Emergency Preparedness and Inclement Weather Policy

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General Description

Policy Summary:

Trinity University is dedicated to protecting the health, safety, and preparedness of its campus community during emergencies or significant business disruptions. In support of this, all employees and students are expected to take an active role in preparedness by reviewing emergency procedures, becoming familiar with safety resources, and registering for TrinAlert emergency notifications to stay informed and contribute to a culture of resilience and readiness. This policy also outlines administrative protocols in response to inclement weather conditions.

In the event of a critical campus emergency, the authority to alter University operations rests with the President or their designee in consultation with appropriate campus stakeholders. Each department is responsible for maintaining emergency procedures specific to its area to ensure continuity of services, preparedness, and resilience.

Responsibilities for maintaining and updating this policy are shared between the Office of Emergency Management and the Office of Human Resources.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of the Trinity University campus community are prepared to respond effectively during emergencies or significant disruptions. This policy outlines essential responsibilities related to emergency procedures, response, recovery, mitigation, campus preparedness, and inclement weather protocols.

Scope:

Employees, Students

Policy Content

Emergency Preparedness Statement:

Trinity University is committed to fostering a safe, resilient campus by building a culture of preparedness and readiness. Through proactive planning, collaboration, and coordinated response efforts, the University promotes the well-being of the campus community and ensures effective readiness for emergencies and operational disruptions.

Emergency Procedures & Resources:

To ensure the safety of the Trinity University community, all employees and students are expected to:

1. Annually Review Emergency Procedures – Know how to respond during various emergency situations. Review and download the Emergency Response Guide at trinity.edu/emergency, or see regular test message emails sent via the TrinAlert Emergency Notification System.
2. Visit the TU Emergency Website – Access preparedness tips, safety videos, procedures, and resources at trinity.edu/emergency.
3. Register for TrinAlert Notifications – Stay informed during emergencies by registering or updating your contact information in Workday.

Staying informed and prepared helps protect you and others during a campus emergency or critical situation.

Emergency Decision Authority:

In the event of a critical campus emergency, Trinity University has established clear lines of authority to ensure timely and coordinated decisions regarding campus closures and safety actions –
1. Authority to close or alter operations of the University during inclement weather or emergency

The authority to fully close, alter operations, or suspend activities at Trinity University before, during, or after an emergency rests with the President, or their designated representative(s), in consultation with the Director of Emergency Management and/or Chief of Police. This decision will be based on the nature and severity of the threat to campus operations, life safety, and/or security.

2. Authority to close or alter hours of operation for individual facilities or suspend activities during inclement weather or emergency

The authority to temporarily close, alter hours of operations, or suspend operations within a specific building, department, or activity rests with the Director of the affected area or their designee. This decision should, when feasible, be made in consultation with the appropriate Vice President and coordinated with the Office of Emergency Management to ensure proper communication, coordination, and safety protocols are followed and in alignment with University operations. Departments should also activate their business continuity plans to ensure continuation of essential campus services – see Business Continuity Plan & Institutional Resilience Policy.

3. Emergency action in absence of Senior Leadership

In extreme circumstances where a timely response is critical and the President and Vice Presidents are temporarily unavailable (i.e. during the night, etc.), on-site administrators or staff directly involved with managing the incident are authorized to take immediate action necessary to preserve life, ensure safety, and protect property. All such actions must be taken (when possible) in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management and/or TU Police Department, and reported to senior leadership as soon as possible for additional guidance and support.

Note: The above authorities and decisions are subject to change to meet the rapidly changing needs of a campus emergency or other critical situation requiring immediate decision-making action.

Inclement Weather Responsibilities for Employees & Students:

Trinity University will remain open during inclement weather conditions unless the President or designee (e.g., Vice Presidents) modifies the University's operating schedule in coordination with the Director of Emergency Management and/or Chief of Police or members of the Crisis Management Team. Administrative officials and department heads may not make closure decisions independently, except as noted in the Emergency Decision Authority section (see above).

The closure of administrative offices does not imply the suspension of classes, and conversely, the suspension of classes does not imply that all or some administrative operations are closed. University operations will be assessed given the inclement conditions at the time and the need for core services to be continued, possibly in reduced or deferred mode. The University may operate on "skeleton" crew for a short period to continue essential services, such as Facilities operations, dining, public safety, and other services as identified by Department Directors.

Employee Responsibilities –

During inclement weather, employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to fulfill their work responsibilities. Employees who believe it is unsafe to travel should notify their supervisor as early as possible. Additionally:

- Employees who are absent, arrive late, or leave early due to weather conditions must use vacation leave or take leave without pay, even if their supervisor has approved the absence.
- Employees who had previously scheduled vacation leave during inclement weather will continue to have that time recorded as vacation.
- Employees using sick leave before and/or after an inclement weather event will have the time recorded as sick leave.
- Monitor the TU emergency website (trinity.edu/emergency) for updates to campus operations, check Trinity social media channels for the latest information, and review the TU Emergency Response Guide for related inclement weather procedures.

Student Responsibilities –

- During inclement weather, students are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend class and meet academic responsibilities. If a student believes it is unsafe to travel to or on campus, they should contact their professor as early as possible to discuss class attendance, missed assignments, or other academic obligations.
- Monitor the TU emergency website (trinity.edu/emergency) for updates to campus operations, check Trinity social media channels for the latest information, and review the TU Emergency Response Guide for related inclement weather procedures.

Official University Closure or Change in Operations:

If the University is officially closed, or a change in operations is approved by the President or their designee, the following applies:

- The Crisis Management Team, led by the Director of Emergency Management (or designee), will be activated to monitor weather conditions and campus operations, and will initiate all appropriate communications in accordance with University emergency protocols.
- Non-exempt employees will be granted administrative leave for the closure period, and this time will not be deducted from their accrued leave.

- If non-exempt employees are required to report to work or remain on campus during the closure due to essential duties:
    - They will receive regular pay (straight time) for all hours worked up to 40 hours per week.
    - They will receive overtime pay (1.5x) for any hours worked beyond 40 hours.

In cases of partial office or unit closures authorized by the President or designee, non-exempt employees not required to work must use Vacation Leave or take leave without pay. Administrative Leave is only granted when the University is officially declared closed or in a related state of operations (i.e. skeleton crew, etc.).

Revision Management

Revision History Log:

Revision #:	Date:	Recorded By:
v2.0	8/5/2025 10:57 AM	Pamela Mota
v1.0	8/16/2019 8:35 AM	Kelleebeth Cantu

Vice President Approval:

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