
	<b>Severe Weather Policy</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Policy</b>
		<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>May 2017</b>
		<b>Revised Date:</b>	<b>November 2019</b>
		<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Approval Signature:</b>		<b>Date Approved:</b>	11/19/19
<b>Name and Title:</b> Lilia Bailey, Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer			

## 1) Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to communicate staff attendance expectations, notification requirements, and application of Benefit Time Off during severe weather. Wake Forest Baptist Health will maintain essential operations during any severe weather or emergency conditions while maintaining quality care to patients and ensuring the safety of patients, visitors, and staff. All employees are expected to be available for work if scheduled.

- a) **Scope:** All Staff, Providers & Faculty
- b) **Responsible Department/Party/Parties:**
  - i. Policy Owner: Human Resources
  - ii. Procedure: Human Resources
  - iii. Supervision: Human Resources
  - iv. Implementation: Human Resources

## 2) Definitions - For purposes of this policy, the following terms and definitions apply:

- a) **WFBH:** Wake Forest Baptist Health and all affiliated organizations including Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center (WFBMC), Wake Forest University Health Sciences (WFUHS), North Carolina Baptist Hospital (NCBH), Davie Medical Center (DMC), Lexington Medical Center (LMC), Wilkes Medical Center (WMC), High Point Medical Center (HPMC), Wake Forest Health Network (WFHN) and all on-site subsidiaries as well as those off-site governed by WFBH policies and procedures.
- b) **Policy:** As defined in the Policy on Creating and Amending Policy, a statement of principle that is developed for the purpose of guiding decisions and activities related to governance, administration, or management of care, treatment, services or other activities of WFBH. A policy may help to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promote one or more of the missions of WFBH, contain guidelines for governance, and set parameters within which faculty, staff, students, visitors and others are expected to operate.
- c) **Severe Weather Conditions:** Includes heavy snow, ice, tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding, or other weather events serious enough to create potential travel hazards and/or raise concerns about maintaining staffing levels sufficient to meet operational demands.
- d) **Severe Weather Plan:** A plan that outlines processes and responsibilities when weather conditions are severe enough to cause reasonable concern for critical staffing levels.

- e) ***WFBH Priority Weather Alerts:*** The system used to alert staff, our patients and their families, contractors and vendors of severe weather. It is imperative staff understand the actions required of them during such events. The Director for Emergency Management and the Administrator on Call, in consultation with the Chief Nursing Officer (inclusive of all campuses), or their designees, shall have the authority to activate a priority alert after consultation with executive leadership. The Executive On-Call will be informed of the decision.

### 3) Policy Guidelines

- A. The provisions of the policy apply to all WFBH facilities. Since weather conditions may vary by location, WFBH facilities will operate under similar provisions with the appropriate senior leaders at those locations making decisions regarding activation of the Severe Weather Policy.
- B. The Severe Weather Policy will be activated when it is determined that existing or approaching weather conditions are severe enough to cause reasonable concern for individual safety and/or critical staffing levels. WFBH Administration will make decisions regarding activation of the policy, in consultation with the Emergency Management and Business Continuity Team. The Emergency Management and Business Continuity Team will keep Administration apprised of weather conditions and make recommendations regarding activation of the policy through communication with the designated Administrator On-Call, Executive On-Call, and Chief Nursing Officer.
- C. The Emergency Management and Business Continuity Team will work with Communications, Marketing and Media to inform staff of the Severe Weather Policy activation through all appropriate means.
- D. Assessments will be made based on forecasted conditions as to whether sleeping accommodations and meal vouchers will be made available to any staff needing to arrive to work early or stay late following their shift. Please refer to the Severe Weather Plan for more information.
- E. **Attendance Expectations**
  - 1. To ensure that there is adequate staffing during severe weather conditions, all scheduled staff members are expected to use sound judgment and make every reasonable effort to report to work. Staff members are responsible for monitoring weather conditions and for planning and securing transportation to and from work.
  - 2. Working from home while the Severe Weather Policy is activated may be an option when practical for exempt (salaried) and non-exempt (hourly) staff members. Working from home must be approved in advance by business unit/location leadership.

## **F. Staff Notification Responsibilities**

1. All staff must follow their established departmental procedures when they will be tardy or absent from work due to severe weather conditions, as scheduled.
2. If a staff member foresees difficulty in reporting to work due to severe weather, the staff member may exchange shifts with coworkers, as appropriate, in order to ensure patient care needs are met. Shift exchanges must always be approved by the staff member's leader.

## **G. Occurrence Reporting**

1. Failure to call-in or report to work will be considered "No call/No show" and subject to corrective action, up to and including end of employment, as established by the Performance Management policy.
2. Employees who properly notify that they will not be reporting for scheduled shifts when the Severe Weather Policy has been activated will have their attendance records reflect an unscheduled absence for each missed shift. This standard is higher than that required under the Attendance Policy due to the crucial need for staff members to come to work during a severe weather event or other disaster affecting the organization's ability to deliver patient care.
3. Leaders should use sound judgement and discretion when factors beyond the employee's control hinder their ability to arrive at work.

## **H. Use of BTO**

1. Once the Severe Weather Policy has been activated prior to an anticipated event, if a non-exempt staff member is not able to report to work during their scheduled shift, the staff member will not be eligible for BTO. If an exempt staff member misses work, BTO will be used.
2. In the event of illness after the Severe Weather Policy has been activated, a physician's statement may be required by the leader for BTO payout. A physician's statement is likely not required if the illness was previously reported to and acknowledged by the leader before activation of the Severe Weather Plan or the staff member is out on an approved medical leave.

## **I. Delayed openings/Early dismissals/Closures:**

Some facilities may close (at executive leadership direction) during an emergency event. If the business unit/location is closed due to an emergency event, there may be opportunities for the team member to assist throughout the System. If a non-exempt (hourly) team member is told to remain at or return to home, the team member may choose between using BTO or time off with no pay (for the amount of time the

department is closed). Exempt (salaried) team members that are not able to or not approved to work from home will be required to use BTO.

## J. Questions

Questions regarding how the policy applies to a specific situation should be directed to the PeopleLink team, 336-716-6464, [PeopleLink\\_UM@wakehealth.edu](mailto:PeopleLink_UM@wakehealth.edu)

### 4) Review/Revision/Implementation

- a) **Review Cycle:** This policy shall be reviewed by Human Resources at least every three years from the effective date.
- b) **Office of Record:** After authorization, the Legal Department shall house this policy in a policy database and shall be the office of record for this policy.

### 5) Related Policies/Plans

Severe Weather Plan  
Attendance Policy  
BTO Policy  
Performance Management Policy  
Severe Weather Guidelines – Ambulatory Care

### 6) Governing Law or Regulations:

None

### 7) Attachments

None

### 8) Review/Revised Dates:

1/10, 12/12, 2/14, 11/14, 8/16, 12/16, 5/17, 11/19