



College/Campus Emergency Closure Procedure ERP803

1.0 BACKGROUND, PURPOSE & SCOPE

1.1 Background

The safety and well-being of Mohawk College students, staff and visitors are always of paramount concern. At the same time, the College has an obligation to maintain the integrity of the College's study and work environment, and will endeavour to maintain operations wherever possible. Mohawk will "close" because of severe weather only when carrying on normal operations would pose a danger to students, staff and visitors or when weather conditions would prevent significant numbers of students and staff from coming to campus or returning to their homes.

Procedures have been established to cover situations when the College remains open but an individual staff member who is scheduled to work determines that the journey to work poses too much risk. **(For Staff Member Responsibilities see Procedure 2.7)**

1.2 Purpose

When any emergency threatens to harm members of the College community, College property, and/or College services, or the reputation of the College, Mohawk College is committed to the implementation of established, effective closure policies and procedures.

1.3 Scope

Extreme Weather Conditions: Refers to situations involving excessive snowfall, rain, sleet storms, tornadoes and other serious weather conditions that may limit or endanger the movement of individuals to and from their intended destination.

Other Emergency Situations: Refers to situations that could involve prolonged power failure, major heating and cooling breakdowns, severe flooding, fire, threats of violence, bomb threats and other situations with potential serious consequences for safety and/or security.

College Closure: Refers to the closure of all college buildings and property to public access and temporary cessation of classroom instruction; all support services (except those designated by the College) are discontinued, and students and staff (except those designated as core) are excused from attendance.

Campus Closure: Refers to the closure of specific campus buildings and property to public access during which classroom instruction ceases to be offered, all support services (except those designated by the College) are discontinued, and students and staff (except those designated as core) are excused from attendance.

Class Cancellation: Refers to cessation of classroom instruction for scheduled day, evening, or week-end classes, at any or all campuses and the provision of support services except those designated by the College. When class cancellation decisions are made, college buildings and grounds remain open to public access. Cancellation decisions may be made when alerts of impending severe weather (weather watches) are issued.

2.0 PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Closure/Class Cancellation Related to Severe Weather Conditions or Other Situations

During or in anticipation of severe weather conditions, or in other emergency situations such as major heating or cooling breakdowns, hydro failures, fires or other occurrences beyond college control, the **President** is responsible for decisions related to College/Campus Emergency Closure or Class Cancellation. The President will be assisted in this decision with a recommendation from the **Vice President, Corporate Services (VPCS)**. In the absence of the President, the **VPCS** will be responsible for making the closure decisions. The Vice-President will designate an alternate senior administrator to monitor the situation and provide a recommendation in his/her absence.

The following factors need to be considered in making a recommendation for weather-related college or campus closures: current weather conditions, local weather forecasts, ability to clear roadways and parking lots on college facilities, and the road conditions for individuals traveling to/from college facilities. The **Chief Building & Facilities Officer** is responsible for providing information to the **VPCS** to inform his/her recommendation. The **Chief** in turn will receive advice from grounds crews/security about the condition of college walkways, parking lots, etc.

On request, the **Vice President, Academic**, the **Dean responsible for Brantford Campus**, and the **Dean responsible for Stoney Creek Campus** may be required to provide information regarding the status of programming in their area and the effect a closure may have on operations at that particular time (e.g. examinations)

Single Campus Closure: In emergency situations affecting only one campus, the decision regarding Campus Closure or Class Cancellation is made by the **President**, based on information provided by a senior college executive. At Fennell Campus, the **VPCS** (or designate) is responsible for informing the President, based on information received from the **Chief Building & Facilities Officer**. At outlying campuses, information on the emergency situation will be provided by the senior college official on-site or designate.

IAHS Campus and Mohawk Laurier Campus: For weather emergencies, or other closure situations affecting The Institute for Applied Health Sciences and the Mohawk Laurier Campus, the policies of both Mohawk College and the university partner (McMaster University and Wilfrid Laurier University, respectively), will apply. The President, or his/her designate, is responsible for collaborating with the designated university representative on decisions related to emergency campus closure or class cancellation in these locations.

2.2 Timing of Closure/Cancellation Decisions

For weather-related emergencies, diligent efforts will be made whenever possible to make daytime closure decisions by 5:30 a.m. and Continuing Education closure decisions by 2:00 p.m.

2.3 Staff Notification

Please follow the **Communication Tree for Emergency Situations** – Attachment A

2.4 Public Communication

When a decision has been made to close the College or a campus, the **Director, Communications** (or designate) is responsible for scripting a message and notifying the following:

- Telecommunications Analyst for College Closure & Information Line
- Senior Web Designer, Marketing for College Web/Internet

In the event of a decision to close the College or a campus in response to inclement weather conditions, the Telecommunication Analyst and the Senior Web Designer, Marketing must ensure that the College Closure and Information Line, auto attendant line, Continuing Education Registration line and the College web site are updated with a message including date and time, even if the entire college is not shutting down.

2.5 Building Lock Up

Upon official closure of the College or a Campus as the result of weather conditions or other emergencies and communication of that decision, students and staff, where possible, are encouraged to leave the building within two hours (after which time the building will be 'locked up'.) Students and staff who choose to remain in the building must inform Security of their whereabouts, and sign out through Security when they leave the building.

If the emergency situation warrants, Campus buildings will be evacuated (i.e. all students and staff must leave the building) and the appropriate communication will take place. Refer to Procedure for Emergency Evacuation for more information.

