Unit No.7, 7071 Airport Rd. Mississauga, ON, Canada, L4T 4J3
(416) 265-5343 info@myontariocollege.com

Emergency Closing Plan Policy and Procedure

Category: Administrative (AD)
Number: AD-016
Responsibility: Vice-President of Finance and Operations and Executive Team
Approval: Executive Team - 2024
Amendments:

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure describes the conditions under which the Ontario College of Business and Technology (hereafter referred to as “OCBT” or “the College”) may choose to close the College premises because of a significant disruption to its critical functions, such as inclement weather, utility outage, or other significant disruptions.

2. Scope

All students, staff members, delivery partners, volunteers, visitors, and contractors are covered by this policy and procedure.

3. Definitions

Closure: means that the institution will stop all in-person programs, including but not restricted to courses, examinations, student-run events sponsored by the College, such as sports and recreation, research labs, business services, and administrative functions.

College Premises: Any area or digital environment that the College owns, leases, manages, operates, licenses, or occupies in any other way.

College Property: All real and personal property owned, leased, or under the control of the College. This includes, but is not limited to, land, buildings, cars, equipment, and data.

Essential Services: Services that are necessary to ensure the health and safety of the OCBT community, preservation and protection of building assets, and minimization of environmental damage.

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4. Policy

I. OCBT will make every reasonable effort to be open and accessible to students and clients during all regular operating hours, however, circumstances sometimes dictate that classes are cancelled, or buildings or entire campuses/service centres need to be closed.

II. The most common reasons for closure include inclement weather, loss of water, loss of electricity or heat, or other health and safety hazards. This policy and procedure is not intended to define all potential causes or combinations of causes that could lead to closure.

III. Should a closure be necessary, OCBT will provide as much notice as possible to minimize inconvenience. Given the nature of emergencies and the unpredictability of weather and weather forecasts, it is not always possible to notify all affected individuals in a timely manner.

IV. Authorization for suspending operations or closing a campus lies with the President's Office or its designate. In the event of severe weather, these decisions will be made and communicated, when possible, by 6 a.m. for daytime classes and operations and by 2 p.m. for evening classes and activities. Decisions will be made for all other emergency closures as quickly as possible after notification of the incident.

V. When a full campus closure occurs, all academic formal classroom activities at the affected location will cease and/or move to remote learning if possible, and non-academic related activities will be cancelled.

VI. Unless OCBT or a particular campus is officially closed due to severe weather conditions or other emergency, employees are required to be at work. Employees absent from work when no emergency has been declared will be required to utilize a vacation day, a lieu day, or a leave of absence without pay. Any exceptions to this policy and procedure must be authorized by the appropriate supervisor or the Executive Team member.

VII. Employees, other than those defined as essential services, are not required to attend work, but are paid for a normal workday, provided they are scheduled to work that day. Employees who work part-time or on different shift schedules would be paid for the hours they are scheduled to work during the period of closure.

VIII. The operations deemed to be 'essential services' that must be partially or fully kept in operation when OCBT is closed are as follows:

a. Communications and Marketing;
b. Emergency Repair and Maintenance;
c. HVAC and Electrical Service;
d. Information Technology Services;
e. Payroll; and
f. additional personnel as designated by the Executive Team.

5. Procedure

I. Severe Weather/Other Emergency

In the event that severe weather conditions or other emergency situations occur overnight, the President's Chief of Staff will contact the President and members of the Executive Committee to advise of campus conditions at 5 a.m. Information provided will include current weather, condition of campus grounds, local forecasts from Environment Canada, and information from appropriate agencies (Police, Fire, Transportation) where available. For other emergency situations, the severity of the event and relevant information will be provided.

The President's Office, through the Chief of Staff, will collaborate with the Executive Committee to make a recommendation to close or suspend normal OCBT campus activity.

The decision to close the campus/College will be provided to the Manager of Marketing and Communications by 6:00 a.m., who will communicate the decision to OCBT's internal and external communities.

II. Severe Weather/Other Emergency – Business Hours

Should severe weather conditions or another emergency occur during business hours, the President's Office will reach a decision based on information it has been monitoring.

The Manager of Marketing and Communications will be contacted to disseminate the decision to the OCBT internal and external communities.

III. Academic and Business Activities during Severe Weather/Other Emergency

When the College is closed:

a. all classes, laboratories, tutorials, and other scheduled instructional activities shall be cancelled, and plans for completion of the learning outcomes will be announced via the learning management system;

b. assignments and other submissions due on the day of closure that can be submitted through the learning management system will adhere to the normal due dates for the course, unless otherwise indicated;
c. assignments and other submissions that are due on the day of the closure that cannot be submitted through the learning management system shall be due at the same hour on the next working day when the College is not closed; Mid-term examinations and/or in-term tests shall be cancelled and will be rescheduled as appropriate;
d. final examinations shall be cancelled and will normally be rescheduled on the alternate examination date at the end of the examination period while final examinations in progress at the time of the closure will be rescheduled on the alternate examination date at the end of the examination period;
e. every effort will be made to post notices through a variety of methods with information about alternative services or facilities to meet the needs of persons with disabilities;
f. meetings and other scheduled events shall be cancelled;
g. all areas and operations not defined as essential services shall be closed;
h. staff other than those employed in essential services are not expected to be at work while the College is closed. Staff for the purposes of this procedure includes all employees of the College scheduled to work at a time when it is closed.

This procedure applies to all locations owned and/or occupied by OCBT for the purposes of conducting its mission and mandate. This procedure also applies to any organizations or institutions affiliated with the College where such inclusion has been agreed upon by the College and the affiliated institution, with respect to the premises, facilities, equipment, services, activities, students, and other members of the affiliated institution.

College-related activity that takes place at locations that are owned and occupied by a third party (e.g., practicum placements, off-campus events) shall be governed by the decisions made by that entity.

During times of inclement weather, individuals should assess their own personal safety in deciding whether to attend an off-site activity.

IV. Accessibility

Students, staff, and faculty who require disability-related accommodation or advice about transportation and accommodation during a campus closure are advised to contact the Director, Student Support Services.

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6. Related Policy and Procedure

AD-005 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Policy and Procedure
AD-006 Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities Policy and Procedure
AD-024 Occupational Health and Safety Policy
SA-007 Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
SA-031 Student Attendance Policy and Procedure

7. References

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Occupational Health and Safety Act

Ontario Human Rights Code

Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), 2000.

Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, S.O. 2004, c. 3, Sched. A

Ontario Career Colleges Act, 2005

The development of this policy and procedure was informed by the review of similar policies and procedures developed by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Ontario registered career colleges.