Issuing Office: Administration and Finance **Policy Number**: FY08-A&F-001-01
Policy Name: Campus Closure and Remote Operations Policy & Procedures, Academic Year **2026-2027**

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Purpose of Policy:

UMass Boston is committed to protecting the safety of its community members, research, and facilities during periods of inclement weather, emergencies, or other extraordinary events that may require a change in the University's operating status or workplace modality. This policy establishes a consistent and efficient framework for evaluating, making, and communicating decisions regarding changes in operating status to students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

The UMass Boston campus has developed remote and hybrid modalities for some academic courses and staff work. When a campus closure is issued due to inclement weather, emergency situation or extraordinary event, all classes and staff work will be cancelled. Essential staff who are categorized by Human Resources as individuals who would normally continue to come to campus during a closure would continue to report to work as scheduled during inclement weather, emergency situation or extraordinary event.

Applicable to:

This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the UMass Boston Campus located at 100 Morrissey Boulevard.

Class cancellations at other locations due to weather conditions will follow the local city/town school closings where sites are located and will be announced on local radio stations.

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

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Policy:
In the event that a snowstorm, other inclement weather, emergency situation or extraordinary event presents a risk to our students, faculty, staff, and visitors in commuting to or from the campus or otherwise conducting activities on campus, the Provost, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, the Chief of Staff, the Chief of Police, the Vice-Chancellor for Athletics and Recreation, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities, the Director of Communications, and the Director of Emergency Management (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 and the conditions anticipated on the university's campus.

When the Policy Group decides to close the campus, the decision shall commence at 7 a.m. and 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 on

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campus until the closure ends or are relieved by other assigned essential employees.

Decisions announcing the closing of the campus will be communicated using the UMass Boston Alert System via text and email, displayed as an Emergency Alert pop-up notice on the UMass Boston website, and posted on the campus main switchboard at (617) 287-5000, the UMass Boston Smartphone Application, and Facebook. Please refer to page 6 of this policy for a complete listing.

Closings
When the UMass Boston Campus is closed for inclement weather, 100 Morrissey Blvd is closed.

Most emergency closures will require a controlled release. In rare cases, a walking evacuation off campus grounds may be required. Depending on the situation, vehicles may be left in parking lots in order to allow emergency response vehicles to access the campus without roadway congestion. Please refer to the Campus-wide Evacuation Plan.

Temporary Remote Operations
There may be times when the University needs to modify the modality of operations. In exceptional circumstances where on-campus operations would be disrupted by unusual operating conditions, the University may remain open but temporarily shift to remote operations.

Procedures:

Section A. Inclement Weather Closures

1. Campus Closure Decision Process
   In the event of severe weather related and other emergency situations where it is necessary to close the campus,
   - Emergency Management will be responsible for notifying the Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance (VCAF) of general road and weather conditions including regional information from MEMA and the National Weather Service
   - AVC for Facilities will contact the VCAF to report campus conditions from Facilities crews on scene.
   - A call will take place, usually by 5 a.m. with the Policy Group (the Provost, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, the Chief of Staff, the Chief of Police, the Vice-Chancellor for Athletics and Recreation, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities, the Director of Communications, and the Director of Emergency Management)

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and together they will assess the situation and determine if the campus shall remain open or closed for normal campus operations.

For all intents and purposes, the **campus closure** notification shall be distributed as soon as practicable to provide adequate notice to our commuting students, faculty, staff and visitors that the university will be closed during normal campus operations and be effective until 7 a.m. the next morning unless otherwise notified.

2. Early Dismissal 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 Chief of 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

3. Athletics
   In general, decisions regarding campus closure apply to Athletics and Recreation. Serious consideration is given to the appropriateness of requiring student-athletes, coaches, and support staff to come to campus when the campus is otherwise closed and classes canceled. Decisions about any continued athletics and recreation activity will be centrally made by the Policy Group and the Vice Chancellor of Athletics and Recreation will provide communication regarding any continued athletics and recreation activity with the respective stakeholders pursuant to the Athletics and Recreation Division policy.

Section B: Emergency Closures

1. 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)
- UMass Boston Police (Criminal Acts/Threats to public safety)
- Environmental Health and Safety (Hazardous Materials)
- Information Technology (Cyber Emergencies)
- Student Affairs (Student Emergencies)

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- University Health Services (Public Health Emergencies)
- Emergency Management / SA International Programs (International Emergencies)

2. Monitoring Phase
   Prior to a campus emergency, Emergency Management or UMass Boston Police will notify Provost, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources 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.

3. Campus-wide Evacuation
   A campus-wide evacuation may be deemed necessary by public safety officials and may be implemented 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.

4. Campus Closure
   When an emergency occurs, the Incident Commander must assess the level of the emergency and determine the appropriate course of action 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.

Section C: Temporary Remote Operations

Purpose

In exceptional circumstances where on-campus operations would be disrupted by unusual operating conditions, the University may remain open but temporarily shift to remote operations.
Examples of exceptional circumstances may include but are not limited to:

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- Building utility failures
- Cybersecurity incidents
- Public safety incidents
- Transportation disruptions
- Public health concerns
- Planned security events

Process
In the event an exceptional circumstance is identified the Policy Group will meet to assess if there is a need to switch to remote operations.

