

CHAPTER 7 EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

EMERGENCY CONDITIONS POLICY

RESOLUTION NO. 907
BOARD FILE NO. 57090
December 9, 1997

RESOLUTION NO. 386
BOARD FILE NO. 58429
August 2, 2005

RESOLUTION NO. 701
BOARD FILE NO. 58772
December 18, 2007

RESOLVED, that the Emergency Closings Policy is hereby amended to the Emergency Conditions Policy, copy of which is on file in County Board File No. 57090, effective December 9, 1997.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Emergency Conditions Policy, copy of which is on file in County Board File No. 58429, is hereby amended effective August 2, 2005.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Emergency Conditions Policy, copy of which is on file in County Board File No. 58772, is hereby amended effective December 18, 2007.

EMERGENCY CONDITIONS DEFINED

This Policy may be implemented for emergency conditions within St. Louis County. Procedures for responding to emergency conditions at County owned and/or operated buildings are defined in facility specific Emergency Response and Evacuation Plans. These plans include general instructions for employees in the facility and information concerning the lines of authority during impending emergency and dangerous situations that may require immediate evacuation or response by on-site personnel. Department specific alternate worksites shall be identified by each department head in advance of an Emergency Conditions Declaration.

Emergency conditions covered by this Policy shall include:

1. **Severe Weather:** Conditions which threaten the health/safety of employees at their work locations or create conditions hazardous to the safety of the public in travel. Examples include, but are not limited to, tornadoes or excessive winds; severe blizzard conditions creating visibility near zero; road impasses caused by severe icing or excessive accumulation of snow; or any other hazardous weather conditions which may cause the cancellation of public transportation.
2. **Power Failure:** Any major failure of a mechanical system, such as power, water, or heating within a County building or a building containing County employee work sites, when the failure is expected to last more than three (3) hours and/or employee health or safety may be jeopardized by the inability to maintain a functioning work environment.

3. **Hazardous Circumstances:** Conditions occurring in or near a County building or place of employment which could endanger the safety of employees. Examples include but are not limited to, bomb threats, terrorist threats, fire, explosion or imminent explosion, toxic substance spills or leakage, accidental and severe damage to a building, and other similar circumstances.
4. **Other Situations:** Other unforeseen and sudden circumstances of an emergency nature similar to those listed above that significantly affect the health or safety of employees.

Separate procedures found in the “Emergency Response and Evacuation Plan” exist for certain County owned and/or operated facilities. These plans provide greater detail regarding evacuation of a building, or such other action as may be necessary, in the event of an impending emergency or other situation presenting imminent danger.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECLARING AN EMERGENCY CONDITION

Declaring an emergency condition shall be the joint responsibility of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the County Board, and the County Administrator, or their designees. Determination of the emergency condition will be made in consultation with the Commissioner(s) representing the district(s) in which the emergency condition exists, if this is practical.

NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY CONDITION

Upon determination that an emergency condition exists, the County Administrator or his/her designee shall convey notice of the condition to County employees as follows:

If an emergency condition is declared prior to the start of the normal business day, notification shall be made by 6:30a.m. or as soon thereafter as possible. Employees should listen to KDAL-AM, WEVE and WELY radio stations for public announcements. Notification shall also be made to the department heads or supervisors impacted by the decision. During times of severe weather, it shall be the employees’ responsibility to be aware of the emergency condition prior to the start of a workday by reference to local radio stations or by accessing emergency status updates through the numbers listed below. With regard to other emergency conditions, department heads or supervisors shall notify the employees in their departments of the emergency condition as soon as reasonably possible.

For emergency status updates in the Duluth Area, employees should call:

From outside the County telephone system: (218) 726-2010
 From inside the County telephone system: Extension 2010

For emergency status updates in the Range Area, employees should call:

From outside the County telephone system: (218) 749-7136
 From inside the County telephone system: Extension 7136

If an emergency condition is declared after the start, but prior to the end of a normal business day, notice shall be conveyed to the media and to

the department heads or supervisors impacted by the decision. Department heads or supervisors shall notify the employees in their departments of the emergency condition as soon as reasonably possible.

NON-EMERGENCY EMPLOYEES

For the purpose of this Policy, the term “non-emergency employees” shall include all County employees except those employees defined herein as “emergency employees.”

EMERGENCY EMPLOYEES

Department heads shall determine the number of employees designated as emergency employees for their respective departments. Emergency employees must appear at designated work sites during an emergency condition. For purposes of this Policy, the term “emergency employees” shall include those employees working in certain job classes, as set forth in the attachment to this Policy, in the following departments:

- A. Sheriff’s Office including 9-1-1 Communications, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management and Jail
- B. Property Management Department
- C. Public Works Department
- D. Public Health & Human Services Department
- E. Chris Jensen Health & Rehabilitation Center

EMPLOYMENT STATUS WHEN EMERGENCY CONDITION IS DECLARED

Except in rare circumstances, as determined jointly by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the County Board, and the County Administrator, or their designees, County offices and work sites will remain open when an emergency condition has been declared.

