



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 10.02, **Suspension of Classes and Closing of Offices, including clinical locations and managed care sites, in Emergency Situations**

PURPOSE: The Purpose of this Health Sciences Center Policy and Procedure (HSC OP) is to establish policy and procedure regarding the suspension of classes and/or closing of offices, including clinical locations and managed care sites, to ensure the safety and well-being of TTUHSC team members, students and visitors at all campus locations.

REVIEW: This HSC OP will be reviewed on September 15 of every odd-numbered year (ONLY) by the Emergency Management Coordinator, the Vice President for External Relations, the Provost, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, and the Chief of Police with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the Vice President of Facilities & Safety Services (VPFSS) by October 1. The VPFSS will present recommendations to the President.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. General Considerations

- a. Situations which may require closure include but are not limited to: inclement or dangerous weather, electrical outages, malfunctions of the central heating and cooling plant, chemical or biological problems, fire, and explosions. The STAT!Alert System is the information source concerning delays or closure of TTUHSC operations for all team members and students.
- b. During an emergency, the safety of students, faculty, staff, patients, and other campus visitors is paramount. At the same time, TTUHSC has research, teaching, and service missions that necessitate maintaining continuous and effective business operations with essential personnel. With due consideration for safety, TTUHSC will remain open and operate normally to the greatest extent possible.
- c. Only the TTUHSC President, or designee, will determine if TTUHSC closes, has an early closure, or has a delayed opening. Employees, students, and visitors are expected to comply with instructions provided by the TTUHSC administration regarding campus closure.

2. Emergencies Posing Imminent Risk of Harm or Safety

- a. In the event there is imminent risk of harm to the campus community, including but not limited to violent intruder, gas leaks, natural disasters, etc., notification regarding such emergencies and applicable safety measures that will be taken to protect patients, visitors, students and employees will be announced in accordance with the university's Emergency Management Plan, as provided in TTUHSC Operating Policy 76.01, [Emergency Management Plan](#), irrespective of the campus closure or delay decision process outlined below.

3. Delay and Closure Authorization Process

- a. Conditions that may require a decision to close or not to open the TTUHSC campuses, including clinical locations and managed care sites, will be evaluated under the process detailed below. Public safety is the primary consideration in closure decisions. In this regard,

recommendations should be made after consultation with applicable campus leadership to provide recommendation and advisement to the President, or designee, on a course of action.

- (1) Step 1: The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) will initiate an advisory call with the Incident Response Team (IRT), which is comprised of the Vice President of External Relations, President's Chief of Staff, Chief of Police, EMC, and the Campus Business Operations Officer (CBOO) of the campus potentially affected by the event if conditions are such that a delay or closure is in question. In the event there is impact to one of the TTUHSC Managed Care units, the Executive Director for Managed Care will be included in the advisory call.
 - (2) Step 2: The applicable CBOO, or Executive Director for Managed Care, will facilitate discussions with their campus or unit leadership teams to discuss impact and develop a recommendation on delay or closure to provide back to the IRT. The recommendation must include a stated justification for the requested delay or closure.
 - (3) Step 3: The IRT will review the recommendation to ensure it aligns with appropriate safety standards relating to the conditions that cause such a delay or closure to be in question. After review, the Vice President of External Relations will provide the recommendation to the President, or designee.
 - (4) Step 4: The President, or designee, will make the final decision on the course of action. Once a decision has been made, the Vice President of External Relations will facilitate communication of that decision to the IRT and impacted university stakeholders through the notification process described below. Additionally, Vice President of External Relations will provide notification to the Texas Tech University System Office of the Chancellor of any campus closure or delay.
- b. In any situation where the members of the IRT are unavailable, designees will be identified to ensure continuity in this process.
 - c. Factors that will be taken in account when considering a recommendation of delay or closure include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Current weather and national/regional weather forecasts;
 - (2) Current and future road conditions;
 - (3) Current and future closures/suspensions of public transportation;
 - (4) Current and future status of region and university utilities (i.e., power, water, and sewage);
 - (5) Current and future conditions of parking and walkways on campus;
 - (6) Current and future operating status of public services, public schools, peer institutions, and governmental agencies; or
 - (7) Recommendations from public safety, public health, and government officials
 - d. In the event the impact of closure is expected to extend to multiple days, the President, or designee, may elect to activate the university's Emergency Operations Center, as provided in TTUHSC Operating Policy 76.01, [Emergency Management Plan](#), to provide general guidance and direction, coordination, and support for the emergent situation.

