

Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing Policy

Policy Number	FOC-004
Effective Date	When Signed
Responsible Office/Person	Academic Affairs: Provost/COO; Exec. Vice Chancellor Admin. & Finance: Vice Chancellor/CFO
Related Policies	
Additional History	This policy replaces HRS-001 from November 01, 2007

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Division of Academic Affairs
Division of Administration & Finance
Policy on Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines by which decisions will be made to cancel classes or close the University due to inclement weather, natural disasters or other unexpected emergency/ hazardous conditions and to define the appropriate operational procedures.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, volunteers, visitors, guests, and contractors at all UMass Dartmouth owned and leased locations. Public events, extracurricular activities, and university activities may be held if safety permits and staff are available. Decisions to close one or more campuses, open late, or close early due to emergency conditions other than weather will apply to all organizations and activities unless specifically exempted at the time the decision is made. UMass Dartmouth reserves the right to restrict access to facilities or prohibit activities in the interest of health and safety or property protection.

III. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth to maintain services, conduct business, provide instruction and research on a normal basis throughout the year without compromising the safety and welfare of students, faculty, staff and visitors. In some instances emergencies arise which require the University to determine if it is prudent and reasonable to offer classes or require faculty and staff to report to work. In those instances, the Provost/Chief Operating Officer (COO) or designee, based on input from the Emergency/Storm Management Team, will make a decision regarding the appropriate campus response.

IV. Definitions

- *Emergency/Storm Management Team*: University personnel responsible for managing and directing campus operations during inclement weather or other emergency.

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- *Essential Personnel:* Employees who are required to work to maintain campus operations around-the-clock including weekends, holidays, class breaks, etc. These individuals must report to work despite weather conditions or class cancellations.
- *Inclement Weather:* Expected or actual weather conditions that are severe enough to affect University vehicular traffic and/or university operations/schedules.
- *Main Campus:* The buildings and grounds located at 285 Old Westport Road, Dartmouth, MA.
- *Non-Essential Personnel:* Employees who are not required to report to work when the University is closed.
- *Off-Site Locations:* University staff who work in other areas outside the Main Campus.
- *Official Media Outlets:* The media outlets utilized to communicate the operational status of the University.
- *Operational Status:* The condition of the campus as communicated via the Official Media Outlets. These could include such conditions such as closure, delayed opening, or classes canceled but University remains open.

V. Procedures

A. Categories of Closing/Delayed Opening

- *University Closed.* In the event of hazardous conditions, the university will be closed for all activities, classes and events. Only essential employees per respective union contracts must report for work.
- *Classes Canceled.* In the event of rapidly changing weather, classes may be canceled for the remainder of the day or designated at a specific hour. Administrative offices may remain open or will be closed as directed. Staff must report or remain at work or utilize personal or vacation time. All other university events are canceled.
- *Delayed opening.* A university operating status based upon the weather or other emergency that delays or changes the schedules of administrative and academic units. Essential employees are to report to work as scheduled. Staff may exercise personal or vacation time.
- *University Operations and Classes Canceled.* The University will cancel all classes and close all buildings, except the library, residence halls, resident dining facilities, the power plant, public safety, and fitness center (the fitness center operates 12:00 – 5:00pm when the University is closed), which are open for resident students use only. All University events are canceled.

Note: If the campus remains closed for an extended period of time (due to an extended power outage or other natural disaster) the residence halls may also close and students will be required to leave. Students with extenuating circumstances (such as international students) may be allowed to remain in the residence halls upon request.

- *Early Closing.* The University may close at any time during the day due to rapidly deteriorating weather conditions, in anticipation of a storm or hazardous road conditions, power outage or other declared emergency. The University will cancel all classes and close all buildings, except residence halls, resident dining facilities, the power plant, public safety, library and fitness center. The library and fitness center may have limited hours due to staffing concerns

B. Levels of Operation

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The University has established levels of operation for purposes of planning and response to emergencies requiring transition from a normal operating condition to a heightened state of emergency. Each of the conditions listed below will simplify response to all hazards presented.

LEVEL	CAPTION	DESCRIPTION
1	Normal Operations	No challenges identified that may impact normal operations.
2	Normal Operations with Emergency Planning in Process	Challenges identified, response and mitigation plans refined and adjusted for implementation.
3	University Operations and/or Classes Modified	Suspension or cancellation of some or all University classes and events. Modifications to services and events identified. Critical and essential personnel required to remain at work or report for duty.
4	University Operations and Classes Canceled	The University is closed with all classes and operations suspended. Modifications to services and events identified. Critical and essential personnel required to remain at work or report for duty.
5	University Evacuated-Emergency Management Team Activated	All University operations and services suspended. Residence halls evacuated and emergency shelter for remaining population established. Emergency Management Team convened.

Note: Off-campus locations will adhere to the same procedures as the main campus for inclement weather situations.

