95.21 -- University Closures
Rewrote in August 2017
March 14, 2016

General

A. General. In the event of a reported emergency or a weather-related emergency, or if an emergency situation appears imminent, the Executive Director of Public Safety & Security, or designee (Safety), may make a recommendation to the President, or designated senior officer, for taking the appropriate action (President). The action could include the cancellation of classes and/or the closure of a University facility. This policy covers all facilities, sites, and campuses located around the State that are occupied, or used by, University of Idaho (UI) employees. However, see below BC-12 (d) 1. for exceptions of specific shared facilities.

A. Definitions

A-1. Essential Personnel. Essential personnel is defined as UI employees designated by department/unit administrators heads to be critical to the continuation of key operations and services in the event of a suspension of operations.

A-2. Consideration of Conditions:
A decision to close a University facility may be based on any, or all, of the following consideration of conditions:
   a. Weather information gathered from official weather reports and forecasts. In most cases, university facilities will not close for winter conditions unless there is a severe weather event or hazardous conditions.
   b. Decisions from city, county, regional, and state agencies.
   c. Local police and county sheriff’s departments surrounding the affected campuses and facilities.
   d. Consultation with UI Public Safety and Security (PSS) and Facilities Services.

B. Definitions. NOAA’s National Weather Service urges individuals to keep abreast of local forecasts and warnings and familiarize themselves with key weather terminology.

B-1. Blizzard Warning: Issued for sustained or gusty winds of 35 mph or more, and falling or blowing snow creating visibilities at or below ¼ mile; these conditions should persist for at least three hours.

B-2. Blowing Snow: Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility and causes significant drifting. Blowing snow may be snow that is falling and/or loose snow on the ground picked up by the wind.

B-3. Dense Fog Advisory: Issued when fog will reduce visibility to ¼ mile or less over a widespread area.

B-4. Freezing Rain: Rain that falls onto a surface with a temperature below freezing. This causes it to freeze to surfaces, such as trees, cars, and roads, forming a coating or glaze of ice. Even small accumulations of ice can cause a significant hazard.

B-5. Sleet: Rain drops that freeze into ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet usually bounces when hitting a surface and does not stick to objects. However, it can accumulate like snow and cause a hazard to motorists.

B-6. Snow Flurries: Light snow falling for short durations. No accumulation or light dusting is all that is expected.

B-7. Snow Showers: Snow falling at varying intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.

B-8. Snow Squalls: Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant.

B-9. University Facility: Includes all facilities, sites, or campuses located around the State that are occupied or used by University of Idaho employees.

B-10. Wind Chill Advisory: Issued when wind chill temperatures are expected to be a significant inconvenience to life with prolonged exposure, and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to hazardous exposure.

B-11. Wind Chill Warning: Issued when wind chill temperatures are expected to be hazardous to life within several minutes of exposure.
B-12. Winter Storm Outlook: Issued prior to a Winter Storm Watch. The Outlook is given when forecasters believe winter storm conditions are possible and are usually issued 3 to 5 days in advance of a winter storm. [ren. 3-16]

B-13. Winter Storm Warning: Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin. [ren. 3-16]

B-14. Winter Storm Watch: Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm. [ren. 3-16]

B-15. Winter Weather Advisories: Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations. [ren. 3-16]

BC. Policyprocedures. [ren.10-13]

B-1. Consideration of Conditions: [add. 10-13]

A decision to close a University Facility may be based on any or all of the following: weather information gathered from the NWS Weekly Briefings, including official weather reports and forecasts decisions from city, county, regional, and state agencies local Police and County Sheriff’s Departments surrounding the affected campuses and facilities consultation with the Office of Public Safety and Security (OPSS) and Facilities Services.

In most cases, university facilities will not close for winter conditions unless there is a Level 1 emergency. [ed. 3-16]

(b) Below are the winter weather conditions classified by Safety based on NOAA’s National Weather Service: [ed. 3-16]

(i) Level 3 - Winter Storm Watch. Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

(ii) Level 2 - Winter Storm Warning. Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

(iii) Level 1 - Winter Storm Advisory. Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations.

(c) If a level 1 emergency is not declared, additional factors that will enter into the decision to close a University Facility are: hazardous road conditions; the presence of ice, snow, or both; amount of wind; presence of daylight; the weather forecast; severe cold; and, consultation with Facilities Services and OPSS. [ed. 3-16]

BC-21. Cancellations and Closures:

(a) Authority. When conditions necessitate, a University Facility may be ordered closed or its opening may be delayed for a period of time. The decision to close or delay opening a University Facility is at the discretion of the President, or designee. In the event of a University closure, only designated essential personnel will be allowed to remain on campus, or occupy a closed university facility. See exceptions below in (ed). [rev. 3-16]

(i) In the event the President is not available to make a decision regarding closure, the authority lies with the Vice President for Infrastructure. [ed. 12-10. 3-16]

(ii) In the event neither the President nor the Vice President for Infrastructure is available to make a decision regarding closure, the authority lies with the Provost & Executive Vice President. [ed. 12-10, rev. 3-16]
B-1. (b) **Supervisor Jurisdiction.** Individual units do not have independent authority to make decisions concerning University facility closures, postponements, and/or cancellations; however, supervisors do have the authority to approve requests from employees who wish early release from work due to severe weather conditions. (See FSH 3470) [ed. 10-13, ren. & ed. 3-16]