Typically, employees will be given one week's notice. In situations where a one-week notice period is not feasible, faculty and staff will be notified through the UMass Boston Alert system. Additionally, the notice shall be sent to all employees through their UMass Boston email. The notice shall also include duration of the temporary remote operations.

Essential employees are required to report to campus and proceed with normal operations. Non-essential employees will be expected to work remotely. Non-essential employees whose duties cannot be performed remotely, as determined by their department head in consultation with Human Resources, will not be required to come to work and will be compensated for the regular workday. A central list of employees who are unable to work remotely shall be maintained by the Office of Human Resources and updated on a yearly basis.

Communication Resources:

- The UMass Boston Alert System – The Alert System will communicate closure via text, voice, and email for weather related closures. For all other campus emergencies and emergency closures, the alert system will notify via all modalities. To add or change a cell phone number, please log in to the UMass Boston Alert System.

- University Website – The UMass Boston website will contain campus open/closed status. In the event of a closure or change to temporary remote operations, an Emergency Alert pop-up notice will appear the first time a user accesses umb.edu, requiring acknowledgment before proceeding to site content.

- 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

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switchboard will carry a voicemail announcement which carries campus open/closed status.

Local television and radio stations may broadcast UMass Boston emergency announcements or campus status information when warranted.

WUMB FM (91.9)	WBZ TV (Channel 4)	WCVB (Channel 5)
WHDH (Channel 7)	FOX (Channel 25)	NECN
WBUR (90.9 FM)	NBC Boston (Channel 10)	

- UMass Boston Facebook

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

Please do not call UMass Boston Police to see if the campus is open or closed. 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.
- This includes the Residential Hall unless otherwise noted.

University Closed/Classes Canceled

- The UMass Boston campus, 100 Morrissey Boulevard classes and events canceled for the day and evening.
- Athletic and recreational facilities are closed unless announced otherwise
- All offices, are closed.
- Healey Library closed.
- Designated essential personnel to report at regular scheduled time.
- Normal campus operations shall resume at 7 a.m. 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. unless otherwise indicated.
- UMass Boston campus locations at 100 Morrissey Boulevard will open for classes and events at 11:00 a.m. unless otherwise indicated.

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- Designated essential personnel to report at regular scheduled time.
- Always use sound personal judgment when determining your commute.

Evening Classes Canceled / Early Dismissal

- UMass Boston campus at 100 Morrissey Boulevard 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 regular 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 shall resume at 7:00 a.m. the next morning, unless otherwise indicated.
- Always use sound personal judgment when determining your commute to campus.

Temporary Remote Operations

- Employees who can work remotely should follow their regular working hours
- Employees who cannot work remotely shall not report to work and be paid for the day
- Classes can be conducted remotely. Faculty will communicate their expectations and schedule changes with students in a timely manner.

Other issues:

- **Parking on Campus**
  Vehicles are required to park in the West Garage during campus closure for weather or during temporary remote operations. All overnight vehicle parking is in the West Garage on levels 2 through 7. Parking permit holders may park their vehicle at no additional charge until normal campus operations resume.

  Parkers who do not have a parking permit may also park at the West Garage by pressing the button at the parking entry device to receive a ticket. Parkers are responsible for payment for the amount of time parked per the posted rates at the West Garage.

- **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

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to operate, weather and road conditions permitting. Be advised that weather and road conditions may cause delays.

Shuttles may be disrupted during temporary remote operations. Schedule changes will be posted on the Transportation website.

- **Healey Library**
  The Healey Library is closed when the UMass Boston Campus is closed. However, many Healey Library resources are available online. Please visit the Healey Library website 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.

- **Athletic Events**
  Athletic Events are generally cancelled when the campus is closed. The Policy Group will determine whether there are any exceptions to a campus closure in limited situations as set forth in section A3. Individuals responsible for areas such as Athletics or special events may put a message on the UMass Boston website and University main phone number (617) 287-5000 concerning information related to particular events or hours of operation.

- **Beacon Fitness Center**
  When the campus is closed or under temporary remote operations the fitness center will also close but may reopen earlier in limited situations. Please see Athletics page of University website, social media and email alerts to Beacon Fitness Center members.

- **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 or temporary remote operations 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

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event agreement. For specific information about events scheduled to occur on campus contact the Campus Center and Event Services Office directly at (617) 287-4800.

- **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 may be lifted to expedite evacuation. In rare cases, a walking evacuation off campus grounds may be required.
- 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.
- Exceptional Circumstances – In the event the campus will be disrupted by a major

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event, exclusive of inclement weather and/or hazardous conditions, the University may remain open but temporarily shift to remote operations.

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, usually within 30 days of the disruption. They include reports regarding major storm damages and emergencies.

Authority: Clery Act, DOC. T99-060, Passed by the UMass BOT 8/4/99, revised 12/14/11. University of Massachusetts Emergency Management and Business Continuity and Planning Policy

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

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