January 16, 2015

EMERGENCY CLOSURE GUIDELINES

When an emergency closing of a State facility or workplace occurs, paid time off will be provided for employees who are required to evacuate a location or worksite as a result of emergency conditions as determined by emergency/public safety officials or the Chancellor in consultation with the university’s safety officer or designee. The university will make every effort to relocate employees to a safe work location or worksite in lieu of work stoppage. If relocation is not a viable option, employees should be paid for lost time from work during the period of time designated as an emergency closing.

These guidelines apply to all leave earning SPA and EPA employees.

DEFINITIONS

Emergency (mandatory) employees: Essential employees who are required to work during emergency conditions because their positions have been designated by the Chancellor or designee as necessary in response to a specific emergency situation in compliance with the university’s emergency response plan.

Emergency operations: Services that have been determined necessary by the Chancellor in response to specific emergency conditions. These operations may vary depending on the nature of the emergency situation and shall be identified in the university’s emergency response plan.

GUIDELINES

Emergency Closing Conditions: Emergency conditions are determined by emergency/public safety officials or the Chancellor in consultation with the university’s safety officer or designee to be hazardous to life or safety of both the general public as well as employees at a specific location or worksite. Examples of emergency evacuations include catastrophic life threatening natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes and floods. Evacuation may also result from fire, bomb threats, prolonged disruption of power and/or water, contamination by hazardous agents, terrorist acts or any other conditions that are specifically determined to be hazardous to the life and safety of the general public, customers, clients, patients, students and employees. Loss of heat and air conditioning does not necessarily constitute an emergency condition. While loss of heat/air may result in uncomfortable working conditions, it is not typically considered life threatening or unsafe for the general public or employees. Employees should be allowed to dress appropriately based on the temperature and may be allowed to use fans or space heaters with the approval of the university’s safety officer. Employees with health conditions that may be sensitive to unregulated temperatures should be relocated to an alternate worksite or allowed to use appropriate leave. In the case of prolonged loss of heat and air during times of extreme weather temperature conditions (freeze or heat warnings), employees will be relocated to an alternate worksite, be permitted to temporarily work from home if appropriate, or utilize the “Adverse Weather Policy Guidelines” to cover the period of suspension of work due to adverse temperatures.

The University of North Carolina System: The declaration of a “State of Emergency” by the Governor does not affect the Chancellor’s delegated authority from the UNC system and responsibility for making emergency closing decisions and implementing emergency response plans based on the nature of the disaster/emergency; however, during disaster/emergency conditions, the Governor or emergency/public safety officials may order mandatory evacuations of geographic areas of the State impacted by the disaster, order mandatory closure of roads, or order mandatory curfews. In the case of State ordered mandatory
evacuations, the emergency closing policy will apply to all worksites in the designated area. For divisions or departments that rent office space from non-State entities, an agreement or understanding should be reached with the landlord as to who makes decisions and communicates facility closings based on emergency conditions at the worksite.

Weather Related Emergency Conditions: Adverse weather conditions typically do not result in an emergency closing at a work location or worksite. Emergency closings are site-specific and dependent upon the determination of the Chancellor or designee the location is not safe for general public, customers, clients, patients, students and employees (both non-mandatory and mandatory) to remain at the work location. Emergency worksite evacuations typically occur as a result of catastrophic life threatening weather conditions such as hurricanes, tornados, floods, etc. The State of North Carolina does not CLOSE due to winter storms (snow and ice) that impact travel conditions (accumulation of ice/snow on roads, parking lots, and sidewalks). Employees should follow the “Adverse Weather Policy Guidelines” for information on reporting to work during winter storms. Heavy accumulation of snow and ice on power lines, trees and rooftops may result in an emergency closing evacuation of a worksite if there is prolonged loss of power/water, downed trees and power lines that make the worksite unsafe, or heavy accumulation of snow/ice on a rooftop that may make the building or structure unstable and the roof may collapse.

