



# University Closing Guidelines

## For Inclement Weather and Emergency Situations

**BACKGROUND:** In the event of inclement weather, declared emergency situations or other unusual conditions, it may be necessary to delay operations or close Mansfield University. The authority to suspend University operations is delegated to the President or his/her designee.

**PURPOSE:** This document conveys information regarding a clear and consistent procedure for identifying and communicating a University closing in order to safeguard the welfare of University students, employees, and guests during inclement weather, emergency situations, or hazardous environmental conditions, and to ensure continuation of essential operations.

The Guidelines address: those responsible to authorize University operations closings and cancellation of classes; partial and full-day suspension of University operations; maintenance of essential operations during University closings, delayed starts and early closing; cancellation, delay or suspension of athletic events, cultural production/exhibits, alumni development functions, student activities and employee leave applications.

The Guidelines apply to all employees and students at all University locations and comply with applicable PASSHE policies and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Directives as well as applicable collective bargaining agreements.

**PROCEDURE:** In the event of inclement weather, emergency situations or hazardous environmental conditions, Mansfield University may delay or cancel operations. The decision to delay or cancel operations will be made by the President (or his/her designee) in consideration of available information. If it is determined that conditions warrant action, one of the following decisions may be made regarding the status of classes and operation of the University and be considered an Official University Closing:

- **PARTIAL DAY CLOSING:** All classes, offices, buildings and events are cancelled/closed except residence halls and residence hall dining facilities until a time determined by the President (Delayed Opening) or University operations are suspended after the normal start of business (Early Closing). A decision to amend the Delayed Opening to closing the University for the day will be made as soon as feasible (no later than 10:00 a.m.) to ensure the safety and security of students, employees and guests. Notification will be made to students and employees in the usual method. Employees carrying out Essential Operations should report to work according to their normally scheduled work hours or earlier if directed by their supervisor(s).
- **FULL DAY CLOSING:** All classes, offices, buildings and events are cancelled/closed except resident halls and dining hall facilities. Employees carrying out Essential Operations must report to work as scheduled or earlier if directed by their supervisor(s). The University will strive to make its decision to close no later than two hours prior to the start of classes.

*Official University Closings begin at the time set forth in the formal closure announcement and end at the earlier of the time operations resume following a delayed opening or at 11:59 p.m. of the same day of the closure, unless extended by the President.*

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- **Event** – includes all Athletic Events (interscholastic, intramural or intercollegiate athletic competitions, taking place on or off campus, which involve University students and/or employees), Cultural Productions/Exhibits

(University related musical, theatrical, or artistic events or exhibits, occurring on or off campus, which involve University students or employees), Student Organization and Club events, Community events scheduled at a campus venue, and all other non-essential activities;

- **Delayed Opening** – Delay of the start of designated daytime University operations as a result of inclement weather or other emergency circumstances;
- **Early Closing** – Suspension of designated University operations prior to the regular closing time as a result of inclement weather or other emergency circumstances;
- **Employees Performing Essential Operations (EO)** – Those non-instructional employees designated by the President (or his/her designee) as essential to the continued operation of the University in the event of a Delayed Opening, Early Closing or Full Day Closing and who must report to work on a normal schedule or earlier if directed by their respective supervisor(s);
- **Essential Operations** – University non-instructional functions or services needed to maintain necessary provisions for students and/or employees despite or because of prevailing inclement weather or other emergency conditions. Essential Operations and Employees Performing Essential Operations will be determined by the President and his/her designee and published on the University website at the beginning of each academic year;
- **Full-Day Closing** – Complete suspension of all University Operations, other than those deemed essential, for a particular work shift or full day of operations;

#### **EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

##### **Employees Performing Essential Operations (EO Employees) – Providing Functions Considered Essential for Students and Employees**

