



Policy Number: I.16  
Policy Level: Operating Policy  
Originally Issued: June 30, 2014  
Reviewed: November 10, 2017  
Revised: October 1, 2019  
Policy Owner: VP for Financial Affairs  
Policy Implementation: VP for Financial Affairs

## Emergency Closing of the University

### I. Policy Statement and Purpose

In accordance with Athens State University's mission, this policy establishes the standards to be used in the event of emergency closings of the University. There are situations (e.g., inclement weather conditions, other acts of God, power failures, etc.) that will prevent Athens State University employees from performing their normal duties. These situations may necessitate the cancelling or delaying of classes and work activities, or the delaying/cancelling of scheduled activities. Conditions may exist which limit employees' abilities to report to work. Certain jobs are considered essential during an emergency and require designated personnel to be present for work.

### II. Emergency Closings

The following apply in situations requiring the opening/closing of the University during inclement weather and/or other emergency situations:

#### **University Remains Open**

The University does not wish personnel to take undue personal or property risks, therefore, employees are expected to use reasonable judgment, in keeping with their location and circumstances, as to whether or not they can or should report to work. However, if the University remains open, those employees who do not report to work must report their hours of absences as personal leave, sick leave, annual leave or leave without pay. If an employee feels it is in his/her best interest to leave work early due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, he/she must report his/her absence as personal leave, sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay.

#### **University is Closed**

If the President notifies employees in advance of the start of the work day that the University will be closed or will have a delayed opening, employees (to include those on annual, personal and sick leave) are not charged leave for the time off. Part time and temporary employees are paid for any hours scheduled to work during the period of closure. An employee not scheduled to work is not given credit for the additional time off.

If the President announces during the day that the University will be closing early, an employee on annual, personal or sick leave is charged leave as scheduled and does not receive additional credit for the hours the University was closed. Non-exempt employees (including part-time and temporary employees) who worked all scheduled hours (if any) should report their full shift, as if worked, on the bi-weekly timesheet.



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If a natural catastrophe occurs that requires prolonged, complete or partial closing of the University, the policy of granting off-time without charging it against leave or providing leave with pay may be negated.

### **Essential Personnel**

Designated essential personnel are required to work during periods when the University is closed. Each department head that has areas of responsibility that are deemed essential during inclement weather/emergency conditions will create a list of essential personnel.

Employees that are designated are informed well in advance of anticipated inclement weather condition requirements and informed of the requirements of this policy and other pertinent information as deemed necessary by the department head and supervisor.

The University will compensate essential personnel at the following rate

- Straight time equivalent to the employee's regularly scheduled hours, (such as 8 hours, or a pro-rated number if the employee is part-time); *plus*
- Extra straight time OR compensatory time (hour for hour) for all actual hours worked on a day that the University is closed for an emergency.
- For all hours worked in excess of 40 for the work week, overtime rates per the [Overtime and Compensatory Time](#) policy will be applied.

Essential personnel must be available for emergency work as required. Essential personnel who fail to report for work as scheduled are subject to disciplinary action if they do not have a valid excuse.

### **Cancellation of Classes**

Cancelling of classes is an academic matter. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends to the President calling off or dismissing classes. Cancellation of classes is predicated upon the faculty encouraging that the same quality of learning outcomes occurs in the semester.

## **III. Responsibility for this Operating Policy**

### **Policy Owner**

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Vice President for Financial Affairs is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.



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This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

**Responsibility for Policy Implementation**

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Vice President for Financial Affairs.