

WORKFORCE PLANNING FOR EMERGENCY AND/OR SUSPENDED OPERATIONS OR EMERGENCY CLOSURE

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide a guide to planning workforce processes when Departments/Colleges develop their short and long-term organizational responses to Emergency and/or Suspended Operations or Facility Closure. The techniques and processes presented for consideration in this guide are not all inclusive, but rather represent Human Resource Services' efforts to provide workforce related planning information for use in developing a Department/College's comprehensive plan for Emergency and/or Suspended Operations or Facility Closure. Human Resource Services staff can support and assist managers in preparing their plans, but workforce planning is the responsibility of Department/College and should contain those operational aspects that are specific to the Department/College.

The information provided throughout this guide has been developed to support easy to understand, common sense approaches, to workforce planning. There are six (6) areas addressed in this guide: Core Functions; Workplace Flexibility; Delegation of Authority; Communication; Employee Health; and Leave Requests. In addition, many of the areas have "Manager's Checklists" designed to assist managers with the process of planning for situations we all hope will never occur.

CORE FUNCTIONS

Department Directors/Deans should anticipate employee absences and develop contingency plans for operations undergoing short-term/ prolonged staff shortages. Flexibility is encouraged when determining appropriate staffing to ensure that "Core Functions" continue. (Core functions are those tasks/job duties that are vital for a Department / College and must be maintained during an emergency situation. Examples include: Security, Facility Operations, Information Technology, and Payroll.) Department Directors/Deans, working with their Appointing Authority, will determine what duties are designated as core functions and must have developed plans to ensure employees are ready to work and can perform those duties.

Department Directors/Deans can insure continued operations by identifying, training, and preparing other employees to assist in the staffing of core functions. This assistance may also be realized by asking core staff to work from different locations or hours other than their regular schedule.

When considering the core functions, managers are encouraged to consider:

- Other organizational dependency on their data or product
- The impact of a function on financial operations and tracking
- The immediacy and importance of a service or function for deadlines or reports

Manager's Checklist

_____ Identify Core departmental functions and the minimum number of employees necessary to execute the functions.

_____ Designate each person with one of the following statuses according to the core functions and identify secondary functions which can be suspended. Examples may include cancellation of sporting events, worship services, and other social events.

- Core Status (The employee's primary job duties)

- Alternate Status (An employee has knowledge of the job duties and can perform the duties albeit at a minimum level)
- Reserve Status (If the Core or Alternate status employee is unavailable, the employee understands the duties and will be able to receive and prioritize information and communicate with managers and if necessary contractors)

Departmental/College Payroll Processing

Departments should have contingency plans to ensure timely submission of leave/time reports, personnel action forms, temporary hiring, and all other pay affecting action.

Manager's Checklist

- _____ Identify staff that have access to input employee time in Time & Labor and determine if current backup staff is sufficiently trained if called upon
- _____ Identify staff that have access to review payroll expense reports and determine if current backup staff is sufficiently trained to if called upon
- _____ Meet payroll cutoff deadlines as specified in the Payroll schedule

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY – ALTERNATE SCHEDULES AND WORK LOCATIONS

Department Directors/Deans should review normal business hours, work schedules, and core functions to determine if their business model can be modified to enhance social distancing*, operational and business continuity, and other emergency response goals. With the Director/Dean's approval, in consultation with Human Resource Services, an employee's schedule may change during an emergency situation. The work schedule may be modified at the employee's request or changed by the employee's manager if an alternative work schedules is preferred, deemed necessary enhance operational and business continuity, insure employee/customer safety, or to meet other emergency response goals.

With the Director/Dean's approval, in consultation with Human Resource Services, employees may have their work location temporarily changed from an on-campus location to their home or another location during an emergency situation as directed by the Department Director/Dean. The work location may be modified at the employee's request or changed by the employee's manager if an alternative work location is preferred, deemed necessary enhance operational and business continuity, insure employee/customer safety, or to meet other emergency response goals.

Department Directors/Deans must ensure that staff understands that it is a joint employer employee responsibility to contact the employee/department/College to determine when and where the employee is required to report to work.

