

**UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
SMH/MEDICAL CENTER, MEDICAL SCHOOL,
RIVER CAMPUS, EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC, SOUTH CAMPUS & MEMORIAL ART GALLERY
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

SUBJECT: Weather Emergency Plan (pages 5-10) not posted on the Web

DATE:
3/18

NUMBER:
6.1

APPROVED BY: Mark Cavanaugh

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**UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
POLICY FOR OPERATION IN ADVERSE WEATHER**

For the purpose of being able to provide patient care and the need for students to be housed and fed, it is the policy of the University of Rochester to remain in operation and to continue regular services and schedules regardless of adverse weather conditions. Exceptions to the policy may be made on a case-by-case basis and can include decisions to reduce services and/or staff levels.

UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES

Cancel or Curtailment decisions: The decision to cancel or curtail services at the University is made by the President and the Provost with the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance. The abovementioned group, whenever possible when making the decision to cancel daytime classes/events should be communicated to the Office of University Communications by 5:30 AM to insure timely announcement before 8 AM classes. If possible, the decision to cancel evening classes/events should be made by 2 PM. If significantly worsening weather conditions occur after classes/events have begun for the day, decisions concerning early curtailment of University operations will be made by officials at least 2 hours in advance of the canceling or curtailment, whenever possible.

Non-essential: Staff on duty when the decision has been made to implement the cancellation or curtailment decision, and who in the judgment of their department heads are performing non-critical services, will be offered the option to go home early. The Vice President for Communications or designate will serve as liaison for communication purposes.

Essential staff: If it is decided some cancellation or curtailment is in order, the objective of the University is to continue certain services with as normal a staff level as possible. In general, those services are defined as those of the Medical Center (inclusive of ambulatory practices), Public Safety; Dining; Housing; and Facilities Services as determined by the Associate Vice President for University Facilities and Services. Personnel in those areas are deemed to be "essential staff". (Other staff may be designated as "essential" by their supervisor(s). Refer to HR Policy 115.)

Personal safety: The University will take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe environment. If an individual feels it is unsafe to travel to class or work, he/she should not travel, regardless of whether classes/events are canceled. The University asks students to make an effort to notify professors/instructors of their planned absence, and for employees, to notify their supervisor of their intention to use PTO or vacation credits as appropriate.

Weather Assessments: Weather reports are monitored continuously by designated University officials at all times. Assessments involve the severity of the weather conditions, the National Weather Service prediction of weather outcome, expected duration of the storm, vehicle travel conditions both on campus and municipal roads, conditions on sidewalks and parking lots.

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Declaration	Criteria	Action
Advisory	Snow up to 4" or blowing snow with reduced visibility and winds up to 34mph or ice accumulations up to ¼" or sleet ¼" to 1" or wind gusts 40-58 mph or hail up to 1" in diameter.	Monitored by Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S).
Watch	Issued when warning criteria may be met 12 – 48 hours in the future or conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms or tornadoes.	Monitored by EH&S. For snow events of 6-12" - Facilities pre-meeting with grounds crew. As advised by EH&S, Communications "Watch" message goes out to University community.
Warning	Snow > 4" in 12 hours or >6" in 24 hours, or heavy snow with winds 25-34 mph or snow with sustained wind of >35 mph or hail with wind gusts > 58 mph, or ice accumulations >1/4", or sustained winds > 45 mph winds for 1 hour or winds >58 mph.	Monitored by EH&S. For snow events approaching >12" or snow rates >2"/hour or travel advisory or state of emergency issued open the Monroe County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). For several trees down and widespread power outages open the UR EOC. For snow events Communications "Warning" message goes out.

DIVISION, SCHOOL or DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE:

Each Division, School, Academic Department or Administrative unit that decides to curtail, cancel or close their operation must request approval from their immediate supervisor (VP, Provost, Dean, or President) prior to implementation. Each Division/School/Department should have its own approved policy on curtailment, cancellation or closing, including a communication plan.

