Purpose of Policy
UMass Boston wishes to protect the safety of its community members, research, and facilities during periods of inclement weather or emergency situations. Toward that end, the University is committed to operational consistency and efficiency when a change in operating status is warranted.

UMass Boston may change its operating status during and surrounding periods of inclement weather or emergency situations. The University has prescribed the following policy for evaluation, decision-making and communication of the campus response to inclement weather or emergency situations to its students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Applicable to:
This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the UMass Boston Campus located at 100 Morrissey Boulevard and 150 Mount Vernon Street.

Class cancellations at other locations due to weather conditions will follow the local city/town where sites are located and will be announced on local radio stations and will also be posted on the College of Advancing and Professional Studies (CAPS) website at http://www.umb.edu/academics/caps.

Academic and administrative units are expected to abide by any decision made by senior staff regarding operating status.

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Policy:
In the event that a snowstorm, other inclement weather or an emergency situation presents a risk to our students, faculty, staff and visitors in commuting to or from the campus, the Provost, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Chief of Police, and the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities (Policy Group) will make a determination of the appropriate campus response.

The closing of the campus is a procedure that differs depending on the timing of the decision to close and the expected length and severity of the situation. The essential factor in the decision is the safety of our commuting students, faculty, staff and visitors. However, severe weather affecting only a limited number of commuters generally will not result in a campus closing.

When a decision to close the campus is made, the decision will be effective until 7 a.m. the next morning unless otherwise notified. Please keep in mind every situation is handled on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions to the rule will be noted in the campus closure alert message.

Whether the campus is open or closed, please use your own good judgment in determining whether to travel to campus as conditions will vary depending on the commute involved.

When the campus is closed for any reason, students, faculty, staff and visitors must leave for their own safety. Exceptions: designated essential personnel who are required to remain to assist.

Decisions announcing the closing of the campus will be communicated using the UMass Boston Alert system via text and email, posted on the University website at http://www.umb.edu, the campus main switchboard at (617) 287-5000, the UMass Boston Smartphone Application, Twitter and Facebook. Please refer to page 11 of this policy for a complete listing.
Closings:
When the UMass Boston Campus is closed for inclement weather, 100 Morrissey Blvd., and 150 Mt. Vernon Street are all closed. All other locations will follow the local school decisions. Staff telecommuting should refer to the telecommuting policy at the following link: [https://hr.umb.edu/uploads/documents/Telecommuting_Policy_6_30_2015.pdf](https://hr.umb.edu/uploads/documents/Telecommuting_Policy_6_30_2015.pdf)

When a closure is restricted to a location of the UMass Boston Campus, such as utility issues, localized hazmat or other emergency, only that location is affected. However, some designated essential and on-call personnel may be required to report to a different location to assist.

Most emergency closures will require a controlled release and parking lots will operate normally. In the rare instance where the entire campus must be evacuated immediately, the parking gates will be opened to facilitate evacuation.

**Procedures**

**Section A: Inclement Weather Closures**

1. **Closings Announced Prior to the Weekday, Weekend Day or Holiday:**
   **Decision Process**
   In the event of a snowstorm or other inclement weather during the night and/or evening hours,
   
   - Emergency Management will be responsible for notifying the Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance of general road and weather conditions including regional information from MEMA and the National Weather Service
   - AVC for Facilities will contact the Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance (VCAF) to report campus conditions from Facilities crews on scene.
   - A call will take place with the Provost, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Chief of Police, Emergency Management, Director of Media Relations, and the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities and together they will assess the situation and make a decision about campus open/closed status, usually by **5:00 a.m.**
Notification Process of the Decision
- VCAF will notify:
  - The Chancellor
  - Director of Media Relations, who will send a message out through the UMass Boston Alert system via text and email, will notify radio/TV stations, will update the university website, and will send messages out through Twitter and Facebook.
  - IT – Telecommunications, who will put the general closing message on the University main phone line.
  - Assistant VC for Campus Services who will notify Sodexo and Transportation Services, who will contact campus bus companies to inform them of closure or delay.

2. Closings Announced During the Workday, Weekend Day, or Holiday:

   Decision Process
   If during the course of the day weather conditions deteriorate, the Provost, and the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance in consultation with Facilities and UMB Police will determine the early closing time of the University and the schedule for evening classes. Every effort will be made to make the decision regarding campus open/closed status as early and timely as possible.