If the "core functions" of a department have not been met, the department managers may direct staff to fulfill the core functions to the best of their abilities; including assigning staff to different work schedules, different offices, and/or different duties if necessary.

During Emergency and/or Suspended Operations or Emergency Closure, an employee may receive a temporary assignment to perform the duties of a higher/lower level classification. This action will be considered "other duties as assigned" and not a promotion, demotion or reclassification and typically will not include an increase or reduction in base pay during this period.

Employees funded by external grants must be paid according to the specific requirements of the grant. Employing units and principal investigators are encouraged to work with funding agencies and their

Appointing Authority to determine how grant funded employees will be paid in advance of any period of suspended operations/emergency closure at the university. When appropriate, the employee should be assigned back to their normal work location.

Unless otherwise communicated, all University policies and practices will continue to be in effect regardless of the work schedule/location assigned.

*Social distancing refers to actions taken to discourage close social contact between individuals.

Manager's Checklist

- _____ Review the overall core functions plan including delegated tasks/job duties and employee designation status with department/staff
- _____ Notify each Department/College employee of her/his designation and associated tasks/job duties (if applicable)
- _____ Establish processes for employees to call-in/report-to-work as required by her/his position's designation during an emergency
- _____ Identify which employees could telecommute or work on alternative work schedules
 - Consider what types of systems access needed would be needed by each telecommuter i.e. applications or only e-mail and/or voice communications
 - Consider having a laptop computer that is pre-loaded with necessary software, which may be checked out on an emergency basis by employees who do not already have the necessary equipment to telecommute
 - Consider alternative work schedules for those authorized to telecommute to reduce peak demands on Information Technology systems
 - Contact your Department/College or University IT staff with questions
 - Requests to telecommute/work alternative schedules will be approved or denied by the employee's Director/Dean with a copy to Human Resources
 - This must be communicated to the affected employee(s) and expectations documented (copy to Human Resource Services)
 - Upon Director/Dean approval managers may document directive to telecommute/work alternate schedule via e-mail, memorandum, fax or other method with copy to Human Resources
- _____ Manager/Employee ensures telecommuting arrangements adhere to State and University policies including those governing IT Resource Utilization

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Department Directors/Deans are responsible for establishing a Department/College management line of succession and identifying alternative lines of succession for employees (may be outside of the Department/College) to assume the leadership roles in the event Department/College management personnel are unavailable.

Manager's Checklist

- _____ Identify and communicate each employee's area of responsibility
- _____ Provide Organizational Chart for all department/staff
- _____ Capture and document an Emergency Contact List for Employees
 - Home Phone

- Cell Phone
- E-mail
- Emergency Contact Name and Phone Number

- _____ Determine if personnel in the Department/College should be cross trained in other areas
- _____ Develop a method to provide information and needed items (computer passwords, calendars for approved time off, office keys, etc. to personnel identified in the Department/College
- _____ Ensure employees know the operations of the Department/College, have the ability to effectively perform assigned duties with minimal or no supervision, and clearly understand the scope of authority and duties delegated and any constraints
- _____ Develop and utilize a shared calendar for better coordination and communication of activities and absences

Employee Checklist

- _____ Join the University's "OPT IN" Emergency Alert System
- _____ Provide your Department/College with your current emergency contact information
- _____ Make sure that your current address and contact information is updated on BroncoWeb
- _____ Discuss with manager the core function plans that your Department/College may have
- _____ Review with your manager any alternative work arrangements such as working from home or another location where you could work
- _____ Inform your manager of any cross training you have completed for other positions in your Department/College.
- _____ Communicated any specific requests and needs to the department e.g. transportation concerns, technology needs, scheduling limitations, etc., that you may have

COMMUNICATION PLANNING

Department Directors/Deans should develop a crisis communication plan/process for the Department/College and consider the following:

- Provide accurate and timely information
- Encompass all pertinent individuals within and outside the department
- Determine the type(s) of information that may need to be communicated to each affected "audience"
- Effectively responds to the circulation of any conflicting information, misinformation, and/or rumors