2.6 Maintenance of Core Services

For the purposes of this procedure, core services are those necessary to enable the college to ensure the health and safety of the college community, preservation and protection of building assets and minimization of environmental damage.

Administrators are responsible for advising staff within their area of responsibility of their status in providing core service.

2.7 Staff Member Responsibilities

If the College or a campus is officially closed, staff who are scheduled to work but prevented from working because of the closure will be paid for the time lost in accordance with their normal pay schedule. If the College or campus remains open, but an individual staff member who is scheduled to work is unable to attend because of weather –related issues, he/she must notify his/her Supervisor of his/her absence by voice mail or e-mail as soon as possible. Where staff elect to stay home when the college is open, it will be considered a vacation day.

Faculty members are responsible for communicating electronically with their students if a class will be cancelled. They are also responsible for working with students to make up time lost as the result of emergency closures. Examinations scheduled for a period when a closure is in effect will be rescheduled; deadlines for assignments and other submissions will be postponed until the same hour on the next business day on which the College is re-opened.

3.0 MONITORING

The Vice President, Corporate Services is responsible for due diligence in implementing the policy and monitoring its effectiveness according to the schedule established by Corporate Services or more frequently in response to feedback from the College community.

Revision Date

May 8, 2014

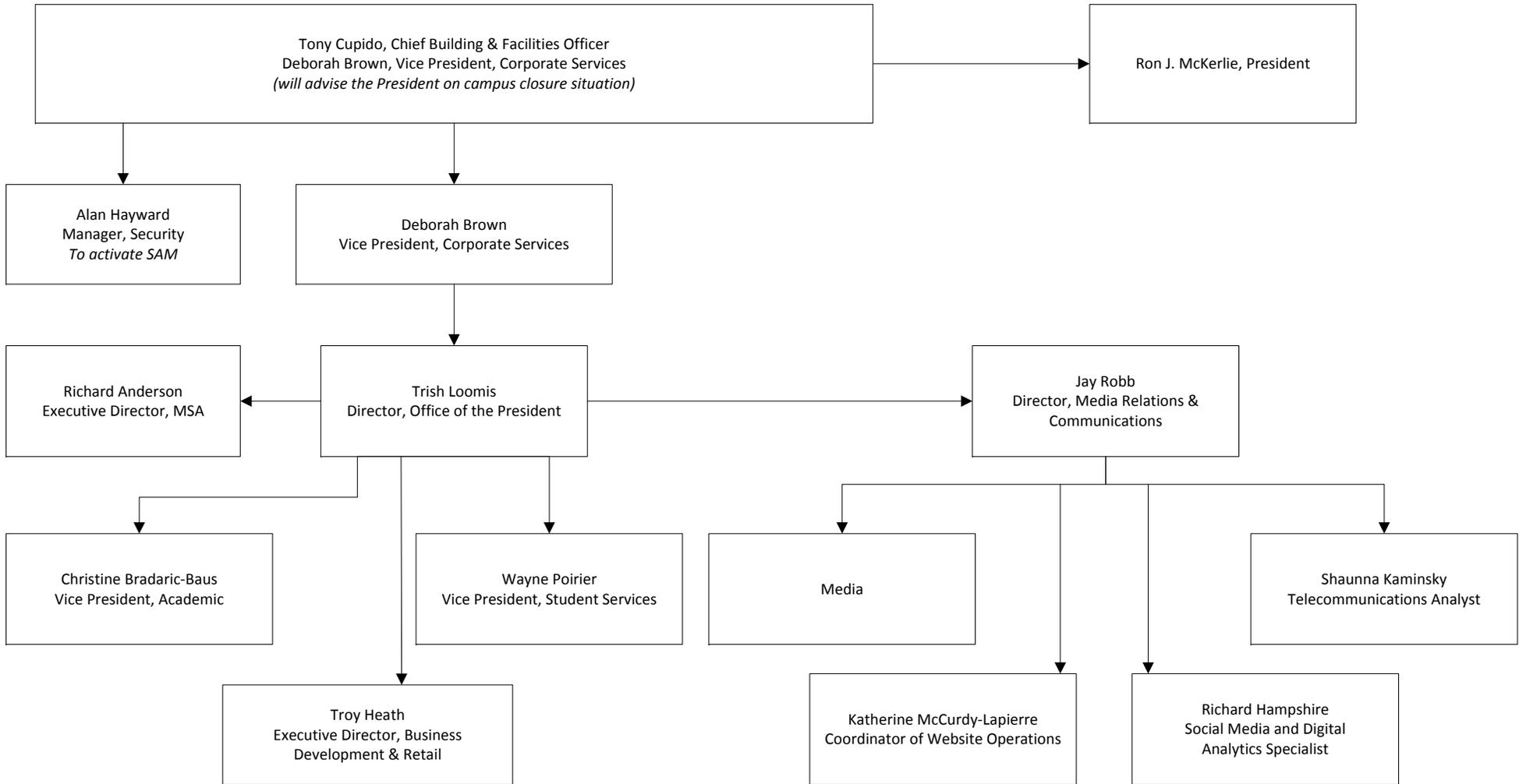
Attachments

Attachment A – Communication Tree for Emergency Situations

Specific Links

ERP809 – Emergency Lockdown

Communication Tree for Emergency Situations (e.g. College/Campus Closures)



Note: It is the responsibility of the person initiating the call to the person below on the tree to ensure that if they can't connect, they go to the next level. This Communication Tree provides minimum needs (e.g. snow closures) and will need modification to address more complex situations.

(updated April 24, 2015 V1)