

PPP-66 Emergency Closure Policy

At times it may be necessary for the President to declare areas of the campus to be closed during specific hours as the result of emergency situations. The entire University, or affected areas, will be closed if emergency situations are judged to threaten the security or safety of staff, faculty, students, visitors or patients. Numerous emergencies may be encountered in the academic setting ranging from technological or natural disasters to civil disturbances. The University may also be required or requested to close due to campus, local or regional utility emergencies.

This policy specifically addresses short-term emergencies. Pre-planned closures or emergency conditions requiring prolonged closure of specific areas may require alternative classroom or working arrangements, and personnel will be reassigned to unaffected areas.

A decision to close university facilities will result in:

1. Cancellation of some or all classes scheduled during the period of closing.
2. Cancellation of some or all events scheduled on the campus.
3. Closing of some or all administrative offices and or buildings.
4. Health clinics will remain open except under extraordinary conditions. Medical students and residents will report for clinical responsibilities, as they are able. The decision to close clinics and cancel College of Medicine and/or College of Pharmacy classes will be made by the President, or designee, upon a recommendation from the Vice President for Health Affairs. During partial closures, COM personnel may be reassigned to report for other duties or facilities.
5. University High School will follow this policy in the event of emergencies that affect University School operations.

NOTICE OF DECISION TO CLOSE

A decision to close part or all of the campus will be made by the President in consultation with the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the College of Medicine/Vice President for Health Affairs/COO. Consultation will also be made with the proper state, county and local public officials. In the absence of the President, the decision to close will be made by the Vice President for Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Health Affairs/COO. The Vice President for University Advancement will be apprised of any decision to close or alter working schedules.

If the decision to close is the result of an emergency situation threatening the security or safety of staff, faculty, students, visitors or patients, further procedures outlined in the East Tennessee State University Emergency Preparedness Plan will be implemented as required:

If the decision to close is the result of inclement weather, the university's Inclement Weather Policy, PPP-28 will be observed.

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The decision to close part or all of the campus will be made and announced as soon as possible to maintain the safety and security of all faculty, staff, students, patients and visitors. The staff of the Office of University Relations will be responsible for preparing an official statement and for notifying the following in the order listed:

1. ETSU worldwide web home page.

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2. Radio/TV stations in the area serving the university. WETS-FM (89.5 FM) will announce the official university cancellation information at least every thirty minutes for an appropriate period of time.
3. University Vice Presidents
4. Campus Switchboard. A recorded voice message will be activated for the university switchboard and University Center information lines.
5. Vice Provost for Student Affairs
6. Building Coordinators in affected buildings.

The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify all academic deans.

ACCOUNTING FOR TIME

During designated emergency closings of the university, regular full-time and part-time employees who are scheduled to work in the affected campus areas during the emergency, and who cannot be reassigned to non-affected areas will be granted time off with pay. In the case of a partial closing, employees who are required to continue at work in the areas or buildings affected by the emergency, or employees who can perform their duties at alternate work sites will be required to work for the normal work shift, with no additional compensation offered. In the event of a full closing, emergency workers who are required to report will be compensated in accordance with the procedures listed below. Employees who are on approved leave status or official travel during an emergency closing will be recorded as previously approved. Temporary, non-contract personnel will be excused from work, with no compensation.

If local or regional emergency conditions exist, but do not result in the closing of university facilities, staff or students not reporting for work or class will need to follow normal absence procedures. Staff will need to report annual or unpaid leave for time missed, and students must make arrangements with instructors for missed assignments.

If an emergency closure is in effect at the start of, or called during, an employee's shift, the period of closure is understood to extend to the end of that employee's shift, unless stated differently in the closure announcement. Therefore, non-emergency personnel are not required to report to work until the start of his/her next shift unless instructed by his supervisor. Emergency personnel are required to work during closures until released by their supervisor and will be compensated as noted below.

Compensation Rates

When the University is closed due to inclement weather or emergency closure, most employees will receive emergency closure leave and will not be required to work. However, nonexempt emergency crew employees assigned to work by their respective department heads will receive premium pay at the rate of two and one-half times the regular rate (one and one-half times in addition to regular pay) for all hours worked during the closure period. This rate applies both to "regular" hours and to "overtime" hours. For example, an employee earning \$6 per hour would receive \$15 for each hour of emergency work during the declared closure period, regardless of the number of hours worked in the workweek involved. This does not apply to partial closures or cancellation of classes when the University is otherwise open.

FAQ

1. If an emergency crew employee does not report to work, how will the absence be handled?

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He/she will be paid straight time.

2. How will the timesheets be coded for emergency employees? All others?
 - “E” code – number of hours closure effects regular shift
 - “IP” code – emergency hours worked due to receive emergency premium (2 ½ times) paid
 - “IB” code – emergency hours worked due to receive emergency premium (2 ½ times) banked
 - Emergency personnel should record both the “E” code and either the “IB” or “IP” code(s) and applicable hours.
 - Non-emergency personnel should record “E” code and applicable hours only.
3. Can the employee choose either banked or paid for the time worked? Yes, with supervisor approval. Compensatory time earned during the year will be paid at the employee’s current rate of pay the last payroll of May if not otherwise used during the year in accordance with provisions of PPP-05.
4. How is an employee paid if he/she is not on the list but required to work? Same as emergency employees who work.
5. If a maintenance worker is called in; i.e. lock shop or housing for non-weather related issue during the emergency closure, what is their rate of pay? Same as emergency personnel; 2 ½ times regular rate.
6. Is emergency closure leave considered as time worked for the purpose of overtime accrued during the pay period? No.
7. If I am not on the list and the university closes, do I go home on paid emergency closure pay? Yes, unless otherwise directed by your supervisor.
8. The emergency closure pay begins upon the announcement time and not the shift? Yes
9. Will this policy go into effect if the building is closed for another reason; i.e., electrical outage? No. This policy is only for when the university is closed for inclement weather (hazardous driving conditions) or natural disaster.
10. If classes are canceled but the rest of the University is open for business as usual (i.e. events during 2nd shift) do I get premium pay (2 ½ times) for reporting to my regularly scheduled shift? No.

IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. The Vice Presidents will develop detailed procedures for implementing this policy within their area of responsibility.
2. Deans and Directors will disseminate the information contained in this policy to all personnel within their respective areas of responsibility and insure compliance with the guidelines.

Source: Approved by Senior Staff, November 10, 2003

East Tennessee State University | Office of Human Resources

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Compensation Rates approved by Senior Staff, June 30, 2008

Administrative titles updated July 2008

Reviewed on 3/16/16