TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 10.02, **Suspension of Classes and Closing of Offices in Emergency Situations**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to establish policy and procedure regarding the suspension of classes and/or closing of offices, including clinical locations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of TTUHSC El Paso employees, students and visitors across all campus locations.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed in September of every odd-numbered year (ONY) by the managing director for Facilities and Support Services, the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), vice president of Institutional Advancement, the v ice president for Human Resources or designee, and the TTUHSC El Paso chief of police or designee, with recommendations for substantial revisions submitted to the chief financial officer (CFO) and the president.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **General Considerations**

Situations which may require closure include but are not limited to: inclement or dangerous weather, electrical outages, malfunctions of the central heating and cooling plant, chemical or biological problems, fire, and explosions. The Raider Shield Alert System is the primary information source concerning delays or closure of TTUHSC El Paso operations for all employees and students.

The safety of students, faculty, staff, patients, and other campus visitors is priority for TTUHSC El Paso. Concurrently, TTUHSC El Paso has research, teaching, and patient care responsibilities that require ongoing and effective business operations with essential personnel. With regard to safety, TTUHSC El Paso will remain open and operate normally to the greatest extent possible. Only the TTUHSC El Paso president, or designee, will determine if TTUHSC El Paso closes, has an early closure, or has a delayed opening. Employees, students, and visitors are expected to comply with instructions provided by TTUHSC El Paso executive leadership regarding campus closure.

2. **Emergencies Posing Imminent Risk of Harm or Safety**

In the event there is imminent risk of harm to the campus community, including but not limited to violent intruder, gas leaks, natural disasters, etc., notification regarding such emergencies and applicable safety measures that will be taken to protect patients, visitors, students and employees will be announced in accordance with TTUHSC El Paso's Emergency Management Plan, as provided in HSCEP OP 76.01, Emergency Management Plan regardless of the campus closure or delay decision process outlined below.

3. **Delay and Closure Authorization Process**

Conditions that may require a decision to close or not to open the TTUHSC El Paso campuses, including clinical locations, will be evaluated under the process detailed below. Public safety is the primary consideration in closure decisions. In this regard, recommendations should be made after consultation with applicable campus leadership to provide recommendation and advisement to the president, or designee, on a course of action.

A. If conditions are such that a delay or closure is in question, the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) will initiate an advisory call with the Incident Response Team (IRT), which is comprised of the vice president for Institutional Advancement, TTUHSC El Paso chief of police, EMC, and the vice president for Clinical Affairs.

B. The IRT will make a recommendation, ensuring it aligns with appropriate safety standards relating to the conditions that cause such a delay or closure to be in question. After review, the EMC will provide the recommendation to the president, or designee.

C. The president, or designee, will make the final decision on the course of action. Once a decision has been made, the EMC will facilitate communication of that decision back to the IRT and impacted university stakeholders through the notification process described below. Additionally, the TTUHSC El Paso president will notify the Chancellor of the TTUS of any campus closure or delay.

- In any situation where members of the IRT are unavailable, designees will be identified to ensure continuity in the process. Factors taken into consideration when recommending a delay or closure include, but are not limited to:
- Current weather and national/regional weather forecasts;
- Current and future road conditions;
- Current and future closures/suspensions of public transportation;
- Current and future status of region and university utilities (i.e., power, water, and sewage);
- Current and future conditions of parking and walkways on campus;
- Current and future operating status of public services, public schools, peer institutions, and governmental agencies; or
- Recommendations from public safety, public health, and government officials

In the event the impact of closure is expected to extend to multiple days, the president, or designee, may elect to activate the university's Incident Command System (ICS), as provided in HSCEP OP 76.01, Emergency Management Plan to provide general guidance and direction, coordination, and support for the emergent situation.

4. **Notification**

A. Once the president, or designee, has made the final decision regarding delay or closure, the TTUHSC El Paso chief of police will communicate the notification of the delay or closure decision through the Raider Shield Alert System to the applicable university

stakeholders using the following notification scenarios:

1. On-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics delayed, but remote curricular activities continue.
   Raider Shield Alert: (campus) TTUHSC El Paso on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are delayed until 00:00 AM/PM due to (incident). All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit https://ttuhscep.edu/tteppd/default.aspx for updates.

2. On-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics canceled, but remote curricular activities continue.
   Raider Shield Alert: (campus) TTUHSC El Paso on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics are canceled on (date) due to (incident). All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit https://ttuhscep.edu/tteppd/default.aspx for updates.

3. All on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics as well as remote curricular activities are canceled.
   Raider Shield Alert: (campus) TTUHSC El Paso on-campus operations, activities, classes, and clinics as well as remote curricular activities are canceled on (date) due to (incident). Please check for further communications from your school. Visit https://ttuhscep.edu/tteppd/default.aspx for updates.

4. Early closure, but remote curricular activities continue.
   Raider Shield Alert: (campus) TTUHSC El Paso on-campus operations, activities, classes and clinics will close today at 00:00 AM/PM due to (incident). All remote curricular activities will continue; please check for further communications from your school. Visit https://ttuhscep.edu/tteppd/default.aspx for updates.

B. Modifications may be made to the above notification scenarios, as necessary, in the event it is determined by the president, or designee, based on the recommendation provided by the IRT that clinical operations require alternate closure or delay schedules.

C. Notifications regarding weather closures or delays will be announced no later than 6:00 am when possible.

D. In addition to a Raider Shield Alert notification, notifications regarding closures or delays will be provided on the TTUHSC El Paso website and social media pages as well as shared with local media outlets as feasible.

E. Unless specific announcements extending cancellations are made, university operations, clinics, and curricular activities that were cancelled under this HSCEP OP will resume the next business day.

F. To ensure that notification of closures and delays are received by members of the

university, all employees and students are urged to enroll in the Raider Shield Alert system as part of their onboarding process.

5. **Identification of Essential Personnel**

A. It will be the responsibility of the president, vice presidents and deans to assure that by September 1 of each year, all departmental administrators notify in writing those persons designated as essential utilizing Attachment B - Essential Personnel Designation and Notification Form. All forms must be submitted to human resources and placed in the designated employee's personnel file.

B. Administrative officers may release essential personnel from their responsibilities to report for work on an individual basis if their services are not needed during a specific emergency. Administrative officers may designate other personnel as essential on an individual basis for a specific emergency if their services are needed by providing notice to the employee.

6. **Employee Compensation for Emergency Leave**

Only closures approved by the president, or designee, are eligible for emergency leave designation. The Human Resources Benefits and payroll director is responsible for coordinating approved emergency leave payment with the Office of Payroll and Tax Service for time keeping and reporting purposes.

7. **Announcement of Policy**

The CFO will prepare and distribute to the TTUHSC El Paso President's Executive Council as a general information memorandum in November of each year (See Attachment C)

8. **Right to Change Policy**

TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without consent of employees.