1. **General**

The Texas A&M Forest Service values employees and their safety. The agency has an obligation to provide a safe and secure environment for staff and visitors. This guideline outlines the factors, notifications, and time reporting associated with weather-related closings or delayed openings of agency offices (including workstations).

1. **Factors**

Leading up to and during inclement weather, the highest-level leader at each office will monitor conditions in their area and determine an appropriate action based on local conditions.

Factors to be considered include:

1. Road conditions leading to the office
2. Parking lot conditions at the office
3. Weather forecast for the next 24 hours
4. Closing or delayed openings of local schools or local government offices
5. Guidance issued by agency headquarters
6. **Notifications**

The closing or delayed opening of an office due to weather or road conditions will result in an email notification to the employees.

1. When possible, daytime decisions to close or release employees early should be made by 12:00 p.m.
2. When possible, any decision affecting the following workday should be made by 6:00 p.m.

The highest-level leader at each office is responsible for making the decision based on factors in their area and sending out the email notification. This email will go to all employees of that office, applicable Department Heads, Division Directors, Environmental Health and Safety Officer, Communications office, Associate Directors, Assistant Directors, Chief Administrative Officer, and the Deputy Director. The Communications office will post the closures to the agency’s main website, main social media pages, and the internal communication platform.

On occasion, weather or road conditions may not result in the closure or delayed opening of an office but may be such that individual employees are affected. When this occurs, it is the responsibility of the affected employee to contact and advise his/her supervisor of the conditions and expected arrival time. Should circumstances change, the employee should update his/her supervisor accordingly.

If an employee needs to work remotely due to an office closure or other circumstances (e.g., children’s school has been closed, road conditions, etc.), the employee is responsible for seeking approval from their direct supervisor. If an employee is unable to work remotely, an emergency leave of absence with pay may be requested.

A decision to close or delay the opening of one office does not necessarily affect another office. Personnel involved in ongoing response operations away from their home office at the time of closure or delayed opening should check with their immediate supervisor for applicability. Employees who are on an Alternate Work Location or who are Temporary Remote Working should check with their supervisor regarding conditions in their area.

1. **Time Reporting**

Any time off in accordance with this guideline will be governed by Administrative Procedure [10.16](https://tfsfinance.tamu.edu/modules/finance/admin/admin_procedures/1016%20Leaves%20of%20Absence.docx), *Leaves of Absence*, Section 7.3: Unsafe Working or Travel Conditions. The use of the Request for Personal Leave form is not required for office closures or delayed openings. Supervisors will provide to the applicable Department Head a list of affected employees along with the date(s) and number of hours of emergency leave for each employee. This should be submitted by e-mail within one business day following the office closure or delayed opening to Employee Services, which will submit a group request for emergency leave to the Director for approval. Once approved, Employee Services will record the time off in Workday.

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