

**BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Policy and Procedures Manual**

SUBJECT: Emergency Campus Closures

NUMBER: 6:12

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Office: Office of Facility Services

Source: [SDBOR Policy 4.1.11](#)

Associated Documents: [Emergency Campus Closure Procedures - Phone Tree](#) (only the individuals on the tree are able to view this document)

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1. Purpose

This policy implements [SDBOR Policy 4.1.11](#) and sets forth the guidelines for canceling classes or closing the University due to emergencies, including inclement weather.

2. Definitions

- a. Emergency: any natural, nuclear, man-made or war-related disaster, any health-related catastrophe, or any phenomenon which disrupts SDBOR or University facilities or operations and as set forth in the University Emergency Management Plan.
- b. Essential Personnel: employees designated by the University Continuity of Operations Plans as approved by the University President, or designee, as being needed for work during a particular emergency so essential functions can be performed.
- c. Non-Essential Personnel: employees designated by the University Continuity of Operations Plans pursuant to the University Emergency Management Plan as not being necessary for work during a particular emergency or employees so designated by the University President, or designee, in a time of emergency.
- d. Non-Instructional Staff: administrative staff members, CSA staff members who are not assigned to classroom or instructional laboratory support activities, and faculty members whose primary responsibilities are for research or service.
- e. University or University campus: includes both the Spearfish and Rapid City campuses.

### 3. Policy

- a. The University remains open in all but the most extreme circumstances. Unless an emergency closing is announced, all employees including faculty are expected to report to work. Weather conditions vary greatly throughout the region, so during inclement weather, all employees are urged to use their own discretion in deciding whether they can safely commute to work.
- b. Campus closings may occur for reasons articulated in [SDBOR Policy 4.1.11](#), including emergencies where law enforcement prohibits travel; the facility is damaged or destroyed due to an emergency; an emergency has made an office or function non-essential; law enforcement or the Department of Public Safety deems the campus a danger and orders evacuation; or inclement weather jeopardizes individual safety and it is determined too dangerous to allow commuting to campus.
- c. University emergency closings are subject to the requirements of this policy, and the procedures will be followed, as described below.
- d. Authority to Close the University
  - i. The decision to close the University (including both Spearfish and Rapid City) or have a late start for an emergency including inclement weather will be made by the University President or, in his/her absence, the presiding University officer, in consultation with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost), Public Safety Officer and the Associate Vice President of Facilities & Sustainability (AVP of Facilities), or designee.
  - ii. A decision to close the University campus should be coordinated and communicated to all partner institutions at BHSU-Rapid City and to South Dakota Mines.
  - iii. Emergency closings should be continuously re-evaluated during the day so regular business can resume as soon as possible. The University website,

campus alert system and/or email should be used to communicate the decision to reopen.

e. Class Cancellation

- i. Classes may be canceled for emergencies, yet the University (both Spearfish and Rapid City) may remain open. When the decision has been made to cancel classes, all non-instructional staff are expected to report to work, but employees are urged to use their discretion in deciding whether they can safely commute to work.
- ii. The decision to cancel classes at either the Spearfish or Rapid City sites due to an emergency, including inclement weather, will be made by the University President or, in their absence, the presiding officer, in consultation with the Provost, Public Safety Officer, and the AVP of Facilities, or designee.
- iii. A decision to cancel classes should be coordinated with other campuses that have employees or students in the same geographic area. At a minimum, notification to cancel classes should be communicated to all partner institutions at BHSU-Rapid City and South Dakota Mines.
- iv. Emergency class cancellations should be continuously re-evaluated during the day so regular business can resume as soon as possible. The University website, campus alert system, and/or email should be used to communicate the decision to reopen.

f. Employee Compensation

- i. When an emergency closing, including for inclement weather, has *not* been declared, employees who do not report to work or wish to leave early have the option of taking annual leave, accrued compensatory time, leave without pay, or adjusting the work week. Supervisory approval is required for any of the options. Employees who feel they cannot safely reach the worksite shall take appropriate action to notify their supervisor that they will be absent from work.
- ii. In the event the offices at the University campus are closed due to an emergency, including inclement weather, the following provisions apply:

1. Non-essential personnel will be granted paid administrative leave.
2. Essential personnel must report to work at prearranged worksites, unless otherwise instructed. The procedure for identifying these employees will be established by University's Continuity of Operations Plan. Those overtime eligible employees that are required to work will receive payment for the administrative leave hours (at a straight rate) plus the hours they were required to work.
3. If paid administrative leave is not approved and an employee is unable to reach work or wants to leave the office early due to an emergency, the employee may do so with the approval of the supervisor. Hourly employees must use vacation leave, leave without pay, or adjust work hours during the remainder of the work week with the approval of the supervisor.
4. Employees will not receive administrative leave pay in excess of the scheduled shift or more than 40 hours per week.
5. Only permanent employees are eligible for paid administrative leave. Seasonal and temporary employees are not eligible for any paid leave, including paid administrative leave.
6. Only employees who were scheduled to work during the closing of the University campus are eligible for paid administrative leave. Employees who were on any type of approved leave, including leave without pay, may not change hours to paid administrative leave.
7. Administrative leave will be granted only for the number of hours the University campus was administratively closed, not to exceed the number of hours for which the employee was scheduled to work.
8. Permanent employees with hire dates on the date of office administrative closings will be paid administrative leave.
9. Salaried employees are paid the same amount whether they have administrative leave or not. However, salaried employees who

were absent for any period are required to record the number of hours of paid administrative leave.

#### 4. Procedures

##### a. Communication of Campus Closing or Class Cancellations

- i. The University President, or designee, shall ensure that the SDBOR Executive Director or presiding officer is notified of the intent to close a campus (including both Spearfish & Rapid City campuses) or cancel classes and the time and duration of the event.
- ii. The Associate Vice President of Facilities & Sustainability, or designee, is responsible for notifying the following people ([Emergency Campus Closure Procedures - Phone Tree](#)):
  1. Notify the Assistant Director of Facilities Services, or designee of the closure type, time and duration. The Assistant Director will make the announcement public via the campus alert system -
  2. Notify the Governor's Office of Emergency Management of campus closure or canceled classes due to an emergency, including inclement weather.
  3. Notify the Director of Public Safety, or designee, of the closure type, time and duration. The Director of Public Safety, or designee, will communicate the closure details to the Spearfish Police Department. No notification is needed for the Rapid City Police Department.
  4. Notify the Senior Director of Marketing and Communications, or designee. The Senior Director will post the closure details on the BHSU website, main social media accounts, and notify local radio and tv stations.

#### 5. Responsible Administrator

The Vice President for Finance & Administration is responsible for the ad hoc and annual review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of this policy.

SOURCE: Adopted by President 11/23/2021 Reviewed 2025.03.04