

Adverse Weather Conditions

1.0 Purpose The diversity of County services and programs makes it difficult to apply a uniform countywide policy regarding how operations will be affected in time of adverse weather conditions. This policy sets forth guidelines for the closing of offices and accounting for leave time.

2.0 Applicability All employees of Bladen County are covered by this policy.

3.0 Policy County offices and departments shall remain open for the full scheduled working day to provide support services to citizens, business and industry, unless authorization for early closing or other deviation for adverse weather conditions is received from the county manager's office. All Offices/Agencies/Departments will be given sufficient notice of authorized delayed openings or early closing to the public. Employees will be notified thru an emergency alert system (phone message, text, and/or email) for information concerning deviations in public opening/closing times due to adverse weather conditions.

The Maintenance Department will make every effort to assure the safety of employees and the public with regard to adverse weather conditions. Employees are to be mindful of the weather conditions and be cognizant of the conditions including wearing proper footwear to prevent slips and falls. Employees who leave work before the end of his/her scheduled shift will be required to use earned compensatory time, petty or vacation time for hours taken if they wish to be compensated. Time off without pay must be taken if the employee has no accrued compensatory, petty or vacation time. Sick leave may not be used for adverse weather conditions.

Following severe weather conditions occurring during the night, it is the responsibility of each employee to work as scheduled. Employees who do not feel they can make it to work due to adverse weather conditions must use compensatory, petty or vacation time for hours not worked. It is the responsibility of the employee to make the judgment about his/her personal safety concerning travel to and from work during adverse weather conditions. It is the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor of any decision regarding a deviation from scheduled work hours. The County Manager has the authority to alter the regular business hours open to the public in the event of adverse weather conditions.

4.0 Mandatory Operations

Certain employees work in positions that are critical to providing support services to the citizens of the County, regardless of the weather conditions and whether or not the county offices are operating. Department Heads designate these essential positions, with approval from the County Manager.

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Certain departments, such as Operations, Emergency Services and the Sheriff's office are always essential to the operations of the county; others may be based on the needs at the particular time.

- 6.1 Essential Personnel: Employees essential to the successful and efficient management of an emergency situation shall be designated by their department head and expected to report when contacted by County officials. Failure to be available or to report when called shall be deemed insubordination and will subject the employee to disciplinary actions. *An essential employee, unable to report for their scheduled shift due to legitimate environmental conditions that preclude them from travel to the work site, should contact their supervisor to see if alternate transportation can be arranged.*

Example: Payroll personnel may be designated as essential if the following day is a normal payday and checks must be produced.

5.0 Inclement Weather Communication

In the event of inclement weather, the county has an emergency alert system assigned to all employees home phone, cellular phone, text, and/or email address concerning opening and closing of county offices. Employees are encouraged to insure that a current cell phone number is provided to Human Resources in order to maintain its database for automated calls.

Additionally, Bladen County will notify local television and radio stations of all openings and / or closings of county offices due to inclement weather so that this information can be transmitted via the media for both employees and citizens.