



Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
Board Policies
Chapter 4 – Human Resources

4.4 Weather / Short Term Emergency Closings

Part 1. Cancellation of Classes due to Weather or other Short Term Emergencies. The authority to cancel classes due to weather conditions or other short term emergencies resides with the college or university president or the president's designee. Policy 1A.10 Emergency Management is applicable for long term closures. Cancellation of classes does not excuse any employee from work. Employees of the college, including faculty, may take personal leave, vacation leave or use earned compensatory time when classes are canceled and they choose to be absent from work.

Part 2. Campus Closing due to Weather or other Short Term Emergency. A president or designee may close a college or university campus due to a weather or other short term emergency of 6 calendar days or less in accordance with this policy. Policy 1A.10 Long Term Emergency Management is applicable for long term closures. The closure of state agencies by the Commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations does not apply to MnSCU institutions. The Governor of Minnesota has emergency powers to issue an executive order to change the work schedule of executive branch employees in cases of natural disaster or other emergencies [M.S. Section 12.21]. This does apply to MnSCU employees.

Subpart A. Weather emergencies. The college or university president shall develop written procedures which will be used to determine when weather conditions constitute a threat to the health and safety of college or university employees and students. The written procedures shall identify the following:

1. Processes for assessment of weather and travel conditions (temperature, wind, precipitation, condition of roads). At a minimum, one state and one local authority should be contacted as part of an assessment of weather and travel conditions. The following offices are suggested as authorities to contact:
 - State Highway Patrol District Office
 - Minnesota Department of Transportation - district offices
 - County and city law enforcement offices
 - County and city highway maintenance offices
2. Positions and employees of the college or university who provide services that are essential to protect life and property during campus closings due to weather conditions. These “weather essential” employees will not be excused from work duty during campus closings.
3. Methods of notification of campus closings appropriate to employees, students and the public.

Subpart B. Filing. A copy of the written procedures shall be filed with the Chancellor.

Subpart C. Other emergencies. The college or university president shall maintain a list of emergency situations other than those which are due to weather conditions for which campus closure would be an appropriate action. A list of essential employees that would not be excused from work duty during campus closings due to identified emergency conditions shall be maintained by the president.

Subpart D. Effect of closure. When a campus closing is declared, college or university employees are excused from work with pay. An employee's absence with pay for an individual emergency situation shall not exceed the equivalent of two work days unless the Chancellor authorizes a longer period. A campus closure applies to all employees without regard to labor contract. Weather or other emergency essential employees who are not excused from work will be paid at their regular rate of pay.

Subpart E. Timeframe. The declaration of a campus closure shall, whenever possible, clearly identify the timeframe when employees are excused from work.

Subpart F. Notice to chancellor. Each college or university shall notify the Chancellor or designee after the decision is made to close a campus due to weather conditions or other emergency conditions. This notice will be used by the Office of the Chancellor to respond to inquiries regarding campus closures.

Part 3. Office of the Chancellor. The Commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations has authority to excuse employees of the Office of the Chancellor with pay due to weather or other emergencies. The Chancellor may also excuse employees of the Office of the Chancellor due to weather or other emergencies and may pay employees with the approval of the Commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations for such absence. Decisions by a president to close a campus apply to employees of the Office of the Chancellor assigned to a work station at that campus.

Statutory Authority: 1994 Minnesota Statutes, section 43A.05, subdivision 4.

Date of Implementation: 10/16/96

Date of Adoption: 10/16/96

Date and Subject of Revision:

July 18, 2007 – Amends policy to create distinction between short term emergencies and long term emergencies.

Amends Part 2, Subpart D to clarify president's sole authority to excuse employees from work with pay only extends up to 2 days, longer paid absences requires approval by the Chancellor. Amends Part 3 to include language consistent with the current statute which provides that the Commissioner of the Department of Employee Relations has authority to release employees of the Office of the Chancellor with pay due to weather or other emergencies. It also clarifies that employees of the Office of the Chancellor who work on a campus will be governed by the decision of the president to close the campus.

12/18/02 – Part 2, Subpart F, Amended from System Office to Office of the Chancellor

02/17/99 - part 2, states Governor's power to change work schedule in case of natural disaster, subp. B, deletes date by which written procedures must be filed.