   Notification Process of the Decision
   - VCAF will notify:
     - The Chancellor
     - Associate Director of Media Relations, who will send a message out through the UMass Boston Alert system via text and email, will notify radio/TV stations, will update the university website, and will send messages out through Twitter and Facebook.
     - IT – Telecom, who will put the general closing message on the University main phone line.
     - Assistant VC for Campus Services who will notify Sodexo and Transportation Services, who will contact campus bus companies to inform them of closure or delay.
Section B: Other Types of Emergency Closures

Types of Emergencies and the Role of Response Departments
Under the University’s all-hazards Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), there may be a need for campus closure due to causes other than severe weather. The EOP specifies that the senior campus official from the appropriate department responding to a given emergency is considered the Incident Commander. These departments are as follows:

- Facilities Management (Facilities Emergencies)
- Public Safety (Criminal Acts)
- Environmental Health and Safety (Hazardous Materials)
- Information Technology (Cyber Emergencies)
- Student Affairs (Student Emergencies)
- University Health Services (Public Health Emergencies)
- Contracts and Compliance/Emergency Management (International Emergencies)

Monitoring Phase
Prior to a campus emergency, Emergency Management or UMass Boston Police will notify Provost, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs of any potential threat that could quickly escalate and become a campus emergency.

Although no immediate campus closure would be required at this time, there would be a discussion and assessment of the threat and a determination of potential future response actions. This could occur for any event that would provide notice, such as an emerging cyber-threat targeting higher education institutions, a spreading pandemic, or any serious issue occurring at other similar campuses. This monitoring phase also occurs in the case of weather emergencies such as hurricanes and blizzards.

Decision Process

Campus-wide Evacuation
A campus-wide evacuation may be deemed necessary by public safety officials and may be effected without a determination of campus closure by the Policy Group, per the UMass Boston Evacuation Policy. In the case of campus-wide evacuation, the Policy Group will convene virtually or off-site to make a formal determination regarding campus status, following the decision-making protocol outlined in Section A.
Campus Closure
When an emergency occurs, the Incident Commander must assess the level of the emergency and determine the appropriate course of action with the input of the Safety Officer from Environmental Health and Safety and make a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance. If the campus is closed, communications will follow as listed under Section A for inclement weather closures.

Communication Resources:

The UMass Boston Alert System – The Alert System will communicate closure via text, voice, and email. To add or change a cell phone number in the UMass Boston Alert System please go to https://www.getrave.com/login/umb.

University Website – The UMass Boston website, http://www.umb.edu, will contain campus open/closed status. Closures will be indicated with a banner. Additionally, there is a “Campus Status” link at the bottom of the home page.

UMass Boston Smartphone Application – Downloadable for both Apple and Samsung devices, the App will carry campus open/closed status.

UMass Boston Main Switchboard number (617) 287-5000 – The main UMass Boston switchboard will carry a voicemail announcement which carries campus open/closed status.

Radio and Television Stations - will carry UMass Boston announcements starting at 5:30 a.m. Following is a list of stations that will carry this message. You can also visit the websites for the following stations.

- WUMB FM (91.9)
- WBZ TV (Channel 4)
- WCVB (Channel 5)
- WHDH (Channel 7)
- FOX (Channel 25)
- NECN
- WBUR (96.7 FM)
- NBC Boston (Channel 10)

Twitter - twitter.com/umassboston
Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/umassboston

Facilities Service Response – To report storm related campus conditions that warrant immediate attention please contact Facilities at 617-287-5450.

Please do not call Public Safety. Their lines must remain open in the event of an emergency.
ANNOUNCEMENTS - WHAT THEY MEAN FOR UMASS BOSTON OPERATIONS:

Evacuation
- For your safety, you must leave the campus immediately.
- Only those authorized by UMB Police may be on campus.
- Parking gates are lifted for emergency campus evacuation only. Parking gates are not lifted for early dismissal.
- This includes the Residential Hall unless otherwise noted.

University Closed/Classes Canceled
- The UMass Boston campus, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, 150 Mount Vernon Street classes and events canceled for the day and evening.
- All offices, including 150 Mount Vernon Street are closed.
- Healey Library closed.
- Designated essential personnel to report at scheduled time.
- Normal campus operations will resume at 7 am the next morning, unless otherwise indicated.

Delayed Opening/Late Opening/Early Morning Classes and Morning Events Canceled
- Staff will report at 10:00 a.m.
- UMass Boston campus locations at 100 Morrissey Boulevard and 150 Mount Vernon Street will open for classes and events at 11:00 a.m.
- Designated essential personnel to report at scheduled time.
- Always use sound personal judgment when determining your commute to campus.

