



## Campus/College Emergency Closure Procedure ERP803

**In light of COVID-19, please note the following changes to the Campus/College Emergency Closure Procedure effective immediately and until further notice:**

- All institutions must comply with provincial emergency measures in place advice, recommendations and/or instructions from public health officials. Mohawk will update practices and policies as required.
- Mohawk Emergency Response Policy provides framework to execute the above

### **1. Purpose**

As part of the Emergency Response Policy Framework, the following procedures are developed to provide general direction to the Mohawk College community on when and how the College will “close” in the event of an emergency or severe weather event. The guiding principles for the decision to close are when normal operations would pose a danger to students and employees while on campus or would prevent large numbers of them from coming to campus or returning safely to their homes.

### **2. Definitions**

**“Class Cancellation”** refers to cancellation of classroom or online 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. This does not include individual class cancellations by a faculty member. When individual class cancellation decisions are made, College buildings and grounds remain open to public access.

**“College Closure”** means that all College buildings and property are closed to the public and access into the buildings and campuses is restricted. On-campus classroom instruction, facilitated on line courses and business activities are cancelled, as well as the provision of all support services, except those designated as core by the College. Online courses provided by other college partners, including but not limited to Ontario Learn, may continue as scheduled. Students enrolled in these courses should check with their individual faculty member.

**“Core Services/Core Employees”** for the purposes of this procedure, core services/core employees are those services or employees necessary to ensure the health and safety of the College community, preservation and protection of building assets, and minimization of environmental damage.

**“Emergency Situation”** refers to incidents 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.

**“Inclement Weather”** refers to severe weather events involving excessive snowfall, rain, sleet storms, tornadoes, etc., that may limit or endanger the movement of individuals to and from their intended destination.

**“Single Campus Closure”** involves emergency situations affecting only one campus, the decision regarding campus closure or class cancellation is made based on information provided to the Emergency Operations Control Group and may affect only a single campus location.

### **3. Decision to Close/Class Cancellation**

- a. The Vice President, Corporate Services or designate is responsible for decisions related to College/campus emergency closures and will determine if it is a College closure, a single campus closure, or class cancellation. This decision is made in conjunction with the Chief Building and Facilities Officer and, as needed, the Vice President, Academic, Associate Vice President Student Services, and Director of Security Services.
- b. The Vice President, Corporate Services will consider the following in making a decision related to:
  - i. Inclement Weather Closures: safety of the College community, current weather conditions, local forecast, ability to clear roadways and parking lots on campuses, road conditions for individuals travelling
  - ii. Emergency Situations: safety of the College community, current situation, expected duration of emergency, recommendations from emergency responders

### **4. Timing of Closing**

- a. For Inclement Weather Closures, diligent efforts will be made whenever possible, to make daytime closure decisions by 6:00 a.m. When a decision is made, it is in effect for the duration of that day (until 6:00 a.m. the following day), unless otherwise specified. In the event of a closure for less than a full academic/business day, only those events or activities scheduled to commence after the re-opening time will proceed as scheduled.

- b. For closures that are required to take effect after the academic/business hours have started for the day, every effort will be made to make a decision prior to 3:00 p.m., to support continuing education classes. The closure announcement will specify whether the closing is immediate or at a stated hour. Unless otherwise specified, the closing will continue for the duration of that day up to 6:00 a.m. the following day.

## **5. Communication**

- a. The decision to implement a College closure, a single campus closure, or class cancellation will be clearly identified in all communication and will be communicated in the following methods:
  - i. Communication tree for emergency situations
  - ii. Mohawk SAM - Security Alert Messenger
  - iii. College webpage – [www.mohawkcollege.ca](http://www.mohawkcollege.ca)
  - iv. College closure & information line – 905.575.2444
  - v. Local media
  - vi. Social media
- b. In the absence of a communicated decision to close, the College will remain open and all activities will continue as planned.

## **6. Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Vice President, Corporate Services**

- Monitor emergency and weather situations to determine if changes are required to normal operating practices
- Consult with others to make an informed decisions
- Advise the College President of any closures or cancellations

### **6.2 Marketing and Communications**

- Provide information to the media (TV, radio, press) regarding the closure
- Update the College website and social media pages
- Notify telecommunications to change the automated message on the phone system providing details regarding the closure

### **6.3 Security Services**

- Activate Mohawk SAM (Security Alert Messenger)
- Place signs on all exterior doors
- Make an announcement on the public address system
- Patrol the campus to ensure safety

### **6.4 Employees**

- Those 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 remains open, but an employee who is scheduled to work is unable to attend because of weather, they must notify their

Manager of the absence as soon as possible. Where the employee elects to stay home when the College is open it will be considered a vacation day for Full time Employees; other than Full Time Employees would be considered unpaid time.

**6.5 Faculty or others in the Academic Department are expected to**

- In the event of a class cancellation, communicate electronically with their students
- Work with students to make up time lost as the result of an emergency closure
- Reschedule examinations that were cancelled due to a College closure or class cancellation
- Reschedule deadlines for assignments and other submissions until the same hour on the next business day on which the College is re-opened.

**6.6 Core Employees**

- Remain at work or report to work as soon as possible in the event a campus is closed, as identified by their Manager.

**6.7 Students: Academic Placement, Service Learning or Volunteer:**

- When the College is closed for an unexpected reason (e.g. inclement weather), students are not required to attend their placement location; however, in the event that a student's placement location is open, students should use their discretion, taking into consideration traveling conditions and their personal safety before deciding what is safe for them.
- Students should refer to their academic area (e.g. Program Handbook or Field Placement Manual) for specific information.
- Students must also follow the policy for reporting absences for their placement location and contact their academic program area.
- Please refer to Field Placement Manual or Program Area regarding expectations for making up missed placement days.

**6.8 Students: Co-Op Work Terms:**

- When the College is closed for unexpected reasons (e.g. inclement weather), students are expected to follow the policies and procedures set by their Co-op employer. Students should use their discretion, taking into consideration traveling conditions and their personal safety before deciding what is safe for them.

**7. IAHS Campus**

For severe weather events, or other closure situations affecting The Institute for Applied Health Sciences, the policy of both Mohawk College and McMaster University will apply. Contact your Program Area for specific information.