Failure of Emergency Employees to Report: An emergency employee's failure to report to work or remain at work can result in disciplinary action and/or requiring the hours missed to be charged to leave with or without pay, as appropriate. Exception: When travel conditions cause an emergency employee to arrive late, the Chancellor or designee may determine that the conditions justified the late arrival. An emergency employee is expected to notify his/her supervisor or designee of his/her inability to report to work on time due to weather conditions so emergency work operations are covered in his/her absence. In such cases, the lost time will not be charged to the employee's leave balances or to leave without pay, and no disciplinary action will be taken.

Alternate Worksites during Emergency Conditions: If possible, the Chancellor will reassign employees to alternative worksites within the same commuting area in order to avoid work stoppage. If the emergency conditions are expected to continue for a prolonged period of time, the Chancellor or designee will consider alternative work arrangements such as flexible work schedules and working from home if applicable.

Accounting for Time: The following shall apply when a state facility or worksite is closed due to emergency conditions:

- Employees who are not required to work at an alternate site or as an emergency employee shall not be required to charge leave or make up the time.
- Emergency employees required to work during the emergency shall be granted emergency time off (ETO) on an hour for hour basis for all hours worked. This time must be used within 12 months of it being awarded. The university will make every effort to give employees the opportunity to take this time off. It should be used after compensatory time off, but must be used before vacation, bonus or sick leave. ETO not taken within 12 months is lost. ETO is not paid out upon separation and does not transfer to another State agency.
- If additional employees, not designated as emergency, are needed for situations such as cleanup and recovery during the time the agencies remain closed, the university will compensate them in the same manner as designated emergency employees.
- Non-emergency employees who are reassigned to a different work location to avoid work stoppage or who are approved to work under alternative work arrangements, shall be paid for his/her regular salary for all hours worked but will not be granted ETO.
- Employees who are on prearranged vacation leave or sick leave will charge leave to the appropriate account.
**Overtime Pay:** In addition to the provisions above, FLSA subject employees shall receive overtime compensation, either compensatory time or pay, for all hours worked over 40 in accordance with the Hours of Work and Overtime Policy.

FLSA exempt employees may be granted compensatory time or the university may choose to use the following provision of the State Emergency Closing Policy:

When the Governor declares a “State of Emergency,” agencies are authorized to pay overtime at straight-time rates to FLSA exempt employees when the following conditions occur:

- A gubernatorial declaration of a “State of Emergency,”
- Management requires employees to work overtime for purposes of response and/or recovery during the emergency, and
- Funds are available to pay overtime. The university shall determine if funds are available and obtain prior approval from the Office of State Budget and Management to use such funds to cover the overtime payments. The university shall distribute any overtime pay consistently with a pre-defined standard that treats all employees equitably.

**Campus Notification** When emergency conditions impact the University affecting daily class schedules and normal business operations, these conditions will be monitored by UNCG Emergency Management, Police and Facility Operations and pertinent information will be relayed to the Chancellor. The Chancellor and Executive Staff will make the appropriate decision based on the safety of faculty, staff, and students.

Should an emergency closing decision be made that is a modification or cancellation of the normal schedule, public announcements will be made through the following notification systems:

- Spartan Alert
- Mass e-mail notification to faculty/staff and students
- The University’s adverse weather line at 336-334-4400
- The main University phone line at 336-334-5000
- UNCG’s homepage (www.uncg.edu).
- Local TV stations
- Facebook (facebook.uncg.edu)
- Twitter (twitter.uncg.edu)

The primary sources of information on the University’s condition levels, however, will be the University’s home page, adverse weather line and main phone line. For additional questions contact Emergency Management at 256-8632.

**ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**EPART:** The University maintains an Emergency Planning and Response Team (EPART) that is comprised of key administrative personnel from various departments and offices. The departments offer critical resources and operational support for emergency response and recovery, and represent each operational unit of the University.

This dedicated team of individuals meets on a regular basis to assist in preparedness and mitigation activities that ensure UNCG is ready to respond to any emergency. During a significant emergency or disaster, EPART works to coordinate resources and information to allow for an efficient, coordinated response by the University.
Emergency Management: The Office of Emergency Management is charged with analyzing and reducing risks to hazards, providing planning and direction before/during/after emergencies, and coordinating resources and information.

If you have any questions regarding the adverse weather and emergency closing policies, please contact the Department of Human Resources at 334-5009 or Emergency Management at 256-8632.