CHANGE IN SCHEDULED OPERATIONS – POLICY AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

Summary

There may be instances when conditions require a change in scheduled operations resulting in class cancellations, an early departure, or a closing*.

Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The University at Buffalo requires scheduled operations to be continued as long as possible, essential University services to be maintained, and University employees to remain on duty when necessary to perform essential services even under extraordinary circumstances. However, when conditions become so severe that the University cannot operate effectively, the President or designee may make a decision to change scheduled operations resulting in class cancellations, an early departure, or a closing*.

* Only the governor can officially declare that the University at Buffalo is closed and only the governor can authorize employees to remain away from work without charge to leave accruals.

Essential Services

Services related to the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and guests, and the security and maintenance of facilities are essential and must continue in spite of severe conditions.

Employees of University Facilities including the Heating Plant and Chilled Water Plant, University Police, Residence Halls and Apartments, Animal Care, Food Service, Student Wellness Team, and others who maintain the University’s essential services, provide food for dormitory residents, and clear the parking lots and roadways are required to remain on duty or make every effort to report to work unless directed or permitted to do otherwise. Supervisors may also determine, based on the nature of the event, which employees are essential. Employees who provide essential services should be identified and notified in order that they understand who must remain at or report to work in the event of a change in scheduled operations. Only employees who provide essential services should report to work in such an event.
Employee Absences

According to New York State policy, employee absences resulting from a change in scheduled operations including class cancellations, early departures, and closings must be charged to appropriate leave accruals. An employee who does not have sufficient leave accruals may borrow from future accruals. Only the governor can officially declare that the University at Buffalo is closed and only the governor can authorize employees to remain away from work without charge to leave accruals.

Any person who reports to work will not be deprived of the opportunity to work. If it is determined during the course of a workday that the University cannot operate effectively, employees are not required to leave at that moment; employees may leave then or any time thereafter. Only the time that an employee is absent is charged to leave accruals.

There is no guarantee that those employees who arrive at the campus or those who stay after a change in scheduled operations announcement will be able to work at their usual work places. Adequate supervision may not be available or the building in which the individual usually works may not be open. Provision should be made for alternate campus work locations and alternate work for those who do get to the campus but who cannot go to their regular work places or cannot perform their regular work assignments.

Change in Scheduled Operations - Considerations

The decision to change scheduled operations resulting in class cancellations, an early departure, or a closing is based on various factors including:

- local weather conditions
- local safety conditions
- travel bans/restrictions implemented by Erie County, the Town of Amherst, and/or the City of Buffalo
- ability to provide bus transportation within and between the campuses
- ability to keep the campus roadways and parking lots open
- directives issued by the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations.

There may be instances when conditions require a change in operations for only one campus (North, South, or Downtown). In addition, there may be instances when Erie County, the Town of Amherst, and/or the City of Buffalo implement travel bans/restrictions but the University decides not to change scheduled operations. In these instances, the Communication Plan will ensure widespread coverage of the information.

Communication Plan

The University at Buffalo is committed to providing timely and accurate information to faculty, staff, students, and the Western New York community. The Communication Plan includes a variety of communication vehicles to ensure widespread coverage of the information.

A change in scheduled operations including class cancellations, early departure, and closing announcements will be made on:

- 645-NEWS, the UB information phone line
- WBFO-FM 88.7, the official UB information radio station
- www.buffalo.edu – UB homepage
- http://www.buffalo.edu/aboutmyub/, MyUB, a web-based personal portal
- local broadcast media
• 1620 AM, campus traffic radio broadcast
• 645-2345, Public Safety campus condition phone line
• if appropriate, all campus email (faculty, staff, student).

Unit Planning
Units are required to develop an individual internal communication plan. Such plans should be tested and clearly communicated to all appropriate individuals.

Employees who provide essential services should be identified and notified in order that they understand who must remain at or report to work in the event of a change in scheduled operations. Supervisors may determine, based on the nature of the event, which employees are essential. Only employees who provide essential services should report to work in such an event.

Any person who reports to work will not be deprived of the opportunity to work. Provision should be made for alternate campus work locations and alternate work for those who do get to the campus but who cannot go to their regular work places or cannot perform their regular work assignments.

APPLICABILITY
This policy applies to all university employees and operations.

DEFINITIONS

University Closing - only the governor can officially declare that the University at Buffalo is closed and only the governor can authorize employees to remain away from work without charge to leave accruals.

RESPONSIBILITY

University Human Resources
Inform State University of New York System Administration of a decision to change scheduled operations.

University Facilities, Environment Health and Safety Services
Annually review and update this policy and issue a campus-wide communication.

Contact Information
University Facilities
Environment Health and Safety Services
220 Winspear Avenue, South Campus, Buffalo, NY 14215
Phone: (716) 829-3301
Fax: (716) 829-2704
Related Information

Related Links:
  UB Policy Library

Presidential Approval

Signed by President John B. Simpson  
2/19/07

John B. Simpson, President  
Date