



 BROWN	Emergency and/or Administrative Closures and Delays SOP	SOP 11.05.01
		Effective Date: November 25, 2025

1.0 Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Purpose

Brown University is a residential academic community supported by a variety of essential operations, including Public Safety, Facilities Management, and Dining Services, which function on a 24/7 basis year-round. Accordingly, the University will close or delay normal administrative and academic operations only in unusual circumstances. In most weather conditions, the University will continue to operate normally. However, no member of the community is expected to endanger themselves traveling to or from campus.

2.0 SOP

2.1 Decision-Making Responsibilities and Authority

A decision to close or delay the opening of administrative offices and functions shall be made by the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, or their designee. A decision to cancel or delay scheduled classes and academic functions shall be made by the Provost. Both senior officers shall consult with and be informed by the Departments of Human Resources, Environmental Health & Safety, Facilities Management and Public Safety/Emergency Management regarding current and anticipated weather conditions, and conditions on and around the campus for safe travel and passage. For the purposes of this SOP, administrative offices include administrative staff (non-faculty) in academic departments. Individual departments may not close without an official announcement.

2.2 Administrative Offices and Functions – Principles and Communications

In making a determination to close or delay the opening of administrative offices, the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, or their designee, shall be guided by the following principles:

- 2.2.1** As a residential academic community, Brown University should remain in normal operations at all times to the fullest extent possible.
- 2.2.2** No member of the staff or faculty is expected to endanger themselves traveling to or from work. If the University is operating normally and an employee determines that travel to campus is too hazardous, the employee may, in consultation with their supervisor, elect to stay home and work remotely, if possible, or use a vacation day or other arrangement approved by the supervisor consistent with the edit. As noted in that policy, the work of some employees is considered non-deferrable. Employees performing duties deemed non-deferrable will be so notified in advance by their department head and may be required to report to or to remain at work regardless of administrative closings or delayed openings.
- 2.2.3** The condition and readiness of the campus to accommodate faculty and staff, including accessibility of parking lots, city streets, and pedestrian paths, shall be an important, but not conclusory on its own, consideration. A parking ban in the City of Providence will not necessarily effect operations of the University, although it will be taken into account, along with any directives or guidance from City and State authorities. When a

City of Providence parking ban is in effect there will be limited parking available on campus, and faculty and staff are encouraged to take advantage of the free RIPTA UPass program for transportation to and from Brown.

- 2.2.4** The responsibility to cease operations of the Brown University Shuttle (BUS) rests with the BUS operator, and will be made and communicated separately from any decision to close or delay opening of the University. BUS, due to the type of vehicles and service, may shut down in inclement weather even when the University is operating normally. Users of the service should monitor communications (generally made via email to the Brown community and on the [Transportation website](#)) regarding service status carefully and plan travel accordingly during periods of snow, ice, freezing rain or other inclement weather conditions.
- 2.2.5** The decision to close or delay opening of administrative offices and operations will be, in most cases, separate and distinct from any decision regarding cancellation of classes and academic functions.
- 2.2.6** When a decision is made to close or delay opening of administrative offices and operations, it shall be communicated to the University community via the following methods:
- The Emergency Information Line recorded message at 863-3111.
 - Providence-area radio and television stations and websites.
 - Brown Website Homepage and Emergency Web Page.
- 2.2.7** When circumstances warrant, such as an early release of administrative staff due to developing weather conditions during normal business hours, supplemental communications may be made via email, Today@Brown and/or the [Brown Alert campus emergency notification system](#). However, all weather-related delays or closings will be communicated via the three methods listed above, and those are the primary locations community members should consult to seek this information.
- 2.2.8** Decisions to delay opening or close administrative operations will generally be made as late as possible due to the changing nature of weather conditions in Southern New England. When weather may impact campus operations on a normal work day all efforts will be made to make a decision to delay opening or close administrative operations no later than 6:00 a.m., with communication of the decision via the three methods described above commencing immediately thereafter.

2.3 Academic Classes and Functions – Principles and Communications

- 2.3.1** Academic classes and functions will be canceled or delayed only in unusual and rare circumstances. Given that most students live on or near the campus and the fact that changes to the academic schedule are substantively disruptive to faculty and students, all efforts will be made to avoid cancellation or delay of classes.
- 2.3.2** No member of the faculty is expected to endanger themselves traveling to or from campus to teach their classes. Members of the faculty who deem it unsafe to get to or from the campus may, at their sole discretion, choose to cancel their own classes. Faculty doing so are responsible for notifying their students directly (e.g., via email, Banner, or Canvas) and making arrangements for make-up sessions. If a decision is made by the Provost to cancel or delay academic classes and functions, that decision will be clearly communicated via the following methods:
- The Emergency Information Line recorded message at 863-3111.

- Providence-area radio and television stations and websites.
- Brown Website Homepage and Emergency Web Page.

2.3.3 When weather may impact classes or academic functions on a normal class day, all efforts will be made to make a decision to delay or cancel academic classes no later than 6:00 a.m., with communication of the decision via the three methods described above commencing immediately thereafter.

2.4 Other Administrative Units

The Departments of Athletics & Physical Education and the School of Professional Studies, which includes adult learning continuing education evening classes, will be guided by University decisions regarding Emergency and/or Administrative Closures but, due to the nature and timing of their events and classes, may also make independent decisions.

Information about athletic schedules and cancellations will be posted at [Athletics website](#). Information about courses and programs will be posted at the [School of Professional Studies website](#).