If an emergency condition is declared prior to the start of the normal business day, all St. Louis County offices will open. However, non-emergency employees may choose to: (1) report for work at their regularly scheduled time, or (2) remain at home and use accrued vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time for the day.

If an emergency condition is declared after the start of the normal business day, all St. Louis County offices will remain open, except in rare circumstances. However, non-emergency employees may choose to (1) remain at work, or (2) go home early and use accrued vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time for the remainder of the day.

Emergency employees are required to appear at their designated work sites at their normally scheduled times during emergency conditions. Emergency employees must also report to work if they are called out to work during emergency conditions. Any emergency employee who fails to report for work without good cause may be subject to discipline.

In the rare instance when emergency conditions require the closing of a County office or work site, emergency employees will be notified of the location of an alternative work site to which they must report. Alternative work sites shall be identified by department heads and shall be located as near to the employees’ designated work site as is reasonably possible.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

If an emergency condition is declared prior to the start of a business day, non-

emergency employees who do not report to their work sites will not be paid for their normal work hours during that day, except by using accrued vacation, personal leave, or accrued compensatory time. Non-emergency employees who report for work will receive their regular wages.

If an emergency condition is declared during regular work hours, all employees will be notified of that determination as soon as reasonably possible. Non-emergency employees will then have the option of (1) remaining at work or (2) leaving the work site and using accrued vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time. Non-emergency employees who remain at work will receive their regular wages.

If the emergency condition is such that the decision is made to “close” St. Louis County offices and/or other work sites prior to the start of a business day, non-emergency employees will not be paid for their normal work hours during that day except by using accrued vacation, personal leave, or accrued compensatory time. Employees who have no accrued paid leave hours available on their payroll record will be authorized advance credit of vacation hours to be used for the emergency closure event, and these credited hours shall be repaid in full from the employee’s vacation earnings in the immediately following pay periods.

If the emergency condition is such that the decision is made to “close” St. Louis County offices and/or other work sites during regular working hours, all non-emergency employees will be released and paid their regular wages for the entire work day. Emergency employees shall report to their normal work sites, or to a designated alternative work site, for their scheduled shifts. Any emergency employee not reporting for work as scheduled or as otherwise required, shall not receive compensation for the day. However, a department head may authorize the use of vacation pay, personal leave, or accrued compensatory time by an emergency employee unable to report to work during an emergency situation, for good cause shown by the employee, on a case-by-case basis, after review by the County Administrator.

Employees on sick leave status on the work day prior to the emergency condition may use sick leave benefits on the day of the emergency condition, if the employee can show that absence from work would have been required, regardless of the emergency condition, because of continuing need for sick leave use.

If, because of severe weather, any emergency or non-emergency employees choose to remain at County offices or other work site after a decision to close the offices, they shall not receive overtime compensation or compensatory time off unless their department head ordered them to remain on site specifically to work during the emergency condition.

EMERGENCY EMPLOYEES (revised 2007)

Sheriff’s 9-1-1 Communications

Emergency Communication Specialist
Electronic Systems Technician

Sheriff’s Law Enforcement

Deputy Sheriffs serving on patrol, in outlying areas and as Investigators
Deputy Sheriff-Sergeant
Deputy Sheriff Lieutenant

Supervising Deputy Sheriff

Sheriff's Emergency Management

Emergency Management Administrator
Civil Defense Coordinator

Sheriff's Jail Division

Deputy Sheriff's Corrections Officer
Deputy Sheriff Sergeant Corrections
Assistant Administrators Operations
Assistant Administrators Security
Jail Corrections Administrator
Cooks Jail
Cook Supervisors Jail
Jail Program Operations Coordinator

Property Management

Assistant Building Superintendent
Building Maintenance Crew Leader
Head Janitor
Designated Janitorial Staff

Public Works

Highway Engineer/Public Works Director
Deputy Public Works Director
Assistant County Highway Engineer
Highway Division Superintendent
Highway Maintenance Supervisor
Road and Bridge Shop Supervisor
Sign Supervisor
Blacksmith
Principle Engineer (Bridge Division)
Bridge Supervisor
Bridge Superintendent
Bridge Worker
Bridge Worker Senior
Equipment Operator Junior
Equipment Operator Senior
Heavy Equipment Mechanic
Storekeeper I
Storekeeper II
Principle Engineer (Traffic Division)
Sign Technician

Public Health & Human Services (No classifications after December 31, 2007)

King Manor and MidTowne II

Board & Lodging Care Assistants

Community Food Service

Supervising Dietitian
Food Service Helper
Cook I and II