

POLICY GROUP: NCT 400 – Health, Safety & Security

POLICY TITLE: Severe Weather Closures

A. Background

The College will make every effort to maintain scheduled classes and services, despite inclement weather. However, in the interest of students, employees and public safety, the College may suspend normal operations.

B. Purpose

The decision to close the College completely cannot be made lightly. Only when the situation is extreme will the College close. This policy serves as guidelines for making the determination to close and advising the College community.

C. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the College community at the Niagara College - Toronto (NCT) campuses, including students, employees, governors, contractors, suppliers of services, individuals who are directly connected to any College initiatives, volunteers, and visitors.

D. Policy Statements

1. Directors and Deans are to anticipate the impact that a weather closure may have on classes and/or work responsibilities, and proactively reach out to Managers. Directors and Deans are also responsible for developing applicable contingency plans related to their respective areas.
2. The Executive Director of Operations & Infrastructure, or designate, will make closure decisions, as appropriate, in consultation with Managers and Campus Safety and Security. In times of severe weather, employees may contact their Manager for information on whether the College will be open and if they are expected to report for work. If it is determined that the College will be closed, Directors are responsible for notifying their teams.
3. Directors and/or Managers are responsible for determining if special events will continue, in collaboration with the Executive Director of Operations & Infrastructure.

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4. Decisions to close before the start of the business day will be made as early as practicable, with the intent:
 - a) To make the decision by 6:00am
 - b) That notice of the closure will be communicated to all students and employees via the College’s website, social media, and media channels by 6:30am; and
 - c) To include the expected duration of the closure (e.g., partial, or full day).
5. If the decision to close is announced prior to the start of normal working hours, employees normally on duty are not required to report for duty unless they are advised by the College that their services are required. Campus Safety and Security is usually the only staff on-site during a closure.
6. If the decision to close is made after scheduled working hours or classes have commenced, students will be advised, and employees may be released by their Manager after the following directions from Management or Human Resources.
7. In the event that College campuses are closed due to severe weather, employees working remotely or delivering academic programming online, will continue to perform their responsibilities. All online courses will continue as scheduled.
8. Students scheduled to attend in-person at other sites for Work Integrated Learning (WIL), are to follow the protocols of their WIL host. Students are to advise their WIL host and their college contact if they are unable to attend their scheduled shift for any reason.
9. When the College is open, but weather prevents some College employees from safely attending, resulting in cancellation of some classes, services or activities, the appropriate department will communicate directly with the students or other individuals affected by the cancellation. The Class Cancellation procedure will be implemented.
10. In the event that inclement weather makes it difficult for employees to get to work, employees are expected to make arrangements, to enable them to arrive as soon as possible. The College will not penalize an employee for lateness or absence if a genuine effort has been made to get to work.

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11. When weather conditions are severe, Directors may choose to permit employees of their area to leave early, without loss of pay. Departments are not to close without prior consultation with the respective Manager.

12. If the decision is made to remain open during adverse weather conditions, staff normally on duty are expected to attend work. Staff are asked to take every reasonable precaution while travelling in inclement weather. If, however, an employee is unable to report to work or will be late due to inclement weather, the employee shall contact their Department Head or Manager as soon as possible to advise of their absence or delay.

13. Faculty who choose not to report for their scheduled classes when the campus is open, are to notify their Associate Dean and Program Manager as soon as possible, who will initiate the Class Cancellation procedure as applicable.

14. Should an employee be away for a previously approved vacation, and the College closes operations for severe weather, the vacation day is still recorded as being taken, it is not rescinded.

E. Related Documents

Policy NCT 100 Class Cancellations

Procedure NCT 100 Class Cancellations

F. Document History

Date	Approval/Review/Key Change(s)
Nov 29, 2023	NEW