

DELAWARE COUNTY
Severe Weather and Other Emergency Policy

Subject	Effective	Supersedes	This Sheet	Total
Severe Weather and Other Emergency Policy	March 10, 2022	1/1/1997, 3/22/1999, 12/22/2016	1	5

1.0 Purpose

To ensure continuity of services to the public, it is the policy of the Delaware County Board of Commissioners to remain open during times of severe weather or other emergencies. However, during extreme conditions, due to severe weather or other emergencies, it may become necessary to delay the opening of or close certain offices. This policy is intended to govern such delayed openings or closings and ensure clear communication of protocols to employees and the general public.

2.0 Applicability

This policy shall apply to all offices and departments under the direction and control of the Delaware County Board of Commissioners and the officials and employees thereof. The Delaware County Board of Commissioners encourages other Delaware County appointing authorities to adopt this policy or a similar policy.

3.0 Distribution and Communication

This policy shall be distributed to all officials and employees under the Delaware County Board of Commissioners and the offices under other appointing authorities who adopt the policy. Employees are required to sign up for the employee notification system for each department or office, as this will be the primary means of communication during weather and other emergency events.

4.0 Definitions

“Business Hours” means the established hours an office or department is open to perform its functions.

“Delayed Opening” means an office or department opening later than its typical start of Business Hours.

“Essential Personnel” means officials or employees who have been designated as critical to the operation of an office or department or whose presence is required to preserve public health, safety, or welfare. Specific officials or employees designated as Essential Personnel by this policy are as follows: the County Administrator and Deputy County Administrator; Emergency Medical Services personnel; Dog Warden

and deputies/assistants; Emergency Communications (9-1-1) personnel; Sewer District personnel including but not limited to operations, collections, inspection, electronic maintenance and maintenance personnel. Additional officials or employees may be designated in writing as Essential Personnel, and designations may be changed at any time depending on need.

“Level 1 Snow Emergency – (Advisory)” indicates that roads are snow or ice covered. Drive very cautiously.

“Level 2 Snow Emergency – (Caution)” indicates that roads are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow or ice covered. Drive cautiously and travel on the roads only if necessary.

“Level 3 Snow Emergency – (Emergency)” means all roads are closed to non-essential employees. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel. Non-essential employees traveling on the roads may be subject to fines or arrest.

“Other Emergency” means dangerous conditions that have the potential of resulting in the loss of life or property. Examples of other emergency conditions include, but are not limited to, hazardous materials spills, imminent dam failures, power outages, flooding, extreme winds, public disturbances, or terrorism events.

5.0 Procedures for Emergency Declarations

5.1 Level 1 Snow Emergency:

Offices will be open during Business Hours. All employees, unless otherwise excused, are expected to travel to work in a safe manner and arrive to work for their normally scheduled work day or shift. Any absence or late arrival is subject to standard policies.

5.2 Level 2 Snow Emergency Issued Prior to Start of Business Hours:

If the Sheriff declares a **Level 2 Snow Emergency** before 6:00AM, offices and departments will operate on a Delayed Opening as established by the County Administrator or designee. All employees that are not Essential Personnel are expected to travel to work in a safe manner and arrive to work at or before the Delayed Opening time. Any absence or late arrival is subject to standard policies, and a supervisor may approve beginning work at the employee’s normal start time or shift.

Essential Personnel are expected to arrive to work in a safe manner regardless of the Level 2 Snow Emergency to begin their scheduled shift. Any absence or late arrival is subject to standard policies.

If the Sheriff declares a **Level 2 Snow Emergency** after 6:00AM, but before normal business hours, the County Administrator, with input from the Sheriff's Office and Director of Emergency Management will determine the best course of action due to the variables of travel and time, per Resolution No. 10-211.

5.3 Level 2 Snow Emergency Issued During Business Hours:

If the Sheriff declares a **Level 2 Snow Emergency** during Business Hours (Monday through Friday only), the County Administrator may determine that conditions warrant the closure of offices or may allow employees that are not Essential Personnel to leave work early if faced with difficult driving conditions. Employees will be permitted to flex their schedule if possible or use accrued vacation, compensatory leave or personal leave during this specific incident regardless of required departmental timeframes for requesting leave. Employees will be permitted to continue their normal work day if they are able to travel safely home at the end of their normally scheduled shift. Any decision from the County Administrator shall be communicated to employees via telephone, text, email, verbal communication, or other appropriate means of communication as determined by the County Administrator.

5.4 Level 3 Snow Emergency:

In the event that a Snow Emergency Level 3 is declared, only Essential Personnel are to report to work.

5.5 Other Emergency:

In the event of any Other Emergency, the County Administrator will make a decision to have a Delayed Opening, to close, or to send employees home during Business Hours.

