of Christmas when classes are not in session, may be designated each year by the chief administrator of a campus or unit as days of administrative closing. During these days, regular employees in an active pay status will be granted time off from work with pay. If the employee’s normal day off falls on a day of administrative closing, an equivalent day off with pay will be granted or if staff non-exempt, the employee may be paid for the day.”

“Payment for days of administrative closing declared in advance should be made in accordance with the provisions specified in University Policy # 350, Holidays. Part time employees receive the benefit on a pro rata basis.”

Weather Status Updates

Information concerning the operational status of the University during inclement weather events will be communicated in accordance with the UTHSC Alert Emergency Notification Plan. This includes utilization of the eAlert system, email distributions and updates on the Health Science Center homepage. Appropriate announcements will also be made over local radio and TV stations.

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Health Science Center students, faculty and staff will be informed of the campus' status in various means: (1) the e-Alert system via text; (2) email to individuals with an @uthsc email address; (3) the UTHSC homepage; and/or (4) public broadcast communications.

Compensation for Emergency Closings

At times, it may be necessary for the Chancellor to declare specific hours as administrative closing because of inclement weather or other emergency situations. Regular employees who are scheduled to work will be granted time off with pay. Payment for emergency administrative closing should be made in accordance with the payment provisions specified in University Policy #350 Holidays. Individuals working from home on days when the campus is subject to a suspension of campus operations due to inclement weather must report the time as regular hours rather than unanticipated administrative closure (UAC). If emergency administrative closing has not been declared and an employee is prevented from reporting to work, annual leave or leave without pay will be charged or the employee may be allowed to make up time lost within the same pay period.

The departmental timekeeper has responsibility for reporting administrative leave taken.

Health Science Center Inclement Weather Procedure

Weather conditions can develop, especially in winter months, that require the University to consider the status of operations. Factors considered include the impact of the weather forecast and maintenance of necessary services for our on-campus student population.

The decision to declare an emergency weather suspension of campus operations (including classes moving to a virtual format) is a consultative process involving several administrative entities responsible for the safety and operations of the University. Chancellor authorization is required for an emergency weather closure of the University. Program Directors, in concert with academic deans, will finalize decisions about individual class modality adjustments.

As a general rule, the University is open during normal business hours and days, and campus operations remain in effect. When inclement weather warrants suspension of some or all campus activities, the following generally occurs:

1. Regular online classes continue to meet. Face-to-face classes attempt to continue in an online modality or cancel as necessary. Faculty are responsible for communicating with their students about the status of their classes and are asked to be flexible with attendance.
2. All services and offices remain open virtually and employees who can do so should work remotely. Individuals that cannot work remotely on inclement weather days by performing

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either their assigned duties or professional development tasks assigned by their supervisor must take annual leave. In the event of massive local power outages exceptions may be made to the expectation for remote work.

3. All hosted events should be canceled or moved to a virtual format unless permission is received from the Chancellor's Office to go forward with the event.

If a non-essential service employee determines that they are unable to work for weather related reasons (either on campus or remotely), then the supervisor should be notified, and the absence will be considered approved with available vacation, compensatory time, or leave without pay authorized accordingly.

Closure of Campus

In rare instances, an emergency closure of campus may occur. In that case, all classes are canceled, including those taught online; all offices and facilities are closed, and except for specifically selected employees working in the essential service operations described below, employees would not be expected to report to campus. All hosted events will be canceled.

When inclement weather is predicted, employees that can work remotely are encouraged to bring their laptops home and other limited work tools as approved by their supervisors to be prepared to successfully work remotely during the weather event. Those employees that do not regularly work remotely and do not work in an essential service operation should also work with their supervisors to be prepared with professional development tasks in advance of the weather event. Professional development tasks assigned by supervisors should be assigned in a manner that accommodates employee remote work environments and resources.

Those employees who normally are not able to work remotely and do not work in an essential service operation should complete tasks or professional development as assigned by their supervisor during regular work hours. Examples of professional development tasks can be found on the [HR website](#).

Essential Services

Essential services are those designated by the Executive Vice Chancellor ("EVC") and are generally defined as critical to services and facilities that maintain business operations for UTHSC, support the physical operations and safety of campus, or provide services to our student population. Employees who do not work in essential service operations should **not** report for in-person work when the campus is closed for inclement weather.

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It is the expectation that essential service employees will report to work on campus if advised to do so. However, if an essential service employee determines that they are unable to work for weather related reasons, then the supervisor should be notified, the absence will be considered approved with available vacation, compensatory time, or leave without pay authorized accordingly. If an essential service employee repeatedly does not work in suspension/closure situations it could lead to a performance improvement plan and/or progressive discipline since doing so is an expectation of the position.

Working with the Chancellor and EVC, Deans and/or vice chancellors will be responsible for identifying essential service employees in the areas of their responsibility and for making the arrangements necessary for such services by informing HR of these employees, establishing their responsibilities, etc.

Essential Positions

Positions designated as essential services personnel include the following:

- Police Chief
- Deputy Police Chief
- Police Captain
- Security Guard I
- Police Dispatcher
- Police Officer
- Police Comm. Supervisor
- Police Sergeant
- Police Detective
- Police Lieutenant
- Forensic Technician
- Med Death Investigator
- Forensic Pathologist
- Dir of Investigation & Training Coord.
- Chief Medical Examiner
- Forensic Technician Supervisor
- Lab Animal Tech II
- LACU Supervisor
- Postdoctoral Scholars (if properly trained to complete essential service assignments)
- Service Assistant II
- SR. Lab Animal Tech II
- Veterinary Technician
- Lead Lab Animal Tech
- Asst Dir Operations_
- Clinical Veterinarian

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Health and Safety Specialist
 Facilities Supervisor
 Director Operations
 Associate Director Operations
 Facilities Services Supervisor
 Senior Power Plant Operator
 Heavy-Duty Mechanic
 Senior HVAC Specialist
 Boiler Operator Supervisor
 Sr. Building Grounds Servicer
 Building Services Supervisor
 Plumber
 Plumbing Supervisor
 Electrician
 Electrical Supervisor
 Building Maintenance Specialist
 Fire Safety Coordinator
 Building Services Supervisor
 Custodial Foreman
 Sr. Custodial
 Building Services Supervisor II
 Maintenance Helper
 Project Manager (Facilities Planning Services)
 Fire Safety Specialist III
 RBL Lab Animal Tech II
 Asst RBL Bldg. Superintendent
 RBL Supervisor
 RBL Build. Superintendent
 RBL Facility Technician
 Fire Safety Specialist II
 Sr. Health and Safety Specialist

The Chancellor or EVC reserve the right to designate any position as essential service personnel in the event of an emergency.

Off-Campus Employees

UTHSC employees assigned to facilities not operated by UTHSC (e.g., Le Bonheur, Regional One Health, St. Francis, UCH, VA Hospital) generally adhere to the policy governing the facility in which they are located; however, college or administrative units should address such special circumstances in their area's procedures related to closings.

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Clinical Operations and Closures

UTHSC patient care and clinic areas will close only if adequate arrangements can be made to reschedule patient appointments or to care for patients in the clinic.

Expectations

Essential employees are required to report to work unless otherwise advised by their immediate supervisor. Supervisors also should extend appropriate and reasonable accommodations (e.g., provide schedule adjustment or overnight accommodations on campus) to ensure the safety of those employees who must report for duty.

The university's administration will work to make the best decision possible concerning general conditions and the overall needs of the campus. However, specific situations and travel circumstances as they relate to individual members of the campus community must be independently evaluated. Employees should exercise judgement in terms of travel conditions.