

**KITSAP COUNTY PERSONNEL MANUAL  
POLICY REGARDING INCLEMENT WEATHER, NATURAL DISASTERS,  
AND WORK CLOSURES**

**PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for employees on reporting to work or departing from work in the event of inclement weather, natural disaster and other conditions that impact an employee's ability to perform work.

**POLICY APPLICATION**

Policy applies to all Kitsap County employees, except those who have been identified by their Employing Official as "Emergency Essential" or "First Responders."

"Emergency Essential" or "First Responders" are employees who are designated as such by their Employing Official, due to requirements for public safety and health, maintenance and/or protection of critical County facilities, infrastructure, equipment and resources. Specifically excluded from this policy are the operations of Medical Examiner, Emergency Management, Sheriff, Juvenile Detention, Public Works Department, Kitsap1, and Kitsap Recovery Center. Employing Officials with responsibility for these operations will determine what services and staffing must be maintained in inclement weather and other emergent situations.

Employing Officials may designate any employee essential and required to report to work in the event of inclement weather or natural disaster, depending on operational needs and the particular job functions required during that event. If essential workers are required to report to a County worksite, the Employing Official must ensure that a supervisor is also on site.

County departments with response requirements during emergencies or inclement weather incidents should identify and inform employees about policies for reporting to work or updating status during emergency situations or inclement weather that meet the department's operational requirements. The Employing Official may determine which operations need to be provided during a period of limited operations or emergency closure. Employees will be notified if they are required to work at their regular or alternative work location. Departments will inform employees of their designation as Emergency Essential or First Responder status and/or of their reporting requirements during an emergency. Employees designated as Emergency Essential or First Responders will be required to use earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave for absences on days of closures. Other employees who were instructed and informed to work at an alternative work location, including teleworking, will also be required to use earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave for absences on days of closures. If no paid leave is available, employees will be placed on unpaid leave of absences on days of closure. Extra Help employees not working will not be paid during a closure.

In accordance with Appendix I (Telework Policy), in the event circumstances such as a power failure prohibit the telecommuter from performing their duties while working at the alternative worksite, the telecommuter shall immediately contact their supervisor for further instructions. These instructions may include requiring the employee to report to the courthouse Campus or other County worksite. If not required to report to an alternative worksite, at the employee's choice, they can utilize vacation, compensatory time, or any unused floating holidays.

If the primary worksite is closed due to an emergency or inclement weather, the supervisor will contact the employee. A telecommuter should continue to work at the telework-site.

See the Guide for answers to other Frequently Asked Questions regarding telecommuting and inclement weather or County closures.

## **POLICY**

### **County Facilities to Remain Open**

1. Regardless of inclement weather, natural disasters, or related conditions, it is the intent of Kitsap County that all County facilities and activities shall be open and in operation to provide services to citizens during established business hours unless an emergency event renders the County facility unsafe or inoperable.
2. Employee(s) unable to report to work should notify their supervisor before the start of their scheduled shift and will be granted the option of utilizing any earned compensatory time or accrued annual leave. If no earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave is available, the employee shall be on unpaid leave during periods of absence. Sick leave cannot be used for time lost due to inclement weather, natural disaster and related conditions.
3. The Employing Official is responsible for ensuring all essential services and operations are being performed and may require temporary re-assignment of duties of those employees who have reported to work or to require employees to report to work to perform reassigned duties.

### **When Closures Are Required and Application to Non-Emergency Essential Staff**

4. Closure of designated facilities or all County facilities will only be made in response to emergencies relating to natural disaster (including but not limited to fires, earthquakes, landslides, windstorms, snow/ice storms) and related hazards that prevent the opening or continued operations of County facilities and requires the suspension of services therein.
5. Employee safety is paramount. Employees who wish to delay their start time or leave work early due to personal commute concerns relating to the inclement weather situation will, with supervisor's prior approval, be given the option of utilizing any earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave.

6. In the event of a delayed opening, regular employees who reported to work as instructed for the delayed opening will be paid for their entire scheduled workday and will not be required to use leave. If an employee does not report to work the employee will use vacation leave or any earned compensatory time. See #8 for employees already in a leave status. If no earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave is available, the employee shall be on unpaid leave during periods of absence. Employees who work flex schedules shall not be required to report prior to the scheduled facility opening. Teleworkers and essential workers shall continue to work their regular schedules with no delay.

**With a County-announced delay, employees may use “County Closure” time off in Workday from their start of shift until the announced delayed start time (i.e. 10 a.m.)**

Employees shall report regular hours for time worked after arrival through the end of the scheduled shift. Employee safety is our priority. If an employee cannot report to work by the announced delayed start time, they may request approval to use vacation leave or accrued compensatory time.

7. In the event of an early closure, employees who were at work when the closure decision was implemented will be sent home and may be instructed to telework for the remainder of their shift. Employees for whom telework is not required will be paid for the remainder of their entire scheduled shift and will not be required to use leave. If an employee leaves prior to the closure the employee shall use accrued vacation leave or earned compensatory time from the time of departure to the end of regular shift. Please refer to #5.
8. Employees who are already in a leave status (vacation, compensatory, sick leave, leave without pay, etc.) when the delayed opening or early closure is implemented will not be allowed to change their leave status. Employees scheduled for remote telework at the time of the closure are not eligible for closure pay, unless their job duties rely on open County operations, as determined by the Employing Official.
9. If a full day closure is announced in advance of the workday, employees not in a leave status will be paid for their entire scheduled work day and will not be required to use leave. Employees who are already in a leave status (vacation, compensatory, sick leave, leave without pay, etc.) for the full day when the closure is declared will not be allowed to change their leave status.
10. The County Closure leave will not count as time worked for purposes of overtime calculation for the week.
11. In the event a facilities closure has been announced that will be in excess of two consecutive business days, the affected Employing Official may assign employees to alternative worksites or implement alternative work arrangements for the affected pay

period (e.g. telecommute or flex schedules). Implementation of alternative work schedules must comply with provisions of applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements or the Personnel Manual. In County operations where the Employing Official is unable to establish alternative worksites or implement alternative work arrangements, the employee may utilize earned compensatory time or accrued vacation leave in lieu of leave without pay beginning on the third consecutive day of closure.

12. Announcements of delayed opening and closures will be provided on the County's Web Site and the inclement weather telephone line (1-360-337-5775). Employees may also sign up for text alerts through the County electronic notification system, available at [www.kitsapgov.com](http://www.kitsapgov.com) and through AlertMedia or other means adopted by the County. Employees are also encouraged to monitor early morning radio reports on KOMO AM 1000 or KIRO AM 710/FM 97.3 to obtain any delayed opening or closure information.