B-2. (c) **Administrative Leave with Pay.** When the President, or designee, makes a decision to close, cancel classes, or postpone opening any University facility, administrative leave for the affected employees may be authorized to use Administrative Leave with pay (see FSH 3710) will be determined pursuant to FSH 3470 and 3710 as applicable. [ren. & ed. 3-16]

B-3. (d) **Locations other than Moscow.** The location executive officer, director, or manager, or designee, will make a recommendation, to the President, or designee, to close the facility(s) they oversee to the President. After approval, the executive officer, director, manager, or designee, will contact OPSSafety and provides the following information on the nature of the event, affected locations, recommended actions (closure, delayed opening), duration of action, and any other relevant details. [ren. & rev. 3-16]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the event</th>
<th>Affected locations</th>
<th>Actions recommended (closed, delayed)</th>
<th>Length of action (when the University is expected to return to normal operations)</th>
<th>Other relevant details</th>
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1. Exceptions:

a. i) **Coeur d’Alene (CDA) Campus.** Due to shared facilities, University of Idaho CDA facilities classrooms may be closed due to a North Idaho College (NIC) closure. In the event of a NIC closure, the CDA Executive officer, or designee, will notify the President, or designee, and OPSSafety.

b. ii) **Idaho Falls (IF) Campus.** University of Due to shared facilities, the IF campus facilities Executive Officer (or Associate Registrar in the absence of the Executive Officer) may be closed due to an ISU-I Idaho Falls (ISU) closure.) will consult with the Vice Provost for ISU-Idaho Falls. In the event of an ISU-Idaho Falls closure, the Idaho Falls Executive officer, or designee, will notify the President, or designee, and OPSSafety.

b.c. **Co-Located UI Offices.** University of Idaho offices co-located with federal, state, or county offices may be closed due to a building closure. In the event of a closure, the UI executive officer at the co-located facility, or designee, will notify the President, or designee, and PSS.

C-2. **Consideration of Conditions:** [add. 10-13]

(a) The Director, Emergency Management & Security Systems, or designee (Emergency Management), participates in the National Weather Service (NWS) Spokane Weekly Weather Briefing. If significant weather is forecast, then additional briefings may be scheduled by the NWS. The NWS office in Spokane serves Latah County and seven others in North Idaho. Emergency Management works closely with Latah County Disaster Services, the Idaho State Bureau of Homeland Security Field Representative for Latah County, Whitman County, Washington and Washington State University. [rev. 3-16]

(b) A decision to close a University Facility may be based on weather information gathered from the NWS Weekly Briefings including official weather reports and forecasts and decisions from county, regional, and state agencies, the North Latah County Highway District, Moscow Police and Latah County Sheriff’s Departments, surrounding the main campus, the City of Moscow, and consultation with Safety, and Facilities Services. In most cases, the University Facility will not close for winter conditions unless there is a Level 1 emergency. [ed. 3-16]

(c) Below are the winter weather conditions classified by Safety based on NOAA’s National Weather Service. [ed. 3-16]
(i) Level 3 - Winter Storm Watch. Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

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(d) If a level 1 emergency is not declared, additional factors that will enter into the decision to close a University Facility are: hazardous road conditions; the presence of ice, snow, or both; amount of wind; presence of daylight; the weather forecast; severe cold; and, consultation with Facilities Services and Safety. (ed. 3-16)

BC-34. Alerts and Notifications: (add. 10-13)

(a) In the event of severe weather, the President’s decision to close any University Facility, faculty, staff, and students will be notified of the closure by email, phone, and/or text message sent to subscribers of the University’s Vandal Alert (emergency alert system). Additional information related to the emergency and facility closure updates and contact information will be posted on the University’s University home page. (http://www.uidaho.edu) website. The status will also be included on the University Emergency Updates line 208-885-1010. (ed. 3-16)

(b) Safety will notify University Communications & Marketing (Communications) no later than 5:30 a.m. MST. This triggers Communications protocols to notify media outlets, send email, and post web announcements and text-messages by 6:30 a.m. on the day of closing. In the event of an evening closure, Communications will attempt to notify the campus and the media by 4:00 p.m. (rev. 3-16)

(bc) All university community members are encouraged to call the University Emergency Updates line 208-885-1010 to confirm whether the University Facility is closed or open. Employees and students should verify media announcements by consulting multiple official sources. (ed. 3-16)

(cd) If the University Facility is open but an individual faculty member cancels class, the faculty member will make a reasonable effort to notify students enrolled in the class. All departments are encouraged to create and follow their own telephone contact trees in the event of a cancellation or closure. (ed. 3-16)

C. Essential Personnel. Essential Personnel is defined as UI employees designated by department heads to be critical to the continuation of key operations and services in the event of a suspension of operations. In the event of a University closure, only designated essential personnel will be allowed to remain on campus or occupy a university facility. Essential personnel will be identified by their department or college and a list of names and positions will be submitted to Human Resources. All University departments/units will maintain an updated list of designated essential personnel.

D. Contact Information:

The Office of Public Safety and Security
875 Perimeter Drive, MS 2285
Moscow, ID 83844-2285
208-885-2285
Fax: 208-885-7001