



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:

Associate Vice President for Safety and Security

Responsible Office: Division of Safety and Security

Last Revised Date: October 4, 2019

ADVERSE WEATHER & EMERGENCY EVENTS POLICY

Policy Summary

The George Washington University is committed to the safety and security of its students, faculty, staff and visitors. As such, the decision to cancel classes, close the university, and/or cancel or postpone GW-sponsored programs or activities is based on the overall concern for the safety and well-being of the university community. In the event of adverse weather or an emergency, members of the university community should use the information resources in this policy to understand their responsibilities with respect to a change in the operating status for any GW location.

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff and students.

Policy

As a residential institution, the university is committed to operate at all times. There will be times, however, because of adverse weather or other emergency conditions when employees cannot travel to work or may need to leave work early. The president, the provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, and executive vice president and chief financial officer (or their designees) will determine any change in the university's operating status due to adverse weather or emergency events. Generally, changes made to the university's operating status will apply to all locations in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (campuses and graduate centers), unless special consideration must be made, as described below.

EMPLOYEE DESIGNATIONS

All faculty and staff members are invaluable assets of the university, and they perform indispensable services necessary to the successful operation of the university. Accordingly, during times of adverse weather or emergency events, some positions require on-site presence to maintain the security, safety and physical operation of the university. The responsibilities of employees during a

change in the university operating status are set forth below. Please note that employees who are a member of a union should follow the terms of their collective bargaining agreements.

Designated On-Site Employees are those employees who hold positions that include job duties with services that must be performed despite a change in the university operating status. Designated On-Site Employees are required to report to work as scheduled, even if the university has announced an alternative operating status.

In general, Designated On-Site Employees are responsible for life, health, safety, security and certain critical student or event services. Some non-deferrable services that must be performed despite an emergency closure include, but are not limited to, dining, housing, facilities, student health and wellness, IT, library, research laboratories and safety. In addition, employees providing high-profile or event support may be assigned Designated On-Site Employee status.

Supervisors, in coordination with Human Resources Management and Development, are responsible for identifying Designated On-Site Employees.

All Other Employees are those who do not perform the above-mentioned services and have not been informed of an assignment of the Designated On-Site status.

Employees who have questions concerning their designation and/or responsibilities during a change in the university operating status, should ask their supervisor.

OPERATING STATUS OPTIONS

Operating status options include: Open on Time; Open with Weather Flex; Delayed Opening; and Closed.

Open on Time

All students, faculty and staff should follow their normal schedules.

Open with Weather Flex

Designated On-Site Employees must report to their workplace on time as directed by their supervisor. All Other Employees should use their best judgment if adverse weather creates extreme travel hazards when traveling to or from the workplace.

All Other Employees may choose to:

- Report to work as normal;
- Report to work after their normally scheduled start time; or
- Not report to work by following their department's normal call-in procedures without being required to use accrued paid annual time-off for regularly schedule time.

Faculty will inform students of relevant instructional continuity plans, if needed. Under these conditions, faculty are asked to be flexible and work with students as necessary.

Delayed Opening

Designated On-Site Employees must report to their workplace on time as directed by their supervisor.

All Other Employees may follow the revised arrival time communicated through official notifications. These employees should report to work accordingly, using their best judgment if adverse weather creates extreme travel hazards.

Online classes will continue as scheduled.

In-person classes may be held online. Faculty will inform students of relevant instructional continuity plans. Under these conditions, faculty are asked to be flexible and work with students as necessary.

Closed

Designated On-Site Employees must report to their workplace on time as directed by their supervisor. All Other Employees are excused from work and will be paid for their scheduled hours.

Online classes will continue as scheduled.

In-person classes may be held online. Faculty will inform students of relevant instructional continuity plans. Under these conditions, faculty are asked to be flexible and work with students as necessary.

NOTIFICATION

The GW community will be notified of a change in operating status through one or more of the following means of communication:

- Infomail
- GW Alert e-mail alert or text message
- [GW Campus Advisories](#)
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- [GW homepage](#)
- GW Information Line (202-994-5050)
- Local media (for example, WTOP, WAMU, Washington Post, local television stations)

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In some circumstances, units on the main campuses or independent locations may change their operating status due to localized adverse weather or emergency

events, although other units or locations may continue to operate on a normal schedule. Some units of the university or locations may also have additional procedures or communication systems for their respective location.

- School of Medicine and Health Sciences

The School of Medicine and Health Sciences has special procedures during adverse weather. For information, call (202) 994-3501.

- Virginia Science and Technology Campus (VSTC), Ashburn, Virginia

VSTC's operating status will be posted on GW Campus Advisories and is also available on their information line (703-726-8333) and [online](#).

- Biostatistics Center (BSC), Rockville, Maryland

BSC's operating status will be posted on GW Campus Advisories and is also available on their information line (301-881-9260) and [online](#).

- Other Off-Campus Locations

The Arlington and Alexandria Graduate Centers follow the operating status decision for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

The operating status of the Hampton Roads Center will be determined by the center's administration.

Locations outside the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area will communicate their operating status to their respective office or department at Foggy Bottom, Health and Safety (safety@gwu.edu) and Media Relations/External Relations (gwwmedia@gwu.edu).

- Emergency Preparedness Resources

Emergency preparedness and incident-related information can be found on [GW Campus Advisories](#) and safety.gwu.edu.

- Special Events

Special events at the university may be held despite a change in the university's operating status.

Related Information

[Campus Advisories](#)

[Emergency Operations Plan](#)

[Employee Handbook](#)

[Human Resources Organization and Development](#)

Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
Health & Safety	202-994-4347	safety@gwu.edu
Human Resources Management and Development	202-994-8500	askhr@gwu.edu

Reporting of non-compliance with this policy can be done through the [Office of Ethics, Compliance and Privacy](#) website.