

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

**Policy Summary:** This policy covers University closings, delays, class cancellation procedures, and notifications, and staff compensation.

**Policy Category:** Human Resources

**Policy Owner:** Human Resources

### **Policy Summary**

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

### **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; the expectations for working on campus and/or remotely in the various scenarios; and compensation practices in the various scenarios.

### **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.

### **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 cancelled. However, the University will remain open to maintain student access to most university services and assure the continuity of university business operations. Unless otherwise directed, faculty and staff are expected to work despite a class cancellation. Managers may authorize staff to work remotely when they deem it appropriate.

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 to campus, limiting the

number of people commuting during the rush hour and, in cases of snow, allowing for sidewalks and parking lots to be cleared. Some essential personnel, such as Facilities, may be required to report to work as normally scheduled or even early to address the conditions that prompted the delay.

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

Under some conditions, certain offices will operate remotely and/or from campus, typically 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, through the Bulldog Alert system, posted on the University Home Page: [www.drake.edu](http://www.drake.edu), 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**

In the event the decision is made to close campus, an announcement will be issued through the Bulldog Alert system and posted on the University Home Page: [www.drake.edu](http://www.drake.edu). Information can also be found on the cancellation line, 515-271-4545. The local television and radio stations will also be notified.

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

#### Campus Closed

**Non-exempt (hourly) employees:** If you are full-time non-exempt employee, you are typically only paid for hours actually worked. When an emergency condition arises while you are at work, and the University closes early, if you are able to complete the workday by working remotely, you will be expected to do so and will be paid at your normal rate of pay. Only those employees who are

unable to complete the workday working remotely, but who are required to leave campus, will receive compensation for the remainder of the day that is not worked.

When an emergency condition arises prior to the start of your workday and the University is closed, you will be expected to work remotely, if you are capable of doing so and will be paid at your normal rate of pay. Only those employees who are unable to work remotely and who are not permitted to come to campus to work, will be paid in full for the day, despite not working.

“Paid in full” means paid at the regular rate of pay for the hours you were scheduled to work on the day of the closing.

Essential personnel required to come to campus despite a delay or cancellation will be paid as outlined below.

**Exempt (salaried) employees:** If you are a full-time exempt employee, you are not paid hourly but through an annual salary, which is not adjusted for closures, cancellations, or delays. When an emergency condition arises while you are at work, and the University closes early, if you are able to complete the workday by working remotely, you will be expected to do so. With manager approval, employees may use personal time during a closure or cancellation, if they would prefer not to work during that time.

When an emergency condition arises prior to the start of your workday and the University is closed, you will be expected to work remotely, if you are capable of doing so. If you are unable to work remotely, your manager should approve the use of personal time or, if you have exhausted personal time, vacation time. Managers may also approve the use of flex time (i.e., you will not work during the closure or delay, but is approved to up the time within the same pay cycle, in lieu of working remotely or using paid time off).

Note that the [Personal Time Policy](#) establishes this form of paid time off to be used, specifically, when inclement weather impacts University operations. The adoption of remote work and/or flexible work may help employees avoid using personal time for inclement weather, if they prefer to reserve that paid leave for other reasons.

Part-time, Temporary, Student Workers: If you are a part-time or temporary employee or student worker who cannot work remotely during a closure, cancellation, or delay, you are not paid for the time not worked. You may talk to your manager about whether options exist for you to make up the time later in the same or subsequent workweek. Student workers are not to work more than twenty (20) hours in a workweek when school is in session.

Extended University Closures: 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 campus remains open, even if classes are cancelled. 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 to campus when classes are cancelled but university offices have not been closed, you will be expected to work remotely, if that is possible for your position. If campus is open but you are not able to work remotely and do not come to campus to work, you must notify your manager and use vacation or personal time to cover the time not worked. Employees who are on sick leave, vacation or other paid time off on a day of closing or delay will not receive additional compensation and will continue to use their leave to cover their absence.

**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. Another option for employees who can work remotely is to start their workday when it is scheduled but to work remotely until such time that it is safe to return to campus.

**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 who are required to come to campus 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 on campus 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).

Additional compensation for essential personnel only applies to those who are required to physically come to campus despite a delay or closing to perform their work. Essential personnel who are required to work during a delay or closure but who can do so remotely will receive their regular rate of pay.

Employees who are on sick leave, vacation or other paid time off on a day of closing or delay will not receive additional compensation and will continue to use their leave to cover their absence.

For essential personnel working on campus 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 on campus will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but in no event will such pay be less than their regular straight-time rate.

**Last Review Date:** January 2022

**Effective Date:** April 2016

**Resources and Related University Policies:**

[University Closings, Delays and Class Cancellations Frequently Asked Questions](#) (Applicable Resources section)