

VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

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| <i>Title: Emergency Closings</i> | Policy Number: G007 |
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Policy Statement

The Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind will provide a safe environment for students at all times. In order to ensure continued operations of the school, it is important that designated personnel and essential school staff report to the school regardless of emergency conditions. Staff members are expected to make every reasonable effort to follow written procedures in meeting the needs of students during such times. The Superintendent has the authority to direct any action necessary for the safe and effective care of children. This authority includes the authority to require employees to work overtime in order to provide services and coverage to students. This also includes the authority to require employees to work during pre-determined breaks in the event of excessive inclement weather, in order to make up days to meet educational requirements. The VSDB shall comply with all policies and procedures of the Department of Human Resource Management Policy No. 1.35, Emergency Closings. The additional procedures are unique to the school organizational structure and supplement the DHRM policies and procedures.

Virginia Department of Human Resources Management, Policy and Procedures Manual:

- Policy 1.25, Hours of Work
- Policy 1.35, Emergency Closings

Definitions

Authorized Closing - The suspension of non-essential operations, which will be declared for each shift by the Superintendent and announced by the designation of **Code Red**.

Designated Employees - Employees designated by the Superintendent to work during authorized closings. Designated employees may be required to work during times they are not regularly scheduled to work. Employees in the following Role Titles are considered designated employees:

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| Trades Manager I | Security Manager II |
| Trades Technician I | Security Officer I |
| Trades Technician III | Security Officer II |
| Trades Technician IV | Security Officer III |
| Transportation Operator II | Security Officer IV |

Emergency Operations - A term used to describe the situation when students are in residence at the school and essential school staff and designated employees are required to work in order to ensure the continuation of essential services to students. Emergency operations are declared by the Superintendent and announced by the designation of **Code Blue**.

Essential School Staff - Employees designated by the Superintendent to work during periods when students are in residence at the school and emergency operations have been declared by the Superintendent. These employees are critical to ensure the safety and well being of our students. Employees in the following Role Titles/Working Titles are considered essential school staff:

Admin & Office Specialist III (Administrative Assistant, Deaf and Blind Departments; Student Life Coordinator)
Agricultural Manager I (Educational Urban Farm Manager)
Agricultural Specialist III (Horticulture Specialist)
Counselor Manager (School Social Worker)
Counselor II (Behavior Program Manager; School Support Specialist; Residential Education Support Specialist; Residential Support Specialist; School Support Specialist)
Direct Service Associate II (Certified Nursing Assistant; Residential Advisor; Transportation Aide)
Direct Service Associate III (Behavior Management Assistant; Residential Supervisor 3rd Shift; Activities Coordinator)
Education Administrator II (School Principal; Assistant Principal)
Education Administrator III (Superintendent)
Education Coordinator I (Director of Educational Support Services; Special Education Coordinator)
Food Service Technician I (Food Service Worker)
Food Service Technician II (Cook)
Food Service Technician III (Assistant Nutrition Program Manager)
Program Admin Specialist I (Nutrition Program Manager; Residential Supervisor 2nd Shift)
Program Admin Specialist II (Director of Student Life)
Public Relations and Marketing Specialist III (ASL/Spoken English Interpreter; Coordinator, Interpreting Services; Interpreter for the Deaf)
Psychologist I (School Psychologist)
Psychologist II (School Psychologist)
Registered Nurse I (Registered Nurse)
Registered Nurse Manager I (Director of Nursing)
Therapist II (Recreation Therapist; Speech-Language Pathologist)
Therapist III (Educational Audiologist; Occupational Therapist)
Trainer and Instructor I (Intervener for the Deaf-Blind; Teacher Assistant; Teacher/Behavior Assistant; Teacher Assistant Supervisor)
Trainer and Instructor II (Guidance Counselor; Instructional Technology Resource Teacher; Trainer and Instructor III (Vision Rehabilitation Specialist); Library/Media Specialist; Orientation & Mobility Specialist; School Support Specialist/TVI; Special Education Program Facilitator; Special Education Teacher; Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Teacher of the Visually Impaired; Transition Specialist; Vision Rehab Specialist)

Exempt Employees - Employees who are not normally given overtime pay or compensatory time for extra hours worked. The minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) do not cover these personnel.

Liberal Leave - A leave policy in which non-designated employees are approved to use leave but must notify their supervisors that they will not be reporting to work for the day. Essential school staff is eligible for liberal leave, if students are not in residence at the school. Liberal leave is declared by the Superintendent for each shift and announced by the designation of **Code Yellow**.

Non-designated Employees - Employees whose job responsibilities are such that they are not required to report for duty during an authorized closing.

Non-exempt Employees - Employees who are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA.

Pre-approved Leave - Leave that is requested in writing and approved prior to an announced closing.

Shift - The assigned daily work schedule of an employee.

Procedure

Authorized Closing Decisions (CODE RED) - The decision to declare an authorized closing or suspend non-essential operations shall be made by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall review weather conditions in Staunton and surrounding areas to determine if conditions warrant the suspension of non-essential operations. Weather conditions that may cause a suspension of non-essential operations would be a severe ice or snowstorm, flooding, hurricanes, etc. When an authorized closing is declared, the Superintendent will ensure Department Heads are advised, email and text notifications are sent, and the television stations noted in the Communications Plan are notified.

