

University at Albany Policy 8.3

Draft

Essential Employees

Policy Purpose:

To set forth the policy and procedures, in the event of Emergency situation, such as severe weather conditions or pandemic Emergency, The University at Albany may suspend normal business operations and classes. If normal activities are suspended, all Employees whose positions are designated as essential must report to campus (or remain on campus) or to another designated area to assess the University at Albany's operations, protect its assets and provide critical services to the community.

Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources, Division for Finance and Administration

Responsible University Official: Chief Human Resources Officer

Policy History:

Date of Initial Approval: Month Day, Year
Dates of Amendments: Month Day, Year
Dates of Withdrawal: Month Day, Year

Policy Statement:

The University at Albany has the responsibility to ensure that all conditions in the buildings and on campus grounds are safe and other required services are performed by institute employees who are available when there is a weather or other Emergency condition.

Persons Affected:

Employees

Definitions:

Campus is any University owned, leased, licensed or operated space, facility, property, grounds, equipment, motor vehicle or building.

Emergency, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as a sudden, urgent, usually unexpected, or impending situation that may interfere with the normal activities where immediate attention and/or remedial action is required. The University may need to suspend and/or modify some or all of its normal operations and for classes as determined by the type of Emergency. Emergencies may include, but are not limited to, weather related, involve utilities, fire, flooding, transportation, situations where local civil authorities require a full or partial campus closure or any other kind of incident.

Employee is any faculty member or staff employed by the University at Albany. This includes permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, hourly, provisional or any other person who is on the payroll of the University in any capacity.

Essential Employee is a University employee (State payroll, RF payroll, University affiliate and their vendors payroll) who is required to report to a designated work location(s), or to a remote/alternate work location(s), to ensure the operation of Essential Services during an Emergency or when the University has closed or curtailed operations. Volunteers cannot be designated as essential under this policy. Whether an Essential Employee is required to report to work during an Emergency or closure will depend upon the circumstances of the Emergency or closure and the functions provided by the employee.

Essential Services may include, but are not be limited to, operations and maintenance, University Police Department, snow and ice removal, bus and transportation, continuity of information technology, animal care, laboratory operations, food services, certain skilled trades and other vendors providing Essential Services who are contractually obligated to provide these services to the University and employees who are essential to maintaining the University's vital services, are required to remain on duty or make every effort to report to work unless directed or permitted to do otherwise.

Remote Instruction Plan is the University at Albany comprehensive plan that is activated for various offices on Campus, to shift to remote work/teaching if circumstances allow. Usually, a shift in remote work/teaching occurs during an inclement weather or Campus Emergency.

UAlbany Alert is the University's official platform to communicate emergencies to the Campus community-including weather-related delays and closures. UAlbany Alerts are delivered via text message, voicemail, and email.

University is the University at Albany, State University of New York.

Policy:

A. Essential Employees

1. Generally, Essential Employees include, but are not limited to, the following departments and offices:
 - a. University Police Department
 - b. Physical Plant, including power plant, shops, grounds, mechanical repair, vehicle operations, custodial, downtown, academic zones, dormitory zone, empire commons, liberty terrace
 - c. Environmental Health and Safety
 - d. Parking and Mass Transit Services
 - e. Vendors providing Essential Services who are contractually obligated to provide these services to the University, i.e. dining services
2. Student presence and the nature of an Emergency will determine which Essential Employees are required to report to their designated work location(s) or to a remote/alternate work location(s) during an Emergency or Campus curtailment of operations.

3. Absent instructions to the contrary, an Essential Employee is required to report for work during any Emergency closure or curtailment of operations. When an announcement is made that only Essential Employees are expected to report to work, Essential Employees should make every effort to get to, or stay at, the University.
 4. Each department or unit may outline procedures for Essential Employees to follow (e.g., calling designated supervisor, checking email, etc.) to determine whether they are required to report to work at the Campus (or at a remote/alternate work location) based upon the nature of a given Emergency.
- B. Essential Employee Designation Notices
1. Deans and Vice Presidents or their designees are responsible for providing written notice and annual reminder notices to each Employee in their division, department, or school who is designated as an Essential Employee. (Copy of letter attached)
 2. Upon initial designation and annually thereafter at the start of each (academic or calendar year) each Dean and Vice President will provide Human Resources with a list of Employees designated as Essential Employees.
 3. Essential Employees are required to enroll in SUNY NY-Alert for text, voice, and e-mail notifications. Enrollment is available through the myUAlbany homepage and choosing the "UAlbany Alert" option under the self-service section. Direct link is [here](#).
- C. Campus Closure or Curtailment of Operations
1. State offices and other state facilities, including SUNY campuses, may only be closed by order of the Governor of New York State.
 2. Declarations of a state of Emergency/road closures are not equivalent to the closing of the University.
 3. The President is authorized to cancel classes or curtail operations and may invoke liberal leave use for non-essential employees to absent themselves from work with proper charge to accruals.
 4. Following certain weather emergencies, New York State's Office of Employee Relations may excuse the charge to leave credits for a specific absence, and in such case, accruals will be restored.
 5. Official notice shall be provided through the University website (www.albany.edu) and the UAlbany Alert system Additional information can be found on www.albany.edu/Emergency and through the University's Emergency information phone line 518-442-7669.
 - i. Sign up for UAlbany Alert through myUAlbany portal for voice, texting, and e-mail notification or directly [here](#).

Related:

Statutes:

Regulations:

SUNY Policies:

University Policies, Guidelines and Procedures:

- [Liberal Leave Designation](#)
- [8.2 Inclement Weather & Other Conditions](#)
- [Liberal Leave During Weather-Related Emergencies](#)

Other:

- [Notification and Acknowledgement of Essential Employee Designation](#)

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