

## **WSU Tri-Cities Inclement Weather Procedures**

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER EMERGENCIES**

An inclement weather event may require the University to suspend some or all operations at the WSU Tri-Cities campus. (See also *BPPM 50.40* for University-wide procedures regarding suspended operations.)

This section provides procedures regarding evaluation of and response to inclement weather situations that affect WSU Tri-Cities.

### **Weather Emergency Condition Levels**

The Chancellor or designee may declare one of the following condition levels when a weather emergency is imminent or active.

#### **Condition Levels**

*Open* Classes, nonessential services, and essential services are all operational.

*Delayed/Limited Operations* Class operations are delayed two hours or cancelled. Nonessential services are reduced at the discretion of unit heads. Essential services are operational.

*Closed* Campus is closed. Nonessential services are suspended. Essential services function with minimal levels of staffing.

The vice chancellors and Chief of Staff are to exercise discretion in determining essential services and essential minimal staffing levels in accordance with *BPPM 60.40* and applicable leave policies. Additional guidelines related to inclement weather and suspended operations are available from the Human Resource Services (HRS) website at:

[hrs.wsu.edu/resources/inclement-weather/](https://hrs.wsu.edu/resources/inclement-weather/)

When the WSU Tri-Cities campus is at the delayed/limited operations or closed condition level, the presumption is that the campus will return to the open condition level on the following day unless the Chancellor or designee decides otherwise. Students and employees should check WSU Tri-Cities Alerts for the latest condition level information:

[tricity.wsu.edu/alerts/](https://tricity.wsu.edu/alerts/)

### **WSU Tri-Cities Emergency Operations Director**

A member of the WSU Tri-Cities executive administration serves as the campus Emergency Operations Directory (EOD).

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### **WSU Tri-Cities Condition Triage Team**

The following individuals or their alternates serve as the WSU Tri-Cities Condition Triage Team. The team is responsible for reporting pertinent information on a weather event to the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the EOD (if appropriate), or directly to the Chancellor.

- Building Maintenance Supervisor or designee. Reports the condition of the campus.
- Marketing and Communications Manager. Reports the condition of state/county/city roads, the weather conditions, and the status of Tri-Cities Transit System and Tri-Cities schools, if available.
- Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or Chief of Staff. Reports any special academic situations, e.g., exam week, and planned activities on the University calendar that may be affected.

### **Determination of Condition Level**

The WSU Tri-Cities EOD or triage team representative calls and reports the overall conditions to the Chancellor or designee, who determines the weather emergency condition level.

### **Personnel Notified of Condition Level Decision**

The WSU Tri-Cities EOD or triage team representative notifies the following individuals or their alternates of the condition level decision.

- Marketing and Promotions Manager performs the following actions:
  - Posts the appropriate condition level on WSUALERT and releases other emergency communications deemed appropriate under the circumstances, including the use of the WSU CougarAlert System (see *BPPM* 50.40).
  - Manages internal and external communications.
  - Notifies television and radio stations, external newspapers, and other media outlets as appropriate.
- Vice chancellors and Chief of Staff (if the Chancellor makes the decision).
- Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration. Notifies the Facilities Department leadership.

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### **Weather Watch**

Designated personnel maintain a weather watch throughout the period in which severe weather conditions remain in force and until normal operations resume. The WSU Tri-Cities EOD or triage team representative provides the Chancellor and the individuals listed above with regular updates on weather, road, and campus conditions throughout the weather emergency.

### **Decision Timeline**

While a weather emergency may be declared at any time if conditions necessitate it, the following are the most likely weather scenarios with target timelines for reaching decisions.

#### **During Night or Early Morning Hours**

If the inclement weather occurs during the night or early morning hours, the Condition Triage Team reports pertinent information on the inclement weather event no later than 4:45 a.m. Such a report initiates the inclement weather procedures listed above. The WSU Tri-Cities EOD or triage team representative reports the condition to the Chancellor or designee no later than 5:00 a.m.

If there is advance warning of a potential weather event, the WSU Tri-Cities EOD or triage team representative notifies the triage team the previous evening to be on standby for a 4:45 a.m. call the following morning.

#### **During the Day**

If the inclement weather event occurs during the day, the EOD or triage team representative collects the pertinent weather information from the WSU Tri-Cities Condition Triage Team and reports the information to the Chancellor or designee as soon as possible. Such a report initiates the inclement weather procedures listed above.

#### **Evening Classes and Operations**

If an inclement weather event is expected to affect evening classes and operations, a decision should be reached no later than 4:00 p.m. to allow time to provide appropriate notice.

### **College/Department/Unit Responsibilities**

All colleges, divisions, departments, and other operating units must develop Emergency Response Plans and Continuity of Operations Plans, in accordance with *Executive Policy EP25* and *BPPM 50.39*. In addition to other Emergency Response and Continuity of Operations responsibilities, the purpose of these plans is to:

- Prepare for weather emergencies.
- Ensure that faculty, staff, and students are informed of the closure of offices within the area.

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### **College/Department/Unit Responsibilities (cont.)**

- Ensure that faculty, staff, and students are informed of the postponement of special events or activities.
- Reinforce the communication of any decisions reached by the President, Chancellor, or designee.

### **Limitations**

The procedures above are not intended to cover all possible eventualities. The University administration assumes that the decision-making and relevant communications will be adapted, as appropriate, to suit the circumstances. The University administration does not assume that all individuals who may be coming to campus or on campus can be notified of a weather emergency or the designated condition level.