Situations at Off-campus Sites Not Affecting the Main Campus

This scenario may occur as a result of a power outage or other emergency situation at an off-campus site not affecting the main campus. The decision to close an off-site building should be made by the Senior Administrator in charge of the building in conjunction with the Provost or designee.

Situations at the Main Campus Not Affecting the Off-Site Locations

This scenario may occur as a result of a power outage or other emergency situation at the main campus not affecting the off-campus locations. The decision to close the main campus will be made by the Provost or designee based on the recommendation of the Emergency Management Team.

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University Events

In non-emergency situations, the Provost or designee will confer with the appropriate administrator in the sponsoring department to determine whether an event shall take place. The ability of the Facilities Department to clear appropriate parking lots and walkways, the ability of campus departments to provide the necessary support services required for the event, the weather forecast, and road conditions will be considered in making decisions regarding University events. The sponsoring department is responsible for communicating the status of the event to all participants.

Online Courses

Asynchronous online courses are not affected by university schedule changes due to inclement weather. The instructor in an online course is responsible for any modifications in course deadlines, assignments, or other requirements in an online course. Students should contact their instructor for guidance in these situations.

C. Timing of Announcements

The Provost/COO or designee will make a decision based on input as appropriate, from members of the Emergency/Storm Management team. Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs is responsible for ensuring the University notifies television and radio stations in time for broadcast announcement deadlines (See Appendix A). The Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety utilizes the Emergency Notification Service (ENS) to communicate with subscribers through voice, text, and email messages, as deemed appropriate in the event of an emergency. All changes in campus operational status due to adverse weather events will be communicated with as much notice to the campus community as possible.

D. Responsibility of Campus Community Members

All employees are expected to verify the operating status of the campus (by utilizing the official media outlets specified in Appendix A) prior to reporting to work in inclement weather situations. Employees and students commuting from long distances may experience much different local weather conditions from the Dartmouth area. All members of the campus community are expected to exercise good judgment in his/her decision to commute to campus, reporting to duty and/or leaving early.

Employees with early shifts (starting before television or radio notifications have been announced) should utilize the University's website and the recorded message on the telephone system to obtain the operational status of the campus before reporting to work.

Campus community members are encouraged to call Facilities at x8100 or University Police at x8107 for problem areas that have not been satisfactorily addressed within the academic buildings. Please call x9691 to address issues within the residence halls (during regular business hours).

E. Designation of Essential Personnel

Division Heads will make the determination when, and if, to have designated essential personnel in their respective areas report to work.

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F. Compensation for Essential Personnel

When the University closes, bargaining unit members designated as "essential personnel" and who work due to inclement weather conditions or other declared emergencies shall be compensated in accordance with his/her collective bargaining agreement as follows:

- *ESU – Designation of Essential Staff & Compensation, Article VII, Section K; weather conditions, Article VII, Section H.*
- *AFT Maintainers – Workweek and Work Schedules/Essential Personnel, Article 7 Section 8*
- *AFSCME – Inclement Conditions, Article 33*
- *IBPO – Employee Compensation, Article 12, Section 8; Essential Personnel, Article 39*

VI. Responsibility

In order to properly manage and direct campus operations during inclement weather or other emergency, the University has established an Emergency/Storm Management Team consisting of the following people:

- The Provost or designee will make the final determination regarding the operational status of the campus and closure and may request specific information from persons concerning the academic mission including the interests of faculty and students.
- The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will provide necessary information concerning issues surrounding all aspects of student life that may impact the decision making process.
- The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus Planning provides guidance on campus emergency planning and preparedness.
- The Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Management ensures that the University's facilities are operational and provides direction for campus access and snow removal operations.
- The Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Talent and Diversity ensures human resources policies and collective bargaining agreements are taken into consideration and adhered to. Addresses issues regarding time off and compensation practices.
- The Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs assists with development of campus messaging and follows notification procedures consistent with this policy.
- The Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety, who chairs and convenes the team, ensures the safety of students, employees and visitors at the University including the issuance and enforcement of parking bans.
- Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance communicates steps to maintain business continuity and in consultation with the Provost shall ensure compliance with this policy.

The Emergency/Storm Management Team may also solicit input from the following people based upon the nature of the emergency:

- Deans of the Colleges/Schools
- Director of Athletics
- Director of Campus Services
- Director of Housing and Residential Life or designee (including Housing Facilities' operations)

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- Director of Health Services
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management (recruitment programs/activities)

Each school, college and administrative unit is responsible for identifying both the services and the specific employees designated critical to report to campus during reduced operations. It may be necessary for some units to develop their own internal procedures for compliance with this policy. For example, Library Services maintains an updated *Inclement Operation Plan* for use. In those cases the unit head/supervisor will ensure the internal Operation Plan is communicated and followed.