4. Notification

- a. Once the President, or designee, has made the final decision regarding delay or closure, the Vice President for External Relations will communicate the notification of the delay or closure decision through the STAT!Alert System to the applicable university stakeholders using the following notification scenarios:

(1) **On-Campus Operations, Activities, Classes and Clinics Delayed, BUT Remote Curricular Activities Continue**

STAT!Alert: **(CAMPUS)** TTUHSC on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are delayed until **00:00AM/PM** due to **(INCIDENT)**. All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit www.ttuhschool.edu/emergency for updates.

Under this scenario, on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are delayed until the stated start time, with only designated essential personnel reporting to work as may be necessary prior to the stated start time. This includes the cancelling of any departmental meetings, clinical appointments, and on-campus classes that may have been scheduled prior to the stated start time. Remote curricular activities will continue as provided by each school.

(2) **On-Campus Operations, Activities, Classes and Clinics Canceled, BUT Remote Curricular Activities Continue**

STAT!Alert: **(CAMPUS)** TTUHSC on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are canceled on **(DATE)** due to **(INCIDENT)**. All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit www.ttuhschool.edu/emergency for updates.

Under this scenario, on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are canceled for the stated day, with only designated essential personnel reporting to work as may be necessary. This includes the cancelling of any departmental meetings, clinical appointments, and on-campus classes that may have been scheduled this day. Remote curricular activities will continue as provided by each school.

(3) **All On-Campus Operations, Activities, Classes and Clinics as Well as Remote Curricular Activities are Canceled**

STAT!Alert: **(CAMPUS)** TTUHSC on-campus operations, activities, classes, and clinics as well as remote curricular activities are canceled on **(DATE)** due to **(INCIDENT)**. Please check for further communications from your school. Visit www.ttuhschool.edu/emergency for updates.

Under this scenario, on-campus operations, activities, classes, and clinics as well as remote curricular activities are canceled for the day, with only designated essential personnel reporting to work as may be necessary. This includes the cancelling of any departmental meetings, clinical appointments, on-campus classes, and remote curricular activities that may have been scheduled for this day.

(4) **Early Closure, BUT Remote Curricular Activities Continue**

STAT!Alert: **(CAMPUS)** TTUHSC on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics will close today at **00:00AM/PM** due to **(INCIDENT)**. All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit www.ttuhschool.edu/emergency for updates.

Under this scenario, on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics will be stopped at the stated closure time, with only designated essential personnel reporting to work as may be necessary after the stated closure time. This includes the cancelling of any departmental meetings, clinical appointments, and on-campus classes that may have

been scheduled after the stated closure time. Remote curricular activities will continue as provided by each school.

- b. Modifications may be made to the above notification scenarios, as necessary, in the event it is determined by the President, or designee, based on the recommendation provided by the IRT that clinical operations or Managed Care Units require alternate closure or delay schedules.
- c. Notifications regarding weather closures or delays will be announced no later than 6:00am when possible.
- d. In addition to a STAT!Alert notification, notifications regarding closures or delays will be provided on the TTUHSC website and social media pages as well as shared with local media outlets as feasible.
- e. Unless specific announcements extending cancellations are made, university operations, clinics, and curricular activities that were cancelled under this Operating Policy will resume the next business day.
- f. To ensure that notification of closures and delays are received by members of the university, all employees and students are urged to enroll in the STAT!Alert system as part of their onboarding process at <https://app4.ttuhscc.edu/hscprofile/>

5. Identification of *Essential Personnel*

- a. It will be the responsibility of the President, vice presidents, provost, and deans to assure that by September 1 of each year, administrators in their organizations notify in writing those persons designated as essential utilizing [Attachment A - Essential Personnel Designation and Notification Form](#). The Human Resources Office will be informed of the personnel designated as essential. Forms will be placed in the team members' personnel file.
- b. Administrative officers may release *essential personnel* from their responsibilities to report for work on an individual basis if their services are not needed during a specific emergency. Administrative officers may designate other personnel as essential on an individual basis for a specific emergency if their services are needed by providing notice to the employee.

6. Compensation of Team Members for Emergency Leave

Only closures approved by the President, or designee, are eligible for emergency leave designation. Refer to the Human Resources Administrative Procedures webpage for time keeping instructions.

7. Announcement of Policy

The Chief of Staff will prepare and distribute to the President's Advisory Board at TTUHSC a general information memorandum on this policy by November 1 of each year (See [Attachment B](#))

8. Right to Change Policy

TTUHSC reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without consent of employees.