

HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES

Chapter 4	General Personnel Policies	Effective:	November 2000
Section 4.7	Work and Leave Administration	Revised:	February 2007
Policy 4.7.16	Staffing During Adverse Conditions	Responsibility:	Executive Vice President for Facility Planning and Operations

STAFFING DURING ADVERSE CONDITIONS

Policy

For the purposes of this policy, the term adverse condition implies inclement weather or other factors (e.g., weather, bomb threats, power outage, etc.) that have an actual or potential harmful effect on the delivery of the Health Science Center’s operations. The Health Science Center at San Antonio, Harlingen or Laredo will remain open during adverse conditions unless conditions are such that:

1. The majority of students, faculty, and staff are unable to traverse city streets or other thoroughfares leading to the campus;
2. A fuel curtailment to the Health Science Center causes a critical shortage of energy; and/or,
3. Portions of the campus are determined to be unsafe.

In the case of severe weather, the President or designee determines the status of the campus being open. For other types of adverse conditions, the President with the advice and counsel of the remaining members of the Executive Committee determine the procedures to be followed based on the existing circumstances.

Applicability

This policy applies to all faculty, administrative and professional (A&P), and classified employees of the Health Science Center.

Essential and Non-Essential Personnel

The Vice Presidents and the Deans will determine in advance, through their respective department heads, those individuals who are considered to have “essential responsibilities.” These individuals are expected to report for duty in adverse conditions unless specifically told otherwise by their Chair or Director.

When an adverse condition occurs such that the majority of faculty, staff, and students may be unable to travel to the Health Science Center, the Executive Vice President for Facility Planning and Operations, in consultation with the Chief of Police, will make a decision as to a specific course of action. Once a decision has been made, the Director of News and Information in the Office of External Affairs will

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take appropriate action in accordance with the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), [Section 8.3.1](#), “Emergency Closings”. All individuals previously designated as having “essential responsibilities” are expected to come to the Health Science Center to carry out those responsibilities at the earliest time that travel may be undertaken. Such employees will earn equivalent time off for the hours that they work.

During an adverse condition that is localized and prevents some, but not the majority to travel to any of the Health Science Center campuses, members of the faculty, staff, and students are expected to make every reasonable effort to meet their assigned responsibilities. Those who believe they cannot travel safely are expected to notify their immediate supervisors by telephone at the earliest time that such restrictions are known. Hours missed by employees under these circumstances will be handled as any other absence and will be charged to leave or reduction of pay.

Communications

When an adverse condition occurs other than severe weather such that all or part of the campus is determined to be unsafe, personnel should be notified through predetermined departmental communication mechanisms of work requirements.

In the event that the President or his/her delegate declares an “extreme weather closure”, the Director of News and Information in the Office of External Affairs will be notified immediately. In turn, the Director of News and Information in the Office of External Affairs will notify the University Police, Communications Technology, and the news media (the major radio and TV stations). In general, such notification will be made by e-mail. With worsening weather conditions during a work day, no one other than the President or his/her delegate is authorized to excuse employees from work for such weather conditions, unless such absences are charged to leave or reductions in pay.

During periods of severe or extreme weather conditions, it may be assumed that the Health Science Center is open, unless an announcement is specifically included otherwise in the news media. Special inquiries may be directed to University Police, or employees can call 567-SNOW for closures during extreme weather conditions.