VII. Appendices:

- A. Official Media Outlets Utilized for Announcements
- B. Parking Guidelines
- C. Time and Attendance Guidelines
- D. Emergency Contact Information
- E. Emergency Preparation Tips

Appendix A

Official Media Outlets Utilized for Announcements:

Recorded message on the University's telephone system – (508) 999-8000

- Notification on the University's website – www.umassd.edu
- Announcement on the electronic marquee at the campus entrance
- Announcements on the following radio stations:
 - **Providence:** WPRO (630 AM, 92.3 FM), WHIM (1110 AM), WHJJ (920 AM, 94.1FM), WALE (990 AM), WRX (103.7 FM), WSNE (93.3 FM)
 - **Boston:** WBZ (1030 am)
 - **Plymouth:** WPLM (1390 AM)
 - **Somerset:** WSAR (1480 AM)
- Announcements on the following television stations:
 - **Providence:** WJAR (Channel 10), WLNE (Channel 6), WPRI (Channel 12), FOX 64
 - **Boston:** WBZ (Channel 4), WHDH (Channel 7), NECN (New England Cable News), WCVB (Channel 5)

Please do not call the Police Department. Their lines must remain open for emergencies.

Appendix B

Parking Guidelines:

The Director of Public Safety may call for a parking ban on Ring Road and all roadways and access roads to parking lots depending on weather predictions and timing. Parking bans will be announced at least two hours prior to implementation and enforcement. Parking bans will be announced on:

- The University Web Site – www.umassd.edu
- MyAlert
- The campus telephone system
- UMD Announce (if possible)

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The plowing of parking lots is a phased operation that requires students to move cars on a schedule designed to give snow removal personnel sufficient access to all parking lots on campus. To accomplish this, the Director of Public Safety notifies the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs to arrange for student notifications preceding planned vehicle relocations.

To the extent that parking bans are violated and inhibit snow removal efforts, violators may be towed.

Appendix C

See the HR website for *Time and Attendance Guidelines* during inclement weather conditions.

Appendix D

Emergency Contact Information:

- Campus Information: (508) 999-8000 or www.umassd.edu
- Police Department – Emergency: (508) 999-9191; Dispatcher: (508) 999-8107.
- SRTA Bus Lines (Public Transportation): (508) 997-6767
- Dartmouth Police Department
 - Emergency: 911
 - Non-Emergency: (508) 910-1700
- State Police-North Dartmouth, Massachusetts: (508) 993-8373
- Bristol County Sheriff's Office: (508) 995-1311
- Fire Department: (508) 636-2441; (508) 994-6761

Hospitals

Charlton Memorial Hospital
363 Highland Avenue
Fall River, MA 02720-3703
(508) 679-3131

St. Luke's Hospital
101 Page Street
New Bedford, MA 02740-3464
(508) 997-1515

Tobey Hospital
43 High Street
Wareham, MA 02571-2097
(508) 295-0880

St. Anne's Hospital
795 Middle Street
Fall River, MA 02740-3464
(508) 674-5600

- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency: (508) 366-5321; (508) 820-2000

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- Federal Emergency Management Agency: (800) 621-3362; www.fema.gov
- Mass Highway Department: www.mhd.state.ma.us
- American Red Cross - New Bedford Chapter: (508) 996-8286
- Campus Weather Information: <http://www.umassd.edu/weather/>
- National Weather Service: www.weather.gov
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service: www.nws.noaa.gov
- The Weather Channel: www.weather.com

Appendix E:

Emergency Preparation Tips

Place a winter emergency kit in each vehicle that includes the following items:

Shovel, windshield scraper, small broom, flashlight, battery-powered radio, extra batteries, water, snack food, matches, extra clothing including boots and socks, first-aid kit, blankets, medication, road salt or sand, emergency flares, cell phone and charger and if necessary a well-stocked diaper bag. Try to maintain at least half tank of gas.

You may also want to keep a small emergency kit in your desk which includes essential items such as medication, a change of clothes and other important necessities in the event you are delayed at work. Parents should also have a person on-call to meet child care needs if the situation arises.

Winter driving tips:

- Clear snow and ice from entire vehicle
- Wear your seat belt at all times
- Slow down and pay attention. Posted speed limits are for dry pavement.
- Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows. Stay back at least 200 feet and don't pass on the right.
- Bridge decks freeze first; surface conditions can be worse on a bridge than on the approach road. Exit ramps are an even greater challenge since they may have received less anti-icing materials than the main road.
- Don't use cruise control. Roads that appear clear can have sudden slippery spots – the slightest touch of your brakes deactivates "cruise control" and can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- Travel only if absolutely necessary.

VIII. APPROVALS



Mohammad A. Karim
Provost; Executive Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs; Chief Operating Officer

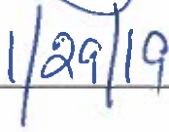


Michael J. Barone
Interim Vice Chancellor for Administration &
Finance; Chief Financial Officer

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Robert E. Johnson
Chancellor



Date

