INSTITUTIONAL POLICY: GA-23

Category: General Administration
Subject: Emergencies and Adverse Weather – Class Cancellations & Campus Closures
Effective Date: December 14, 2005
Updated: N/A

GA 23-1. Authority

1.1 W. Va. Code § 18B-1-6

1.11.2 W. Va. Code § 12-3-13

GA 23-2. Purpose/Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set forth protocols for class cancellations, campus closures, and related occurrences at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (“WVSOM”) due to emergencies and adverse weather conditions. Extreme weather conditions or energy outages have resulted in disruption of normal operations at WVSOM on several occasions during past winters. Similar situations may occur in the future. With that possibility in mind, WVSOM has developed the following policy.

GA 23-3. Cancellations and Campus Closures

3.1 Cancellations are declared when WVSOM classes are cancelled for a specific period of time due to adverse weather or other unforeseen circumstance. If classes are cancelled, other events and activities scheduled during that same time will be cancelled as well, unless otherwise specified by WVSOM. During cancellations, offices will not be closed and all employees will be expected to report to work.

3.2 Campus closures are declared when all operations of WVSOM are suspended due to a declared emergency or other unforeseen circumstance. WVSOM Statewide Campus sites may be shut down independently of a WVSOM Main Campus emergency closure.

3.3 Information regarding student course work missed during a cancellation or campus closure may be found in WVSOM Institutional Policy E-07: Cancelled Class Policy.

GA 23-4. Authorization of Cancellations and Closures

2.14.1 All decisions on cancellations will be authorized by the President, or his/her designee.

4.2 Authorization for campus closures will be at the discretion of the President or his/her designee, in consultation with local, state, or federal public safety officials.
4.3 The Governor of West Virginia has the authority to close any State building. WVSOM will comply with any directive from the Governor’s Office concerning campus closures.

**GA 23-5. Notification of Cancellation or Closure**

5.1 If the decision to cancel classes is made during the normal working day, when the classes are in session, the decision will be announced over the WVSOM Emergency Notification System, public address system and in the classroom, and/or by other available means.

5.2 Notification of decisions for all other cancellations and campus closures will be made, as appropriate, via:

- 5.2.1 A campus-wide email;
- 5.2.2 The WVSOM Emergency Notification System; and/or
- 5.2.3 Local radio and television stations.

2.25.3 In most cases, campus closure notification should be announced by 7:00 a.m. on the day of closure.

**GA 23-3. Reporting to Work**

3.1 Although it may be necessary to suspend classes because of inclement weather or other problems on some occasions, offices will not be closed and all employees will be expected to report to work.

3.2 Individual employees, for whom it is appropriate, may in their best judgment determine the risk of travel to be too great and elect to remain at home. Those who do so should contact their respective supervisors and indicate they are (1) taking annual leave that day or (2) taking a day off without pay or (3) taking a floating holiday, if available, or (4) taking compensatory time, in the event compensatory time is owed them.

**GA 23-4. Class Cancellations**

4.1 All decisions on class cancellations will be authorized by the President, or his designee, and called in to the following stations:

- 4.1.1 WSLW-AM White Sulphur Springs
- 4.1.2 WRON-AM/FM Ronceverte
- 4.1.3 WKCL-FM Lewisburg

The stations will be asked to repeat the announcement frequently from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. as appropriate.

4.2 If the decision to cancel classes is made during the normal working day, when the classes are in session, it will be announced over the public address system and in the classroom.

**GA 23-5.GA 23-6. Closure of a Building or Section**

**Employee Management During Cancellations and Campus Closures**
6.1 In the event that a building, or a section of a building, is closed (because of heat loss, power outage, or other reason, etc.) employees working in the affected area will be permitted to take their work to another area or building on campus or, with supervisor approval, work remotely. In the alternative, or, in consultation with the supervisor, the employee may elect to take annual leave that day, take the day off without pay, take a floating holiday if available, or take compensatory time off. Supervisors must take steps to ensure offices and/or work stations are open to employees at all times when those employees are expected to be at work, including during inclement weather situations and other disruptive situations.

