



Severe Weather Policy

Policy Statement

During severe weather events, the primary goal of Louisburg College is the protection, safety, and health of students, staff, and faculty. While essential services will need to continue, the campus will close and non-essential employees will be excused for the time of the severe weather event.

Job/Work Categories

Every Louisburg College employee performs important services and work. During extraordinary times of severe weather, some positions must be on campus to ensure operational effectiveness and student support. To ensure continuous operations during these conditions, all jobs are categorized into one of three service levels in support of the policy:

- **Essential Service:** Jobs that are required to maintain essential services and operations during severe weather while ensuring the safety and health of all students, staff, and faculty. During Severe Weather or when a State of Emergency has been issued, essential service employees report to or remain at work. These employees are primarily Campus Safety Officers and Community Hall Directors.
- **Reserve Service:** Jobs that are not immediately required to provide service but function as "Delayed Service" during severe weather and may be upgraded to "Essential Service" based on the needs of the department/organization. During Severe Weather or when a State of Emergency has been issued, reserve service employees remain available in case their services are needed. These employees are IT specialists and Maintenance Techs.
- **Delayed Service:** Jobs that can be delayed until severe weather conditions have passed do not report to or remain at work.

Planning

Each department head is responsible for:

- Completing a department preparedness plan and reviewing the plan twice each year before the hurricane and winter seasons.
- Identifying and notifying staff members of their Severe Weather job/work category designation and departmental expectations during the orientation process and, then, twice each year before the hurricane and winter seasons.

Review with Staff: Each manager is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing the department plan and the staffing contingency plan with the department head at least twice each year, before the hurricane and winter seasons.
- Explaining and providing each staff member with the policy, clarification of work/job category designation, and the department plan and staffing contingency plan. This document should be reviewed with each staff member twice per year and when staff members are hired.

Imminent Severe Weather: The department head and manager should review the policy, department plan and staffing contingency plans if severe weather is imminent.

Conditions

Severe Weather/Emergency Conditions are defined as heavy snow or ice accumulations, flooding, hurricane, or tornado damage that significantly affects the normal operations of Louisburg College. Regardless of the severe weather, the College must provide residential support. However, classes may be canceled and administrative offices closed. Positions assigned to the Essential Service category must report to or remain at work.

State of Emergency: Only the Governor and Mayors of affected areas can declare a State of Emergency. If a State of Emergency is called, all Louisburg College staff and faculty should contact their supervisor for instructions. Positions assigned to the Essential Service category must report to or remain at work as scheduled or directed.

Declaring Severe Weather: Decision-Making Process

Members of the Weather Committee will monitor local media to determine the severity of the weather event. Credible media include:

- Local news channels that will switch to full-time coverage of severe weather.
- North Carolina's Weather Authority – available through Facebook
- Franklin County's Emergency System – Hyper-Reach Program-Register for Emergency Alerts
- National Weather Service – Web page
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Web page
- Weather Channel App

Efficient discussion of the weather conditions is required to enable appropriate and coordinated decisions. The following criteria will be considered in declaring severe weather:

- Condition or anticipated worsening condition of local streets and highways in the general locale of the campus.
- Other conditions that may pose a threat to the safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

The decision to activate or deactivate the policy is made by the members of the Weather Committee making a recommendation to the College President for a decision on activating or terminating the severe weather policy. If the decision is to alter campus business hours, the following options are possible:

- Closure for the entire day.
- Late opening.
- Early closure.

Once implemented, the policy will remain in force as communicated. The decision to alter campus business hours will be repeated each day that a weather event remains in force.

When the policy is activated or terminated, College communication procedures will be followed. All employees should be enrolled in LC Alerts, and phone numbers should be up-to-date so that they can receive communication regarding severe weather issues. Staff members will also need to implement communication steps, as appropriate, with their supervisors.

Notification Process

Institutional Notification Steps

When the College President decides to activate the Severe Weather Policy based on the recommendations from the members of the Weather Committee, communication will occur as early as possible using LC Alerts and email to all employees and all students. Once activated, the policy provisions will remain active for the duration of the work day.

It is the responsibility of department managers to develop a process that ensures that all faculty and staff members are appropriately notified of the activation and termination of the Severe Weather Policy.

Communication Guidelines

Institutional Responsibility

In the event of severe weather or emergency conditions, information will be distributed by the Dean of Students and Chairman of the Weather Committee, using LC Alerts and email to all employees and all students.

Faculty: If classes are not canceled but a faculty member is unable to get to campus, he or she should notify students using one of the following options (in decreasing order of preference):

1. Post a notice in Brightspace using the "Announcements" section or the group email feature.
2. Call the appropriate departmental or school personnel to get the word out in the rare case of cancellation of individual courses.

Staff Member Responsibility

Planning: Each staff member shall be responsible for the following during the New Employee Orientation Period and twice each year before the hurricane and winter seasons:

- Reviewing the Severe weather policy.
- Clarifying responsibilities and expectations with his or her supervisor.
- Ensuring they register for and update the LC Alerts database as needed.

Imminent Severe Weather: Each staff member should review the policy and staffing contingency plan with his or her manager if severe weather is imminent.

Dining

During severe weather, Louisburg College Dining Services will open the dining hall to the extent possible.

Reopening of the Campus

The members of the Weather Committee will continue to monitor the weather event(s) and make recommendations to the College President. If the College is to remain closed, this decision will be communicated using the same media: LC Alerts and mass email. When the decision to reopen the campus is made, students and employees will be updated also using LC Alerts and mass email.

Employees of Louisburg College live throughout the area, some quite remotely. Once the college is reopened, employees are scheduled to return to work. They are encouraged to take caution in driving to campus, but if employees are not comfortable returning to campus, they are required to communicate this information with their supervisor. If employees do not return to campus at the scheduled time of the reopening, they are required to take vacation time.

Unable to Leave Campus

If a weather event occurs rather suddenly and employees are unable to safely leave campus, all measures will be taken to ensure their safety and comfort. Employees in this situation should monitor weather news to stay informed of possible imminent danger. They should find safe places in the building to remain until the weather passes, including lower-level interior areas away from windows.

Safety Tips

- Report police, fire, and medical emergencies to 911.
- Report service interruptions to telephone and/or power companies.
- Replenish emergency preparedness supplies when it's all over.
- Do not handle electrical equipment in wet areas.

Tips for Driving in Severe Weather/Emergency Conditions

- Avoid low-lying areas and underpasses.
- Know safe alternate routes, along high ground, between home and work.
- Beware of downed power lines and debris
- Do not cross flooded roads. You can get stranded even in shallow water.
- Do not enter areas that are posted or blocked with emergency signage.
- If you must evacuate, disconnect electrical equipment if it is safe to do so.
- Take your keys and valuables.
- Drive slowly and cautiously.
- Be careful of "black" ice on highways.
- Clean debris, snow, and ice off of car windows, bumpers, and roof before driving.

Home Preparations Recommendations

Make sure to secure the following:

- Flashlight, battery-operated radio and/or television.
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C, D and 9-volt).
- Sturdy shoes, blankets, and extra clothing.
- Back-up eyeglasses, medications, and sanitation supplies.
- Bottled water (one gallon per day for people and pets).
- Emergency food for at least three days (people and pets).
- Manual can opener.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled household members.
- Candles and matches.
- Tools: crescent wrench, crowbar, shovel, heavy work gloves.
- Heavy tape and plastic sheeting.
- Address book to include emergency phone numbers such as physician, power company, phone company, gas company, etc.
- Cell phone and car charger.
- Cash and important documents.