Evening Classes Canceled / Early Dismissal
- UMass Boston campus locations at 100 Morrissey Boulevard and 150 Mount Vernon Street classes and events beginning at or after 4:00 p.m. or in progress at 4:00 p.m. are canceled.
- Designated essential personnel will work their scheduled hours and all other faculty, staff, students and visitors must leave by 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise notified.
- Parking lots operate normally for one hour after closing.
- Normal campus operations will resume at 7:00 a.m. the next morning, unless otherwise indicated.
- Always use sound personal judgment when determining your commute to campus.
OTHER ISSUES

- **Parking on Campus** –
  No overnight parking on campus unless authorized. All authorized overnight vehicle parking is in the West Garage on levels 2 through 7. In order to park a vehicle overnight on campus you must first fill out this form at [https://www.umb.edu/the_university/getting_here/parking/overnight_parking](https://www.umb.edu/the_university/getting_here/parking/overnight_parking)

- **Transportation** –
  In the event of an early closing or late opening, the shuttle will continue to operate its normal service for one to two hours after the closing or before the delayed opening, weather and road conditions permitting. After this time, one shuttle bus will continue to operate, weather and road conditions permitting. Be advised that weather and road conditions may cause delays.

- **Healey Library** –
  The Healey Library is closed when the UMass Boston Campus is closed. However, many Healey Library resources are available online. Please visit: [https://www.umb.edu/library](https://www.umb.edu/library) for more information.

- **Classes at other locations** –
  Class cancellations at other locations due to weather conditions will follow local school decisions and will be announced on local radio stations in communities where sites are located, and will be posted to the College of Advancing and Professional Studies (CAPS) website at [http://www.umb.edu/academics/caps](http://www.umb.edu/academics/caps).

- **Athletic Events** –
  Before making any request to hold an athletic event later in the day or evening when the campus has been closed, Athletics staff will confer with UMB Police and Facilities to ensure that campus roads and parking areas are passable.

  Individuals responsible for areas such as athletics or special events may put a message on the University’s website [www.umb.edu](http://www.umb.edu) and University main phone number (617) 287-5000 concerning information related to particular events or hours of operation.

  - To put a message on the University’s main phone number contact IT Telecom and provide clear text and any special instructions.
To post to the University’s website contact Associate Director of Media Relations and provide clear text and special instructions.

- **Meetings, Conferences and Events** –
  If the University closes all scheduled meetings, conferences and events will be cancelled. When possible, the Campus Center and Event Services staff will make every effort to contact individuals planning large conferences or special events to notify them of the closure. Campus closures may also delay the set-ups for events taking place the morning following a closure. If an event planner has signed a contract for a conference or special event, the university will work with you to schedule a new event date or void your event agreement.

  For specific information about events scheduled to occur on campus, visit the UMass Boston website at [www.umb.edu](http://www.umb.edu) or contact the Campus Center and Event Services Office directly at (617) 287-4800

- **Telecommuters** –

- **Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Boston** –
  - The Governor is authorized by state law to declare a Gubernatorial State of Emergency (SOE). A SOE may be accompanied by a request by the Governor to release employees early or to stagger arrival at work. Such actions are usually in the form of a request, not an order. If the Governor does not declare a SOE but makes a decision to close the Executive Branch, the University will take this decision into account while determining the plan for the campus.

  - The Mayor has the authority to call a snow emergency for the City of Boston. Depending on the severity of the storm, the Mayor also has the authority to release city employees early, to stagger arrival to work or to close city businesses for the day for non-essential personnel. If the Mayor declares a snow emergency for the City of Boston and shuts down city government, the University will take this decision into consideration while determining the plan for the campus.
Definitions:

- **Campus Wide Evacuation**  
  The campus is evacuated for a “confirmed threat to the campus community.” Parking gates are lifted to expedite evacuation.

- **Building Evacuation**  
  A building is evacuated. A building evacuation does not necessarily constitute a campus wide evacuation.

- **Confirmed Threat to the Campus Community**  
  A significant emergency or dangerous situation involving imminent or immediate threat to the health or safety of the campus community, occurring on or immediately adjacent to the campus.

- **Early Dismissal**  
  An early dismissal is issued for closures that do not require immediate emergency evacuation of the campus but rather an early closing requiring a controlled release. This is not an emergency campus-wide evacuation; parking lots operate normally.

**Oversight Department:** Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance

**Responsible Party within Department:** Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance

**Monitoring:**

After Action Reports are prepared by the Office of Emergency Management and Business Continuity, usually within 30 days of the disruption. They include reports regarding major storms and emergencies.

**Authority:**  

**Related Documents:**  
UMass Boston Alert System Policy, FY13-A&F-004-03  
Evacuation Policy, FY13-A&F-005-03  
Continuity Planning Policy, FY14-A&F-006-01