TO: Office Heads and Academic Department Managers

FROM: Romy Riddick

SUBJECT: Essential Services During Emergencies or Other Conditions

DATE: October 7, 2014 (Updated October 21, 2014)

In an effort to ensure safety for the University community during unscheduled situations or emergencies, this is a good time of year for you and your managers and supervisors to review policy 5.0.4 Essential Services During Emergencies or Other Conditions and plan your department’s staffing needs for situations that may necessitate cancelling classes and/or closing offices. We encourage you to share this memo with your staff as appropriate.

Please remind your staff to call the weather emergency hotline at (609) 258-S-N-O-W (258-7669) to learn if the University has announced a delayed opening, an early dismissal, or full closure. In these situations, essential employees should follow the direction received from their department. For more information, refer to the policy or the new Emergency Management website.

**General Information**

As a residential community, the University is open 24 hours a day. When dealing with an emergency situation/weather emergency, the University considers the need to continue full services to faculty and students as well as the safety and accessibility to the University for employees who commute.

Employees are responsible for determining their own safety when commuting to work. The University monitors road and University parking lot conditions during severe weather to determine whether to alter arrival or departure times.

**Determining Essential Services Needs**

Essential services employees perform jobs that are necessary and required to maintain basic University operations during scheduled closures or unscheduled suspension of normal operations due to emergencies, events or other situations.

Each department manager is responsible for clarifying employees’ job responsibilities during a weather emergency. Please review your department’s staffing needs and Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) annually to:

- verify the “essential” services required,
- determine and designate which employees are required to report to or remain at work as directed by the University or department, and
- remind affected employees of their specific responsibilities and departmental procedures.
The designation of essential services may change depending on the nature of the weather or emergency event. Essential services employees may be asked and/or required to perform jobs or duties on an ad hoc basis that fall outside their normal job classification during an emergency event. This means that upon review of the emergency, department managers will determine which groups of employees are needed to address operations effectively on campus.

**Pay Practices**

Biweekly-paid employees who perform essential services covered by a union agreement are compensated according to their contract. Other biweekly-paid employees providing essential services may receive premium pay or equivalent time off within the same workweek. Refer to the Weather Emergency Chart in policy 5.0.4.

Exempt monthly-paid employees who perform essential services normally receive their regular base salary.

**Absence Alternative & Flexible Work Schedules**

During delayed openings, employees who are not designated as essential services staff and who are not able to or choose not to report to work when the University reopens must notify their supervisors within a reasonable amount of time or follow call-in procedures for their departments.

Managers should communicate expectations and notification procedures for employees regarding circumstances where employees may be permitted and/or are required to work from home or remotely, or who work weekend, alternative, or flexible work schedules.

To receive immediate notification of closures from University officials through the Princeton Telephone and E-mail Notification System (PTENS), employees should keep their personal information up-to-date in the human resources self-service website, including cell phone numbers, home phones, and personal e-mail addresses.

Employees performing essential services covered by a union agreement may have different requirements in their contract. Also, each weather event has unique circumstances, and closure and reopening times can vary, which might impact pay practices.

The University will evaluate conditions and provide information needed for managers and employees about reporting to work and will clarify the impact on compensation. If you have any questions, please contact me or a member of the Client Services Team supporting your department.