

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION HR Division of Human Resources
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POLICY TITLE Hazardous Weather and Emergency Leave
SCOPE OF POLICY USC System
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RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Vice President for Human Resources
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Division of Human Resources

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PURPOSE

This document sets forth the University of South Carolina policy on hazardous weather and emergency leave for all employees including temporary and student employees, pursuant to regulations of the South Carolina Division of State Human Resources.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Emergency Conditions: Circumstances that would expose employees to harmful or unsafe conditions as determined by the university campus location.

POLICY STATEMENT

A. Authorization for Emergency Leave

1. The Governor has sole authority to excuse employees of State government, including university employees, from reporting to work during hazardous weather or other emergency conditions. The Office of the Governor and the Emergency Management Division will make a determination that state offices will close based on the determination of the county government officials where the campus offices are located with the exception of Richland and Lexington counties.
2. The Governor, in coordination with the state emergency management officials, will

determine whether to close state government offices in Richland and Lexington counties due to hazardous weather. This includes the state-supported colleges, universities, and technical colleges located in these two counties. USC Columbia is located in Richland County and falls under this provision.

3. The remaining university campuses and their non-essential employees will follow the weather hazard/emergency leave decisions made by the county government offices where the campus is located. If an employee is a non-essential employee and state and county offices close or delay opening because of bad weather, campus offices in that county will also close or delay opening accordingly. Those non-essential employees who live or work within the specified regions will not be expected to report to work and compensation will be determined in accordance with this policy.
4. All essential and direct care services will remain operational during hazardous weather or other emergency conditions. The president, provost, vice presidents, chancellors and regional campus deans will identify and notify essential employees by position, classification or internal title and a list will be maintained. To the extent possible, no change of the essential employee roster should be made after the notification of a closing.

B. Compensation During Emergency Leave

When the Governor declares a state of emergency or orders all or some state offices closed due to hazardous weather conditions, the Governor may issue an executive order authorizing up to five days of paid leave for those employees who did not work due to the state of emergency or hazardous weather.

When the Governor does not provide State employees with paid leave, an employee who does not work, who reports late to work, or is dismissed early from work due to a state of emergency or hazardous weather conditions shall use annual leave, compensatory time or leave without pay to cover the hours scheduled but not worked. Employees must also be given the option to make up the hours at a time set by the university.

Compensation during emergency leave does not apply to non-leave earning employees including student employees, temporary employees and research grant and time limited employees who earn neither annual leave nor sick leave.

PROCEDURES

A. Notification of Hazardous Weather Delays/Closings

1. Any closings or delayed opening of state government offices are posted on the **South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website**.
2. The Division of State Human Resources will be responsible for communicating the Governor's closure decisions.

B. Notification to Departments/Employees

1. For the Columbia campus, the university will send notifications using the **Carolina Alert system** which includes text messages, emails, social media and the sc.edu gateways. The university will also notify local news outlets to communicate delays and closings. USC Columbia employees may register for Carolina Alert and update contact information via Self Service Carolina.
2. The other USC campuses have established methods to notify employees in these circumstances.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[SC Code of Laws Section 8-11-57](#)

[State Human Resources Regulation 19-712.01, section K](#)

[Executive Order 2025-17v](#)

[HR 1.03 Annual Leave](#)

[HR 1.09 Other Leave with Pay](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
June 15, 2021	Updated to new format. Clarified limitation of Emergency Leave compensation to include only leave earning employees. Updated information about the Carolina Alert System.
September 18, 2024	Updated to comply with the new State Human Resources Regulations.
May 30, 2025	Updated to comply with Executive Order 2025-17 which allows the Governor to declare closings in Richland and Lexington counties.