COMMUNICATIONS:

University-wide: The Office of University Communications will be responsible for initiating broad-scale announcements about curtailments or closings as soon as possible:

- a) via the AlertUR emergency notification system (E-mail, SMS text, phone calls)
- b) on the University of Rochester Information Line at 275-6111;
- c) on the University's Web home page (www.rochester.edu).
- d) via media (television, radio, newspaper) releases

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e) via University social media channels

Offices that need a change in the announcements on the University of Rochester Information Line should request it through the Spokesperson in the Office of University Communications (281-9495).

Initiating communication: Communication regarding cancellation or curtailment-of-services decisions or emergency responses will be initiated by the decision-makers noted above. It is expected notifications will be made through normal reporting channels to the deans or directors of the various divisions (for instance, Eastman School of Music; School of Medicine and Dentistry; Arts, Sciences and Engineering; River Campus Libraries; Simon School, Warner School, Memorial Art Gallery, Laboratory for Laser Energetics) and then through their offices to all faculty, staff, and student members of those respective University communities. Notification also will be made to the directors of Central Administration departments for further dissemination to those respective staff.

Divisional and central departmental communication plans: Each division is expected to have in place a procedure for communicating with its departments and with its faculty, staff, and students. In addition, each school or academic department or administrative unit, whether or not it is likely to remain open during curtailment of services, should have a plan for communicating any changes or important messages to members of that department. This plan should include a designated “communicator” with whom the department’s faculty/staff/students should be in contact to give and receive instructions.

Classes: Individual class cancellations do not require broadcast across the University. Faculty members should make note to their classes that under almost all circumstances classes will meet as scheduled as defined in the course syllabus. Faculty members needing to cancel their own classes should notify their department Administrator/Chair. If there is a question about a particular class, the departmental office should be contacted.

Programs, Activities, or Campus Events: In case of inclement weather that does not warrant cancellation of an activity/program, the faculty/staff member in charge of the activity/program will contact Facilities Customer Service Center (273-4567) to ensure the Grounds Department clears appropriate lots and sidewalks.

For weekend events or activities, if a decision is made before the end of the workday on Friday to cancel a weekend activity/program, advise the Office of University Communications to communicate the cancellation. If the decision is made on Saturday or Sunday, the faculty/staff member in charge should attempt to contact the organizer or participants individually to announce the cancellation and post building notices, if possible.

Direct Patient Care Employees:

All Medical Center employees with direct patient care duties – whether at Elmwood Avenue or any off-site location – are considered essential staff and are required to report even during severe weather unless notified otherwise by their supervisor. If they are unable to report to work or are unsure of their status, they must contact their supervisor.

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These policies are in place to ensure that our patients receive the medical care and treatments they need. If patients begin to cancel appointments, practice administrators should work with remaining patients to realign their schedules (i.e., bring patients in earlier), but should not cancel any appointments. Staff may be sent home early using PTO if patients have cancelled their afternoon appointments and staff are not needed for other department activities. If you must cancel a clinic, please email Ambulatory Team Weather Alert from the URM Global Address book so we have a full understanding of the status of our clinical operations.

Indirect Patient Care Employees:

All employees who work on the Medical Center campus – regardless if they provide direct patient care -- are considered essential staff and are required to report even during severe weather unless notified otherwise by their supervisor. If they are unable to report to work or are unsure of their status, they must contact their supervisor.

If you manage staff in an off-site area with non-patient care duties, work with your staff to ensure you have adequate coverage to continue work critical to our operations, and refer to PTO guidance.

Caveats: There will be occasions when weather conditions, although not severe enough for implementation of the entire plan, could warrant partial implementation of the plan depending on specific circumstances. Such circumstances might be, the event impacted a local geographical location, or will not permit staff who live long distances to make it to work or make it home from work, or live in areas that are prone to more severe weather conditions.