6.0 Notification Procedures

The primary means of communication will be the employee text notification system. Employees unable to join the text notification system must ensure supervisors and directors are aware and must arrange for an alternate means of communication.

If the employee text notification system is inoperable, each director and the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners will be notified by the County Administrator. Each director will notify their supervisors and lead employees of the decision and direct those supervisors and lead employees to notify their subordinates of the decision. To assist in this notification, each Department Director shall develop a communication system so that every effort is made to promptly notify each employee as to the decision.

7.0 **Remote Work**

Employees of the Board of Commissioners serve the public and are needed in order to provide services to internal and external customers. As such, if Board of Commissioners offices are open each office is expected to provide adequate in-person office coverage. Department Directors will be given discretion in determining adequate office coverage.

Employees who are authorized for remote work are expected to be prepared to work offsite during severe weather and other emergencies that may prevent an employee from reporting to the office.

Generally, employees who have the ability to work remotely will not be granted a delayed start or paid time off for time not worked even if the offices are operating on a delayed schedule or closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Employees working remotely must remain reachable and available for recall during their regular work hours unless approved leave has been granted by the supervisor.

In the event of a delayed opening or office closure, non-essential employees who are *unable to work from home* will not be required to work remotely or report to work during a delay or in the event of a closure. Non-essential must remain reachable and available for recall during their regular work hours unless approved leave has been granted by the supervisor.

Essential employees who are critical to County operations will report to work as scheduled unless deemed non-essential as described in section 8.0 of this policy.

8.0 Compensation Procedures

In the event of a closure or Delayed Opening in accordance with this policy, employees will be permitted to utilize flex time, appropriate leave, or paid time off as provided in the compensation procedures in this section of the policy, unless otherwise addressed in a collective bargaining agreement.

Any paid time off shall be subject to the County Administrator's approval. If the County Administrator authorizes paid time off, employees who are unable to work remotely will be compensated for the number of hours they were scheduled to work during the emergency period. Employees not scheduled to work due to pre-scheduled vacation, compensatory leave or sick leave will be charged for leave regardless of the declared emergency. If the pre-authorized leave ends prior to the end of the declared emergency, no accrued leave will be charged to the employee for the remainder of the emergency. Employees who are unable to work remotely and call off the morning of the declaration that the offices are closed or delayed, will not be permitted to utilize paid time off (if authorized) and will be required to use appropriate leave for their individual situation.

Employees who are unable to work remotely who have already reported for work and are then permitted to go home will be paid for the hours actually worked and compensated for the remainder of hours they were scheduled to work during the emergency period through the use of flex time (during the same work week) or paid time off as authorized by the County Administrator. Paid time off provided to employees due to a cancellation or Delayed Opening does not count as hours worked for purposes of calculating overtime.

If the County Administrator, per Resolution No. 10-211, decides not to close or further delay the office opening, employees who are not able to report to work at their regularly scheduled start time due to inclement weather or other emergency should contact their respective supervisor to request leave in accordance with standard leave policies.

In the event that Delaware County does not have a Delayed Opening or closure, employees living or located in another county shall follow the immediately preceding paragraph in accordance with any event or snow emergency declared by the Sheriff for the county in which the employee lives or is located or is required to pass through on their route to work.

9.0 Board of Commissioners Essential Personnel

County Administrator

1. County Administrator
2. Deputy County Administrator, until notified as non-essential by the County Administrator.

Dog Warden

1. Dog Warden and Assistant Dog Wardens, for emergency pages and care of dogs in the Dog Shelter only.

Emergency Medical Services

1. Director / Chief of Emergency Medical Services and Assistant Chiefs, until notified as non-essential by the County Administrator.
2. All operational personnel with the exception of the administrative staff personnel.

Emergency Communications

1. Director / Deputy Director of Emergency Communications, until notified as non-essential by the County Administrator
2. All personnel identified as essential by the Director of Emergency Communications.

Environmental Services / Sanitary Engineer

1. Director / Deputy Director of Sanitary Engineering and Development until determined as non-essential by the County Administrator.
2. Operations Superintendents and Managers until notified as non-essential by the Director of Sanitary Engineering and Development

3. Regional Sewer District Operations staff including but not limited to , Regional Sewer District Operations, Maintenance, Electronic Maintenance, Collections, and Inspection staff until notified as non-essential by the Superintendent and / or the Operations Managers.

Facilities / Maintenance

1. Facilities Director, until notified as non-essential by the County Administrator
2. Facilities / Maintenance Staff, until notified as non-essential by the Director of Facilities

All employees designated as Essential Personnel must report to work unless otherwise directed as identified above. The task of this notification may be delegated to the Department Directors. If any Essential Personnel are not able to report to work due to the weather, road conditions or other emergencies, they shall immediately notify the County Administrator or Deputy County Administrator.