

Oberlin College Standard Operating Procedure	SOP No. 1120-001
	January 2013: REVISED Jan 2014; Jan 2021

TITLE: Adverse Weather Conditions/Emergency Situations

During periods of inclement weather or other emergency situations it is the goal of Oberlin College to maintain normal operations and educational processes of the College while remaining sensitive to safety concerns. Therefore, when school is in session, staff should expect that the College will remain open and fully operational to the extent possible in order to meet the needs of those we serve.

Under extraordinary conditions, however, the College may: (1) Cancel classes; (2) Declare a level 1, 2 or 3 weather status and cease non-essential operations either prior to normal operating hours or during operating hours while asking essential function personnel to remain and/or report for work.

Status - Level 1 Conditions:

- Roadways are hazardous, drive with extreme care.
- Extreme weather conditions are likely to develop within eight (8) hours (for example; storm warning issued or extremely cold temperatures or wind chill are predicted).

Non-essential personnel should determine for themselves whether they should report to work and can do so safely.

Failure to report under Level 1 conditions will require the use of benefit time should the employee wish to be paid and will not be counted adversely for adherence to attendance standards.

Status - Level 2 Conditions:

- Roadways are hazardous with blowing, drifting snow and/or flooding.
- Extreme weather conditions exist (i.e. extremely cold temperatures or wind chill)
- Motorists should use extreme caution. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be on the roads.

Non-essential personnel should determine for themselves whether they should report to work and can do so safely.

Failure to report under Level 2 conditions will require the use of benefit time should the employee wish to be paid and will not be counted adversely for adherence to attendance standards.

Status - Level 3 Conditions:

- Roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. Violators may be cited.
- Other conditions specific to Oberlin College that would not be conducive to employees reporting to or remaining at work (for example; lack of heat, power or water) or any other situation as determined by the President)

It would be impossible to identify all emergency situations that could conceivably occur. Therefore, it is important to note that the guidelines set forth in this policy are subject to change based on the circumstances of the specific emergency situation, its duration, the time of year in which it occurs and the number of students on campus.

Non-essential personnel are strongly encouraged to remain home and stay off of roadways unless absolutely necessary. Essential personnel should determine for themselves whether they are able to report to work safely.

Failure to report under Level 3 conditions will require the use of benefit time should the employee wish to be paid and will not be counted adversely for adherence to attendance standards.

COLLEGE OPERATIONAL STATUS

Class Cancellation: This status may apply when severe weather conditions or other emergency situation interferes with the ability of students or faculty to attend class. Normally in this event, all staff members are expected to report to work as usual, even though classes and external events are cancelled.

Campus Closing: This status may apply when unusual, extreme conditions exist and only when students are absent from campus or if local roads are officially closed. If the College closes, employees are not to report, except for certain employees necessary to protect the College, maintain life safety systems and provide for student needs. Essential function employees will be notified in response to each specific emergency. Under certain circumstances, a limited number of non-essential function personnel may also be asked to report based on the type of emergency and the specific needs of the campus.

In the event that a closing is announced after employees have already reported to work, all but essential personnel may leave the campus however; they are not required to do so. Essential personnel will be expected to remain until relieved or notified by their supervisors to leave.

Decisions to Close the College: Decisions to close the College will be made by the President or the Vice President for Finance in consultation with other College executives as needed.

Communication and Information Sources Concerning College Status: An official announcement will be communicated to all employees via the College communications channels. Essential function personnel identified in this policy will be expected to report, unless told not to do so by a supervisor.

Reliable College status information is available through the following sources:

1. Oberlin's home web page: www.oberlin.edu
2. The Department of Human Resources: (440) 775-8430
3. Safety and Security: (440) 775-8444

Closing information is also provided to local and regional news outlets. In the event of College power failure, they may be the only operational information sources.

Compensation During an Emergency Closing: Hourly employees will be paid only for those hours actually worked. Employees who do not report to work or who leave work early prior to the completion of their shift shall be required to use benefit time in order to be paid. In the rare instance when an employee has exhausted all available benefit time, or for newly hired staff who do not yet have benefit time available to them, an advance against future benefit allocation may be requested.

Members of the College's collective bargaining units should also consult the most up-to-date language concerning protocols for their attendance during campus closures.

Safety: Notwithstanding College status, employees, even essential personnel, must make individual decisions about whether to travel between home and the College or between the College and home based on local conditions. As a general rule, all employees, regardless of position, are requested to give as much notice of their absence as possible.

Localized and Temporary Closing: Extreme conditions occasionally may make working conditions in a particular building or location inconvenient or unsafe. Supervisors or employees in the affected unit(s) should discuss the problem with the Chief Facilities Officer and the Department of Human Resources. If the problem cannot be resolved, the supervisor may request permission of the Division Head and Deputy Human Resources Officer (aka, Manager of Labor Relations) to temporarily close the area or location or to relocate staff to another location, if possible. Building closures must be authorized by the appropriate Dean in consultation with the Vice President for Finance & Administration, and the President.

States of Emergency: States of emergency may be declared by officials of the City of Oberlin, Lorain County, and/or the State of Ohio. A state of emergency is implemented by accompanying executive orders that declare a curfew, prohibit travel, control traffic, designate areas as emergency shelters, and close public places of assembly. States of emergency do not necessarily mean that roads are closed, unless so stated. Even if roads are closed, essential personnel and employees asked to report by their supervisors or other management persons should report, but only if they are able to travel safely between home and the College.

Essential Function Personnel: Essential function personnel are identified by job title and department below.

Administration:

- Dean(s)

Campus Safety:

- Director and/or Assistant Director of Safety and Security
- Campus Safety and Security Officers
- Safety and Security Communications Officers
- Museum Safety and Security Officers

Facilities:

- Management staff will be on site and will call or otherwise notify tradespeople of their essential status on a case-by-case basis.
- Central Heating Plant Staff and Supervisor during winter months.
- Grounds Staff, as necessary, and Supervisor.
- Contracted custodial staff in sufficient numbers to safely and effectively maintain operations as determined by the Chief Facilities Officer.

Campus Dining:

- Contracted dining staff in sufficient numbers to safely and effectively maintain operations as determined by the College.

Main Library:

- Personnel in sufficient numbers to safely and effectively maintain operations as determined by the Director of Libraries

Phillips Gymnasium:

- Personnel in sufficient numbers to safely and effectively maintain operations as determined by the Delta Lodge Director

Emergency Procedures: For all life-threatening emergencies on campus, employees should call 911 immediately. For a non-life-threatening emergency, employees should call Campus Safety and Security at extension 5-8444.

Oberlin College has an Emergency Response Plan which is available from the Environmental Health and Safety Administrative Manager in Facilities Operations. In addition, the College has installed an Emergency Alert System that provides notification of a life-threatening campus situation by telephone and email.

