

EMERGENCY CLOSING

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/14/2025 (revised)

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 12/31/2027

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

I. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Northern Kentucky University (NKU) to continue normal operations during periods of inclement weather or unusual circumstances, except when the most severely adverse conditions exist.

In the event of severe weather or other unusual circumstances, the President, in consultation with Cabinet designee, will determine if classes and/or the University will close as a result of the emergency. Any change in normal operations will be communicated via Norse Alert. A separate decision for Chase College of Law will involve the Dean of the law school.

Normal Operations: Even though a severe weather event has occurred, steps have been taken to mitigate barriers, and conditions are determined safe to proceed with normal, routine, in-person academic instruction and university operations.

Plan A: Given existing weather conditions or the forecasted high probability of a severe weather event that may threaten human safety on campus, university operations will transition to remote/virtual for the day.

Instructors will determine, in their discretion, whether their synchronous classes can shift to remote/virtual instruction based on course needs and instructional feasibility. Asynchronous online classes will continue as scheduled. Faculty should provide written instructions in all syllabi to inform students of the procedures for learning continuity when a class has been cancelled for any reason.

Faculty are expected to ensure that course content is not materially affected by any cancelled classes. To ensure compliance with the federal definition of the credit hour, instructors should take appropriate steps to recover any instructional time lost due to the cancellation of the class meeting time. If inclement weather prevents a student from safely attending class, an instructor should provide the opportunity to make up work without penalty.

Students scheduled to work in clinical and similar off-campus settings should follow the instructions of their site supervisors regarding whether to report to the site.

Department heads/Supervisors will contact essential employees to assist on campus.

Designated remote capable employees should transition to remote work, monitor critical student and operational services, and maintain communication through email and other outlets.

Employees that are unable to work virtually will be compensated with Admin Release time.

Plan B: Due to severe weather conditions that may threaten human safety on campus and/or significant damage to university infrastructure, in-person as well as online synchronous and hybrid instruction are unavailable. Classes (other than online asynchronous) are cancelled and university operations are suspended for the day.

The ability for employees to work remotely is significantly prohibited or unavailable.

Essential employees should follow procedures established with their department/office supervisors for conditions that require their presence at work on campus.

All other employees should check/communicate with their supervisor and should not report to campus in-person.

Single Building Closures: For building closures not related to severe weather, Safety and Emergency management shall make a recommendation to the President regarding closure and operations for affected employees and students.

II. POLICY APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all NKU employees and operations.

III. DEFINITIONS

Essential Personnel - Employees deemed “essential personnel” may vary based on the reason for emergency closure. It is the responsibility of the department head to identify “essential personnel,” inform them of their responsibilities, and ensure they can work when needed.

Designated Remote Capable Employee – Employees deemed “designated remote capable employees” are able to complete the majority of their work via remote access for the continuity of university operations as determined by their supervisor.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees:

- Be available and able to work on campus, if deemed essential personnel by supervisor.
- Contact supervisor if unable to report to work.
- Log work hours properly.
- Be available for remote work if deemed designated remote capable employee by supervisor

Supervisors:

- Identify and communicate who are the essential personnel for their department.
- Identify and communicate who are the designated remote capable employees for their department.
- Develop remote work plan for all designated remote capable employees for occasions when the campus moves to virtual/remote operations and communicate expectations in advance with those employees when severe weather is anticipated.
- All Deans and Chairs are expected to work with their areas of responsibility to have readiness plans in place to continue teaching/learning on remote work days and be prepared to enact this option in a timely manner and communicate remote class requirements to all of their students.
- Ensure employees' hours are correctly recorded and their time approved.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Late for Work Allowances

When adverse weather conditions exist, delays could be expected for employees reporting to work. Reasonable judgment is to be exercised on the part of both employees and supervisors relative to on-time requirements. Authority for granting allowances for travel delays rests with supervisors and department heads.

B. Allowances for Caregiving and Connectivity

Employees should communicate any issues with virtual work due to caregiving or connectivity issues with their supervisor. Supervisors should discuss with employees what work they may be able to do in these cases when the university is operating under Plan A. Those employees will be compensated with Admin Release time.

C. Partial Day Closing

When the University operates on a delay, an employee may choose to take the remaining scheduled hours off of work utilizing their sick/vacation hours to cover the “open hours.” “Open hours” are the only hours that will be charged to sick/vacation. The “closed hours” will be charged to Admin Release Time. Supervisors should discuss with employees what “open hours” time they may be able to flex to later in the week or take the time as sick/vacation. Employees already scheduled for sick/vacation time during an emergency closing will be allowed to receive credit for the emergency closing and utilize admin release time rather than the scheduled sick/vacation time.

D. Essential Personnel

Because various critical operations such as Facilities Management or public safety require staffing at all times, certain “essential personnel” will need to work even when the rest of the university is closed. The number of “essential personnel” necessary may depend on whether the emergency situation occurs when classes are in progress.

Employees deemed “essential personnel” might vary based on the situation. It is the responsibility of the department head to determine who “essential personnel” are, to inform them of their obligations, and to ensure that they are able to be at work when needed. Examples may include but are not limited to, police, employees responsible for feeding animals in labs, employees responsible for working sports functions, and employees responsible for other facilities that may remain open.

E. Designated Remote Capable Employees

A designated remote capable employee is able to work via remote access to ensure continuity of university operations. This includes any employee who works fully or partially remote as part of their normal schedule.

F. Compensation for Emergency Closing

Non-exempt employees who are not “essential personnel” and are not required to work, or who arrive at work and are subsequently dismissed, shall receive regular pay for their normally scheduled work hours that occur during the emergency closing.

For employees not scheduled to work during the hours of the emergency closing, no additional pay or compensatory time off will be granted.

Time entry is to be coded as “Admin Release Time” with the appropriate dates and hours indicated.

Non-exempt “essential personnel” who are required to report during an emergency closing will be compensated at their regular hourly rate for all hours worked. Consideration may be given to premium pay (e.g., time-and-a-half pay) to recognize the added burden of reporting during such events):

- Essential non-exempt employees required to report to campus during Plan A would receive time-and-a-half (1.5x) their regular hourly rate for all hours worked on campus.
- These hours will count toward FLSA overtime calculations for work exceeding 40 hours in the week.

Temporary staff employees and student employees will not receive compensation for University emergency closings. However, if temporary employees or student employees work during an emergency closing, they shall be paid their regular straight-time rate for each hour worked during the emergency closing.

No additional compensation shall be granted to exempt or non-exempt designated remote capable employees who are required or permitted to work during an emergency closing (full or partial day).

G. Calculating Total Hours

All hours worked by non-exempt employees during emergency closings will be included in calculating total hours worked for overtime calculations (time and one half). Hours not worked but paid as emergency closing hours are excluded from this calculation.

Revision History

REVISION TYPE	MONTH/YEAR APPROVED
Revised Policy	November 14, 2025
Revision & Name Change to “Emergency Closing”	June 8, 2018
Revision	February 17, 2015
Revision – Emergency Closing/Severe Weather	February 26, 2000

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PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

Signature Cady Short-Thompson Date 11/14/25

Cady Short-Thompson, Ph.D.

BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVAL (IF APPLICABLE)

The Board of Regents approved this policy on ____/____/____.