Effect of Authorized Closings on Designated Employees - Designated employees who do not report to work or do not remain at work during an authorized closing (unless authorized to be absent due to extenuating circumstances or pre-approved leave) will be subject to disciplinary action under the Standards of Conduct and will be charged leave with or without pay. Designated employees authorized to be absent due to extenuating circumstances may be charged leave or leave without pay as appropriate. For authorized partial-shift closings (such as late openings or early closings), designated employees must work all or the part of the work shift not affected by the authorized closing in order to be paid for the absence. Designated employees on pre-approved leave with pay will not be charged leave for partial-shift closings if they work or are on paid leave for the remainder of the shift. However, designated employees on pre-approved leave may be required to work based on operational need, at management's discretion. Non-exempt designated personnel required to work in excess of their normally scheduled shift, will be given either a schedule adjustment, overtime payment or overtime leave. Designated employees will be credited with compensatory leave for the hours worked during an authorized closing.

Effect of Authorized Closings on Non-designated Employees - Non-designated employees, who are absent during an authorized closing, will be paid for such absences if they meet the following criteria:

- For authorized closings of an entire shift, employees must work or be on paid leave the scheduled work day before and the scheduled work day after such closing.
- Employees who are on pre-approved leave on the day of a partial-shift closing shall have those hours of the shift closing applied to this policy and not to their leave balances.

Declaring Emergency Operations (CODE BLUE) - The Superintendent may declare emergency operations when students are in residence at the school and conditions exist which make transportation to or from the school difficult. During this period, designated employees and essential school staff are required to report to work their normally scheduled shift unless otherwise designated by their supervisor. Other employees may also be required to work during periods when students are in residence at the school in order to maintain essential services to students dependent upon the severity of the emergency situation. Employees whose services are not required during emergency operations may use liberal leave. Supervisors have authorization to reassign employees

to duties essential for the continued operation of the school. This reassignment may occur within a department and/or between departments to assure services to students are provided while minimizing safety risk to employees. When emergency operations are declared the Superintendent will ensure Department Heads are advised, email and text notifications are sent, and the television stations noted in the Communications Plan are notified.

Effect of Emergency Operations on Designated Personnel and Essential School Staff -

Designated employees and essential school staff who do not report to work or do not remain at work during emergency operations (unless authorized to be absent due to extenuating circumstances) may be subject to disciplinary action and will be charged leave with or without pay. Employees authorized to be absent due to extenuating circumstances may be charged leave or leave without pay as appropriate. Employees who feel they cannot safely travel to or from the school for scheduled hours of work can arrange accommodations at VSDB. Meals will be provided at no cost or a nominal fee during the time of the emergency. Non-exempt employees required to work in excess of their normally scheduled shift will be given either a schedule adjustment, overtime payment or overtime leave. Exempt employees who work in excess of their normal work schedule will receive compensatory time or a schedule adjustment with supervisor approval.

Declaring Liberal Leave (CODE YELLOW) - The Superintendent may declare liberal leave when conditions exist which make transportation to or from work difficult. Liberal leave may be called when the Superintendent does not believe that conditions are severe enough to declare an authorized closing, thereby permitting non-designated employees, who believe they should not travel to work because of conditions, to call in and utilize their accrued annual, family and personal, or compensatory leave balances or leave without pay. If non-designated employees elect not to report to work, they must notify their supervisor in accordance with normal leave procedures. During periods when students are not in residence at the school, essential school staff members are eligible for liberal leave. No compensatory leave will be earned by employees who report to work during periods of liberal leave. When liberal leave is declared, the Superintendent will ensure that Department Heads are advised, email and text notifications are sent, and the television stations noted in the Communications Plan are notified.

Communications Plan - The television stations listed in the Communications Plan in Attachment A will be notified of authorized closings (**Code Red**), emergency operations (**Code Blue**) and liberal leave (**Code Yellow**) decisions. Employees will be notified using email and text notifications as the primary mode of communication. Employees will be notified of early closings by their supervisor. If employees have questions on whether or not to report to work, they are to contact their supervisor or supervisors through the supervisory chain. Supervisors and employees shall discuss procedures required for closings within their department before emergency conditions occur, so that it is clear whether or not the employee's presence is required.

Interpretation - The Director of Human Resources is responsible for interpretation of this policy. Questions regarding the application of this policy should be directed to the VSDB Office of Human Resources.

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| | Attachment A |

Attachment A

Communications Plan

The following television stations will be notified of emergency closing/inclement weather decisions. Announcements for employees will designate the work status for the day such as, authorized closing (**Code Red**), emergency operations (**Code Blue**) or liberal leave (**Code Yellow**).

Television Stations

Charlottesville

Charlottesville

Harrisonburg

Call Sign

WVIR, NBC 29

WCAV, CBS 19
WVAW, ABC 16
WAHU, FOX 27

WHSV, TV 3

Rescission: Effective Date: December 13, 2010; Revised: June 12, 2019;
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BOV Approved: 9/25/19