Communication needs:

- Develop and regularly review the emergency communications plan with all employees
- Where possible, prepare basic templates and other communications materials in advance, and update them as needed
- Monitor the effectiveness of communication messages, vehicles, and timing

Communications mediums/technologies:

- Establish procedures to ensure technology such as networks and servers are readily available, tested, and backup up
- Ensure access to laptops, fax machines, and other hardware for appropriate personnel

- Prepare the Department/College communications team

Manager's Checklist

- _____ Schedule crisis communication planning for all employees who will have a communications role
- _____ Identify which employees will have authority to communicate on behalf of the Department/College with other employees

EMPLOYEE HEALTH

If an employee appears to have a contagious/infectious illness, the employee may be required to leave the workplace. Managers must receive approval from the Director/Dean **AND** HRS prior to requiring an ill employee to involuntarily leave the workplace.

If an employee is sent home because the employee may have a contagious/infectious illness, the employee should not be allowed to transport themselves home and the Department/College should work with the employee's family to ensure safe transport. A private provider, such as a taxi company, may be used and department may request reimbursement through purchasing processes.

An employee who is sent home because of a contagious/infectious illness may use leave accruals in accordance with University Leave Policies governing leave utilization for Classified, Professional, or Faculty, depending on the employee's occupational category.

For suspected cases of the H1N1 virus:

- Employees should not report to work if experiencing flu like symptoms
- Employees should not return to work until 24 hours after fever
- Current data suggests that the employee will be absent from work for between five (5) to seven (7) days
- In most situations BSU employees will not be required to provide medical documentation to return to work. Please contact HRS if special circumstances warrant discussion.
- Contact Human Resource Services for questions concerning expedited application of shared leave requests if necessary

When an employee returns to work, depending upon the Department/College needs, the manager will contact the employee if the shift, work location, or unit has temporarily changed and advise the employee of the work expectations.

LEAVE REQUESTS

The Governor or University President can declare the closure of the University, and the University President may direct the suspension of operations or closure of a Department. Classified employees not required to work during an emergency closure shall be authorized administrative leave with pay to cover their scheduled hours of work during the closure or inaccessibility. Employees who work during the declared closure or inaccessibility shall be, in addition to regular salary, granted time off equal to the number of hours actually worked.

Professional staff employees may be authorized administrative leave with pay to cover their scheduled hours of work during the closure or inaccessibility. If a Professional staff employee is required to work, no additional compensation shall be awarded.

An emergency situation such as the H1N1 virus may have a significant impact on the utilization and/or granting of requests for annual leave, compensatory time off, and/or unpaid leave. In cases of emergency, managers have the discretion to deny or modify requests for leave off and/or rescind previously authorized leave with the exception of sick/FML.

Prior to rescinding a request to use leave, the manager should attempt to staff the core function through other available means. Rescission of an employee's leave, which is already in progress, may be reasonable based upon business necessity and the employee's ability to report to work. For example, it would be reasonable to require that an employee who is on vacation at home to report to work, but unreasonable to require an employee who is on vacation out of the area or out of the country, to report to work.

When rescinding leave, the manager shall have direct contact with the employee, if possible, to ensure that the manager understands the circumstances of the employee's leave and to verify that employee received the directive to report to duty. Rescission of paid leave should be confirmed in writing with a copy sent to HRS.

Department managers may review the duties of the employee who is on leave and, as an option, determine if those duties may be accomplished via temporary telecommuting in lieu of returning to the worksite.

As always, Departments/Colleges should make every attempt to assure employees are allowed to utilize their leave prior to requiring an employee to work past their maximum vacation accrual levels. For Classified Employees, the Department may work with HRS to request an exception to the accrual limit from the State Board of Examiners. However, for Professional Staff Employees, the State Board of Education does not currently have an exception to the cap on annual accrual.

Should rescission of compensatory time off occur, Director/Dean may direct the payment of overtime compensation in lieu of allowing an employee to accrue compensatory time above the 240 hour maximum accrual limits.