6.2 During utility service disruption, emergency situations, or inclement weather, employees may be asked to perform their duties in alternate work locations. Employees that opt not to work in an alternate location must take annual leave unless otherwise specified in this policy. Absences from work due to inclement weather conditions other than during a declared emergency must be charged against accumulated annual leave or accumulated compensatory time, or the employee must be removed from the payroll for the time in question. If the employee has "floating holiday" time, the employee’s holiday leave record may also be charged. Sick leave may not be charged for absence due to weather. Time lost from work may be made up in the same work week at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

6.2.1 Utility Service Interruptions. When extended power and utility service interruptions occur, administrators should arrange for employees usual work routines to be accomplished at alternate work locations, or make affected employees available to other administrators for work in other areas. If an administrator deems it advisable and the employee agrees, time off during the utility service interruption may be granted and charged against the employee's accumulated annual leave.

6.2.2 If an employee is working remotely via telework and the employee’s electric or internet service is interrupted during the workday, the employee must work on an alternative assignment, move to an alternative work location, or use annual leave for any hours the employee did not work due to the service interruption.

5.1.16.2.3 Combinations of the alternatives set forth in Section 6.2 may be necessary, but in all cases interruptions of work schedules must be handled in accordance with applicable laws, including West Virginia Code § 12-3-13. If pay is associated with the absence from work, the absence must be charged to the employee’s accumulated annual leave unless otherwise specified in this policy. Absences from work due to weather conditions other than during a declared emergency must be charged against accumulated annual leave, accumulated compensatory time, or the employee must be removed from the payroll for the time in question. When WVSOM employs the "floating holiday" concept, the holiday record may be charged. Sick leave may not be charged for absence due to weather. Time lost from work may be made up in the same work week at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

6.3 In the event of an extreme situation (tornado, flood, ice storm, campus disturbance, etc.) and the employees’ presence is not desired-required on campus, this information notification will be disseminated via campus-wide email, the WVSOM Emergency Notification System, and/or available to the news media. A decision as to whether the missed time will be paid as working hours or chargeable to annual leave, compensatory time, or a non-pay situation will be determined by the President and communicated through supervisors on the first day
normal campus operation is resumed. Individual employees, for whom it is appropriate, may in their best judgment determine the risk of travel to be too great and elect to remain at home or leave campus early. Those who do so should contact their respective supervisors and indicate they are (1) taking annual leave that day, or (2) taking a day off without pay, or (3) taking a floating holiday, if available, or (4) taking compensatory time, in the event compensatory time is owed them.

6.4 WVSOM operations may be shut down in total or in part because of any circumstance which threatens the health or safety of employees and/or students, such as extreme inclement weather and facility shutdowns. When WVSOM closes due to a declared emergency, all employees required to work shall be compensated.

6.4.1 All full-time regular employees are eligible for regular pay for work time lost because of a declared emergency. Work time lost will be considered regular work time for pay purposes and will not require time charged to accrued leave and will not require that the hours be made up.

6.4.2 When operational needs require a non-exempt, regular employee to work during a WVSOM declared emergency, in addition to regular pay the employee will receive compensation in either compensatory time off (CTO) or pay at the rate of time and one-half for the actual hours worked during the declared emergency period.

6.4.3 Exempt employees that work during a declared emergency period receive CTO on an hour-for-hour basis up to 7.5 hours per day. Statewide Campus employees or any other WVSOM employees who are working in an alternate location, as approved by their supervisor, or at WVSOM during a WVSOM declared emergency closure will be compensated as stated in this policy.

6.5 Emergency Situations. In the event that an emergency exists, the President, in conjunction with local or state public safety officials, has the authority to address the emergency situation and close WVSOM. Such a declaration will be transmitted to the Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. The President, working with public safety officials, will determine when the emergency condition no longer exists.

6.5.1 Should the President or his/her designee require an employee to work during a declared emergency, the employee’s time worked shall be compensated in accordance with WVSOM Institutional Policy PE-03: Institutional Holidays and Employee Leave. If approved, the employee may be permitted to work at an alternate primary work location or work remotely.

6.5.2 Work time lost by any employee during a declared emergency will be considered regular work time for pay purposes and will not require that the time be charged to the employee’s annual leave and will not require that the time be made up.