

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

MEDICAL CENTER

Policy: Inclement Weather

Policy Number	OP 30-10.08
Chapter	Operations
Effective Date	October 2010
Approval Date	Month Year
Supersedes	April 2003

Applicable to

VUH
 Children’s Hospital
 VMG
 VMG Off-site locations
 VPH
 VUSN
 VUSM
 Other:

Team Members Performing

All faculty & staff
 Faculty & staff providing direct patient care or contact
 MD
 House Staff
 APRN/PA
 RN
 LPN
 Other:

Lead Author & Content Experts

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SPECIFIC EDUCATION REQUIRED:
 YES
 NO
 If yes, see section on “Additional Competencies Required”

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I. Purpose:

To establish Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) expectations concerning faculty/housestaff/staff presence at work during periods of inclement weather. This policy does not apply to periods during which VUMC Emergency Operations Plan is in effect. When the VUMC Emergency Operations Plan is in effect, all VUMC faculty/housestaff/staff are expected to follow the Emergency Operations Plan.

II. Policy:

VUMC remains open at all times, maintains staffing levels sufficient to continuously meet the needs of its patients, and has plans in place for the safety of VUMC faculty/housestaff/staff during periods of inclement weather.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Inclement Weather Event:** the existence of hazardous weather conditions that pose a threat to life or property.
- B. **Yellow Alert Standby for Inclement Weather Announcement:** Standby, prepare for inclement weather.
- C. **Orange Alert Inclement Weather Announcement:** Inclement Weather is in the area and has the potential to disrupt normal medical center operations. The VUMC Emergency Operations Plan is activated and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is opened to handle the event
- D. **For other VUMC Emergency Operations Plan and weather related definitions see Attachment**

IV. Specific Information:

- A. Inclement Weather Readiness:
 - 1. If inclement weather is predicted, Medical Staff Leadership and all Unit/Department Managers/ and Supervisors are responsible for reviewing the staffing needs of their areas; and planning proactively to meet the area's patient care needs. Medical Staff Leadership, Unit/Department Managers and Supervisors will re-evaluate and adjust staffing plans as necessary and appropriate in

the event of procedure/clinic cancellations or other changes in circumstances.

2. When a Yellow Alert is in effect, all faculty/housestaff/staff are required to report to work as scheduled.
3. When an Orange Alert is in effect, scheduled faculty/housestaff/staff are required to report to work (absences from work due to circumstances beyond an individual's control are handled on a case-by-case basis) per their departmental sub-plans. As workforce decisions are made in the Emergency Operations Center, the Incident Commander or designee is authorized to retain, release or recall faculty/housestaff/staff as needed in order to meet the patient care mission of VUMC and/or ensure the safety of VUMC faculty/housestaff/staff. Due to the regional nature of inclement weather, the Incident Commander may delegate decision-making authority regarding retaining, releasing or recalling faculty/housestaff/staff who work in locations geographically removed from the main medical center campus to management over those locations.

- B. Needs Assessment for Department Managers, Supply Chain, Nutrition Services, Pharmacy, Linen Services and others as deemed necessary.

When an impending inclement weather event makes regularly scheduled delivery of equipment, supplies, food services and pharmaceuticals uncertain, provision is made to obtain sufficient quantities of supplies in advance of the onset of the inclement weather.

- C. Departmental and Faculty/Housestaff/Staff Individual Planning

1. Each department is required to have a departmental emergency operations sub plan that includes expectations for reporting to work during an inclement weather yellow or orange alert.
2. Faculty/Housestaff/Staff attendance is critical to the ability of VUMC to provide services and maintain operations. All faculty/housestaff/staff are responsible for having a plan in place to enable them to meet their personal responsibilities and still report to and remain at work as scheduled should an inclement weather event occur.

D. Failure to Report to Work

1. Non-exempt staff members who do not report to work for their scheduled shift (per the applicable department sub-plan) during an inclement weather event will be considered absent and will not be paid as set forth in the Vanderbilt Attendance and Punctuality policy (excluding absence for a qualified leave of absence). Non-exempt staff members who are unable to report to work as scheduled are responsible for notifying the department of the absence in accordance with departmental call-in procedures. Non-exempt staff who do not report to work due to an inclement weather event are placed into a no pay status. Note: This is an exception to the requirement that staff utilize all appropriate accruals before going into an unpaid status.
2. Cases of exempt faculty/housestaff/staff members who do not report to work (per the applicable department sub-plan) during inclement weather will be handled in accordance with applicable VUMC Medical Staff Bylaws and Rules and Regulations, The Housestaff Manual, and applicable labor laws and regulations. Before an exempt faculty/housestaff/staff member can take unpaid time, the department should consult Employee Relations for guidance.

E. Early Release of Faculty/Housestaff/Staff

1. While a yellow alert is in effect, faculty/housestaff/staff may not leave work unless and until they are released by Medical Staff Leadership or their Manager/ Supervisor or designee.
2. While an orange alert is in effect, faculty/housestaff/staff may not leave work unless and until they are released by the Incident Commander or designee.

F. Faculty/Housestaff/Staff Accommodations

1. In instances of inclement weather and based on the availability of space and resources, the Administrator on Call (AOC) or Administrative Coordinator (AC) may activate the onsite Faculty/Housestaff/Staff Accommodations Plan. In this situation, large conference rooms for male and female faculty/housestaff/staff are set-up with air mattresses or cots. Shower facilities are designated by the AOC or AC at the time of

plan activation. Faculty/Housestaff/Staff are required to register for accommodations by calling the Office of Bed Management in the adult hospital (3-8193). Activation of the Faculty/Housestaff/Staff Accommodations Plan is communicated via the hospital paging system and Medical Center Communications.

2. Faculty/Housestaff/Staff are not permitted to sleep in patient rooms or patient care areas with the exception of designated housestaff on-call rooms.

G. Faculty/Housestaff/Staff Communication

During an Inclement Weather event faculty/staff are updated via the following communications modes:

1. Overhead Announcements;
2. Alphanumeric Paging System;
3. Medical Center Communications email system

V. References:

VUMC Policies Database. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <https://mcapps.mc.vanderbilt.edu/E-Manual/Hpolicy.nsf>
[OP 30-10.12](#) Lodging Assistance: Designated Hospital Staff

VUMC Human Resources Policies and Procedures. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://hr.vanderbilt.edu/policies/index.htm>
[HR-026](#) Attendance and Punctuality
[HR-030](#) Hours of Work

VUMC Emergency Operations Plan. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/ep/>

National Weather Service website. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>

American Cross website. Retrieved November 28, 2011 from <http://72.3.171.147/#SITE>

VI. Endorsement:

Operations Policy Committee	Date
Luke Gregory Executive Director & CEO Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt	Date
David Posch CEO, Vanderbilt University Hospital and Clinics Executive Director, Vanderbilt Medical Group President, Vanderbilt Integrated Providers	Date

VII. Approval:

Colleen Conway-Welch PhD, CNM, FAAN, FANCM Nancy & Hilliard Travis Professor of Nursing Dean, Vanderbilt School of Nursing	Date
Marilyn Dubree MSN, RN, NE-BC Executive Chief Nursing Officer	Date
C. Wright Pinson MBA, MD Deputy Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs CEO of the Hospitals and Clinics for VUMC	Date
David Raiford MD Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs	Date