2.5 Communications re: Administrative Offices and Academic Classes

In all communications regarding Emergency and/or Administrative Closings and Delays, the University will seek to clearly communicate information regarding the status of both administrative offices and functions and academic classes and functions. Members of the community should be aware that a decision to close or delay administrative operations does *not* necessarily mean classes are canceled or delayed.

2.6 Parking Ban Procedures

- 2.6.1** The City of Providence may issue a parking ban when the University remains in normal operation. The University Transportation Department has made extensive efforts to accommodate staff who typically park on city streets and who are deemed essential to health and safety. Staff in the Departments of Public Safety, Facilities Management, CARE, Dining Services and OIT will be directed by their supervisors where to park in the event of a parking ban.
- 2.6.2** When a parking ban is in place, parking for those who have not paid for a parking pass for a University lot will be extremely limited. Accordingly, we strongly encourage all members of the community to utilize RIPTA public transportation, ride-share, or work from home with supervisory approval. Supervisors can plan ahead for this possibility by determining which employees can work from home and communicating this to employees in advance. Information on how to utilize computing resources remotely can be found at <https://brownuniversity.statuspage.io/>. Supervisors can also help by encouraging staff to take advantage of public transportation and otherwise reduce the demand for parking on and near campus during inclement weather.
- 2.6.3** When there is a parking ban, community members who do bring a car to campus and who have not paid for a parking pass for a University lot or have a parking pass for the on-street leased parking may report to one over-flow parking lot: (1) Lot 2, located off Hope Street. Vehicles parked in any other University lot without a visible parking permit will be subject to being ticketed and/or towed.

2.7 Compensation During Emergency and/or Administrative Closures

- 2.7.1 Staff who are released from work due to administrative closings or delays or emergency closure will receive their regular pay. Employees scheduled for sick time (e.g., for a doctor's appointment) or vacation time on days when Emergency and/or Administrative Closures or delays are declared will not be affected by the closings for purposes of sick or vacation time, and their scheduled time will be deducted as normal.
- 2.7.2 Non-exempt, non-union staff who perform work during an Emergency and/or Administrative Closure will receive time off for all actual hours worked in addition to their hourly pay (or overtime if required by the FLSA).
- 2.7.3 Non-exempt union staff members will be compensated and expected to report for duty during Emergency and/or Administrative Closures in accordance with the terms of their respective collective bargaining agreements.
- 2.7.4 Exempt staff who occupy Essential Positions and who work during an Emergency and/or Administrative Closure will receive their regular pay.
- 2.7.5 Staff in Standby Positions will receive their regular pay for the time they were regularly scheduled to work during an Emergency and/or Administrative Closure. Non-exempt staff who were not scheduled to work will not be paid.
- 2.7.6 If seasonal/intermittent staff are required to work during an Emergency and/or Administrative Closure, they will be paid for actual time worked.
- 2.7.7 Staff in Essential Positions whose work requires them to stay on campus overnight during an Emergency and/or Administrative Closure or whose non-deferrable work results in overnight service on-campus will be provided with or reimbursed for accommodations, but will neither receive their regular pay or additional time off for rest/sleep time.

3.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this SOP, the terms below have the following definitions:

Emergency and/or Administrative Closure: An unscheduled suspension of the University's administrative operations due to inclement weather, a natural or man-made disaster, the outbreak of pandemic illnesses and/or any other unforeseen circumstances. A decision to close or delay the opening of administrative offices and functions due to an emergency shall be made by the University's Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, or their designee, consistent with this SOP.

Essential Position: A position that has been designated as critical because its responsibilities include non-deferrable services that must be performed despite an emergency administrative closure. Positions may be designated as essential on an academic year, seasonal or situational basis, e.g., in the event of a snow emergency or a public health crisis. In addition, any position may be designated as essential at any point during an emergency, even if not designated as essential prior to the emergency.

Standby Position: A position that is not designated as essential and as such its incumbent is not required to work during an emergency administrative closure. Note: as outlined above, any position may be designated as essential at any point during an emergency, even if not designated as essential prior to the emergency.

4.0 Responsibilities

All individuals to whom this SOP applies are responsible for becoming familiar with and following this SOP. University supervisors are responsible for promoting the understanding of this SOP and for taking appropriate steps to help ensure compliance with it.

5.0 Related Information

This SOP is not a legal document. This SOP does not confer a term of employment, nor is the language intended to establish a contract of employment, express or implied, between any employee and Brown University. The University reserves the right to change, amend or terminate any of its human resources policies or SOPs at any time for any reason.

The following information compliments and supplements this document. The information is intended to help explain this SOP and is not an all-inclusive list of policies, procedures, laws and requirements.

5.1 Related University Policies:

- [Essential Positions Policy](#)

5.2 Related SOPs: N/A

5.3 Related Forms:

- [Brown Continuity Planning Tool](#)

5.4 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): N/A

5.5 Other Related Information: N/A

6.0 SOP Owner and Contact

6.1 SOP Owner: Director of Emergency Management, Resilience & Business Continuity

6.2 SOP Approved by: Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration

6.3 Contact Information: Director of Emergency Management, Resilience & Business Continuity

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7.0 SOP History

7.1 SOP Issue Date: April 22, 2020

7.2 SOP Effective Date: March 10, 2024

7.3 SOP Update/Review Summary: Prior version(s) superseded by this SOP:

- Emergency and/or Administrative Closures and Delays SOP, Effective Date: December 16, 2021
- Emergency and/or Administrative Closures and Delays SOP, Effective Date: April 22, 2020