- EO Employees will be expected to report for work or remain on campus during their normal work hours or for extended hours as directed by their supervisor during a University Partial or Full-Day Closing; leave will be charged for any scheduled hours not worked unless there is a valid and compelling reason for the absence.
- When an EO Employee anticipates late arrival for work due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, the employee must communicate with his/her supervisor prior to the beginning of the work shift the reason(s) for the expected length of delay and the expected time of arrival; leave will be charged for the scheduled hours not worked.
- When an EO Employee leaves in advance of his/her normally scheduled work hours during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, the EO Employee must communicate with his/her supervisor about the reasons for the early departure; leave will be charged for the scheduled hours not worked.
- EO Employees reporting their inability to work during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, may be required to produce medical documentation to substantiate the claim immediately upon their return to the workplace. Failure to produce the documentation as required will result in an absent without leave designation and further administration action, including discipline, may be considered.
- When EO Employees are on a pre-scheduled leave and do not report to work during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, the EO Employee must use the leave time that was previously authorized. The University reserves the right under these conditions to cancel an EO Employee's leave and direct the employee to report to work to assist with the inclement weather or other emergency conditions.
- Essential Employees who are required to report to work or to remain on duty during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, will be compensated at their regular rate of pay, including shift differential if appropriate, for all regular hours worked. Hours worked in excess of the regular shift will be paid at the appropriate overtime rate as outlined by

the collective bargaining agreement. The regular hours which such employees work during a Partial or Full-Day Closing, will be counted as hours worked for overtime calculation purposes.

### **Employees (Non-Instructional) Engaged In Non-Essential Operations (NI Employees)**

- NI Employees will be excused from work without leave penalty during hours of Partial and Full- Day Closing, except as indicated below;
- NI Employees will be compensated at their regular rate of pay, including shift differential as applicable, in the event of a Partial or Full-Day Closing, except as indicated below.
- NI Employees who report for their regular shift as scheduled and who are sent home before their shift ends because of an official University Early Closing will be paid their regular pay rate for all scheduled hours worked during that shift as well as for all hours scheduled but not worked for the balance of their regular shift. NI Employees whose regular shift on the day of the Partial or Full-Day Closing is scheduled to start after announcement of an official closing will not be required to report for work and will be paid for the hours scheduled but not worked during the Partial or Full-Day Closing. Portions of a regular work shift that extend beyond 11:59 p.m. of the day of Closing (or beyond the time operations resume, in case of a Delayed Opening) may, with supervisory approval, be covered by annual or personal leave.
- In the event of a Delayed Opening, NI Employees will be considered tardy only if they arrive after the delayed starting time and will be charged leave accordingly. Leave will also be charged for departures earlier than the designated hour in the event of an Early Closing.
- NI Employees who were on pre-approved leave during the closure period will be required to use that leave for all hours of Closing.
- Hours paid but not worked will not be counted for overtime purposes.

### **Faculty**

- Faculty members are not expected to work during hours of Partial or Full-Day Closing; if unable to perform faculty responsibilities during the University's open hours, Faculty members should follow leave procedures prescribed by the Office of the Provost. Pursuant to Article IV or the ASPCUF collective bargaining agreement, Faculty employees will be responsible for making a reasonable effort to ensure the provision of class materials.

### **Students**

- Students are not expected to report for classes or attend University Events during hours of University closure; students assigned to off-campus locations for internships, student teaching, etc. should follow the directions of the agency or institution where they are assigned. Recognizing that commuting students come from a wide geographic area and that travel conditions can vary greatly throughout the region, students are urged to use good judgment and caution in inclement weather and other emergency situations.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** Mansfield University's goal is to keep the campus open whenever safely possible. In the event of inclement weather or other emergency circumstances, University officials will make every attempt to render a prompt decision regarding curtailment of classes and activities.

Decisions will be based on weather forecasts, campus conditions and conditions of the surrounding geographic area. Mansfield University will continue operation of essential and emergency services during closings.

The Vice President for Finance and Administration is responsible for obtaining information from Physical Plant and Campus Police personnel and/or other governmental or emergency officials about the safety condition of the campus and the thoroughfares to the campus. This information and a recommendation regarding closure will be shared with the President who will have responsibility for approving the suspension of University operations.

The Vice President for Finance and Administration will notify Physical Plant and Campus Police directors and also Public Relations of all Closings. For all Closing (Partial and Full-Day), Public Relations will initiate the public website announcement with Campus Technology, record the appropriate voice mail message for the MU telephone alert line and notify the appropriate news and media outlets. Campus Technology will initiate the Mansfield University computer and cell phone alert system. Campus notification of a return to normal operations will be handled similarly.

**UNIVERSITY RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES:** Mansfield University reserves the right to make exceptions, to modify or eliminate these guidelines and or its content. These Guidelines supersede all previous policies, procedures or guidelines relative to this subject.