

**Policy Title:** University Closings, Delays and Class Cancellations

**Policy Category:** University Policy

**Policy Owner:** Operations & Human Resources

**Review Period:** Every Three (3) Years

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2016

**Policy Homepage:**

**Resources and Related University Policies:**

FAQ – University Closings, Delays and Class Cancellations

## **Policy Summary**

This policy covers University closings, delays, class cancellation procedures and notifications, and staff compensation.

## **Scope**

Drake University faculty, staff, students and visitors. This policy may not apply to grant funded programs due to operational needs, please check with appropriate administration.

## **Definitions**

- Essential personnel – employees designated as essential for safety, security, or operational needs.
- Non-exempt - employees are paid on an hourly basis and are entitled to overtime pay.
- Exempt - employees are paid an established salary and are expected to fulfill the duties of their position regardless of hours worked.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure employees, students, and visitors to Drake University know how closings, delays, and class cancellations are communicated, the expectations during these times, and employee expectations for being at work and compensation in the various scenarios.

## **Policy**

Official class cancellations, university delays or closings are infrequent events. In certain circumstances such as inclement weather, power outages or other extreme conditions the Provost or President will make the decision regarding class cancellations, university delays or closings after consulting with appropriate members of the University community.

It is important to distinguish between class cancellations, university delays and closings.

Class Cancellations: Under some conditions, Drake classes will be canceled; however, the University will remain open to maintain student access to most university services.

University Delays: Under some conditions, a delay in opening of the University is made. In these circumstances, weather and other reports suggest that conditions will improve early in the day. The delay allows students, staff, and faculty additional time to arrive at work or class; limits the number of people commuting during the rush hour and allows for clearing of parking lots.

University Closings: In circumstances where the University is closed, no classes are held and most offices are closed. There are certain essential personnel who must report for work even when the University is closed so the institution can serve the residential students. Their respective departments identify these personnel groups. This decision is made when extreme conditions that are widespread in the city or area threaten life. Often the decision is the result of recommendations from state and local police and safety officials.

Under some conditions, certain offices will be operating only under limited hours even when the University is

closed. These specifics are included in the closing and/or cancellation announcements.

## **Decision to Cancel, Delay or Close**

Day Classes: All efforts are made to make the decision by 6:00 a.m. so the information can be disseminated to media outlets and the University's cancellation line before most people begin their trip to campus.

Evening Classes: All efforts are made to make the decision by 2:30 p.m. so the information can be posted on media outlets before most people begin their trip to campus. For these purposes, classes that begin after 4:30 p.m. are considered evening classes.

Other Circumstances: Require individual decisions and individual contacts by faculty, school, and college administrators, such as weekend workshops and classes that are off-site.

## **Notification Process**

The most accurate and detailed information can be found on the cancellation line, 271-4545, or on the Drake web site at [www.drake.edu](http://www.drake.edu). The local television and radio stations will also be notified.

## **Compensation (Pay) During Emergency Closings (Full-time and regular part-time staff)**

### Campus Closed

If you are a non-exempt employee, you are paid for hours worked. When an emergency condition arises while you are at work, and the University closes early, you are paid in full for that day. When an emergency condition arises prior to the start of your workday and the University is closed, you will be paid in full for that day. "Paid in full" means paid for the hours you were scheduled to work on the day of the closing.

In the event of an unusual emergency situation, causing the University to be closed for more than five (5) business days, the University reserves the right to revisit the provisions of this policy pertaining to continued pay status.

### Classes Cancelled, Campus Open (This section applies to non-bargaining unit staff employees only)

It is the expectation that staff (exempt and non-exempt) will make every reasonable and safe attempt to work when classes are cancelled and the campus is open. If you, in exercising your best judgment with respect to personal safety and after consulting with your manager, elect to leave work early, delay coming to campus, or not come in when classes are cancelled but university offices have not been closed, you will be paid in full for the hours scheduled but not worked. If work is available you may be asked to work from home during this time. Employees who are on sick leave, vacation or other paid time off on a day of closing or delay will not receive additional compensation.

### Early Start Time

Some employees with earlier starting times may not have closing information prior to the time they typically leave home for work. These employees should discuss with their managers the procedures for reporting to work on days when emergency conditions are likely to cause university offices to close. If business needs allow, managers may permit employees with early starting times to wait until the deadline for making an announcement has passed before leaving home for work.

### Essential Personnel

Employees designated as "essential personnel" may be required to work even when the University is closed. For normal emergency closings related to severe weather, such non-exempt essential personnel are paid double time for the greater of: actual hours worked during the closing period, or the equivalent number of paid time off hours provided to administrative staff during the closing period. For purposes of this policy, "closing period" shall begin in accordance with the closing time announced by the President (or the President's designee) and shall end at the time specified in the announcement for reopening. If not specified in the official closing announcement, the reopening time will be deemed to be 8:00 a.m. on the following day. Essential personnel

required to work during the period of official delay will be paid double time for the hours worked during the period of delay (i.e. from the beginning of the shift until the time of reopening.) Employees who are on sick leave, vacation or other paid time off on a day of closing or delay will not receive additional compensation.

For essential personnel working weekend shifts, normal emergency conditions relating to weather will result in the premium pay described in the paragraph above if the President (or the President's designee) determines that weather conditions were severe enough to warrant premium pay.

For unusual emergency situations not involving current weather conditions, the payment of essential personnel who are required to work will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but in no event will such pay be less than their regular straight-time rate.