

**POLICY**

This policy is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of Southeast College students, staff, and faculty during severe weather events.

**PURPOSE**

To outline procedures for campus closures, remote work arrangements, travel using college fleet vehicles in extreme cold conditions, and criteria for reopening, while supporting continuity of operations wherever possible.

**SCOPE**

All students, staff and faculty of Southeast College.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Inclement Weather** - Severe or hazardous weather conditions that may include extreme cold, heavy snowfall, freezing rain, blizzards, or other events that pose safety risks or disrupt normal operations.

**Campus Closure** - A temporary suspension of in-person activities at one or more Southeast College campuses due to inclement weather, as determined by the College's executive leadership.

**Remote Work Due to Inclement Weather** - A temporary arrangement allowing staff to work from home during a campus closure. This is not governed by the College's Hybrid Work Policy or Agreement and does not require formal approval under that framework.

**Hybrid Work Agreement** - A formal, pre-approved agreement in accordance with H314 Hybrid Work Policy that permits eligible staff to work remotely. This policy does not apply to temporary remote work due to inclement weather.

**Extreme Cold** - Weather conditions where temperatures or wind chill are expected to be -40°C or colder for at least two hours, based on Environment Canada data.

**Fleet Vehicles** - Vehicles owned or leased by Southeast College for official college-related travel.

**Winter Safety Kit** - A set of emergency supplies required in college fleet vehicles during winter months, as defined by the Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Committee. Maintenance and stocking of these kits is the responsibility of the Facilities Manager.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### **Campus Closure Decision-Making**

Under extreme weather conditions, which may include but are not limited to extreme cold or winter storms, Southeast College may evaluate the risk to health and safety and determine whether one or more campus locations should be temporarily closed.

### **Procedure**

1. When inclement weather may be reasonably forecasted, proactive planning will take place to support ease of decision making and communications, should a campus or classroom site require closure.
2. To evaluate the need for a campus or classroom site closure, the Vice President, Communications and Strategic Enrollment will consult with:
  - Campus Managers, Program Coordinators or designated staff at affected locations to evaluate current status of weather related events.
  - The Facilities Manager, to confirm that sidewalks, entrances, and access points can be safely cleared and maintained throughout the day.
  - The VP Academic, Teaching & Learning, with input and recommendation from Program Coordinators, to determine which classes may offered remotely, taking into account factors such as:
    - class structure (e.g., theory versus lab components)
    - student access to internet and technology
3. A final decision regarding closure of campus(es) or specific program locations will be made in consultation with the President and CEO, prior to 6:30 AM, with an immediate notification sent to Executive Management.
4. If a decision has been made to close any College facility, communication of the decision will be shared no later than 7:00 AM as follows:
  - The VP, Academic, Teaching & Learning will communicate final decisions on remote program delivery with Program Coordinators, who will ensure Instructors and Students have been notified.
  - The VP, Communications and Strategic Enrollment will ensure a notice has been posted to the following:
    - Southeast College website
    - Official social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn)
  - The VP, Communications and Strategic Enrollment will distribute an e-mail notification to all staff and faculty.
    - A phone tree approach will be enacted to ensure all employees have received the message prior to the work day. Notifications will commence from Executive Leadership and cascading through managers. Each division is responsible for managing its own phone tree process and ensuring all employees have been notified.
5. The decision to re-open a campus or classroom site following a closure will follow the same consultative process as outlined above. It should be assumed that a closure will remain in place for one day only. Should there be need to prolong a closure, each day the above decision process and modes of communication will be followed to ensure staff and students have received appropriate updates.

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### **Remote Work and Program Continuity**

Under extreme weather conditions, where a decision has been made to close one or more campus locations, it is expected that College operations and classes will be transitioned to an online format wherever feasible.

#### **Procedure**

1. When inclement weather has been forecast or may be reasonably anticipated, all staff are expected to take reasonable measures to be prepared, including:
  - Monitoring weather forecasts
  - Take laptops and essential work materials home at the end of each day to ensure readiness for remote work
2. Staff assigned to a closed campus will:
  - Be expected to work remotely, if applicable to their role.
  - Receive the day off with full pay if remote work is not possible *due to the nature of their position*.
3. Remote work due to inclement weather is outside the scope of the Hybrid Work Policy and does not require a formal agreement. As such, remote work days *due to a determination to close a College campus or classroom site experiencing extreme weather situations* will not count toward the monthly hybrid workdays allotted.
4. Staff who do not take their laptops or required materials home and are therefore unable to work remotely must request an appropriate leave, such as:
  - Vacation
  - Banked time
  - Banked EDO/CTO, or
  - Leave without pay (if other leave options are exhausted)

### **Fleet Vehicle Travel Guidelines in Extreme Cold**

Under extreme weather, which may include but are not limited to extreme cold or winter storms, it is expected that travel using College fleet vehicles will be postponed or rescheduled.

#### **Procedure**

1. Employees should evaluate the safety of their travel considerations, including:
  - Urgency of travel
  - Road and weather conditions
  - Route familiarity, remoteness and duration
  - Driving experience during seasonal conditions
2. Travel, during extreme cold or where winter storms can be reasonably anticipated, must be approved by a supervisor *prior* to departure. Routes and departure/arrival times must be communicated.
3. Where an employee is authorized to travel, routine check-ins are required between supervisor and employee throughout the travel period, and ensuring the employee has returned at the end of the day. This constitutes best practice for all travel regardless of inclement weather.
4. Vehicles must be equipped with a Winter Safety Kit as defined by the OHS Committee. The Facilities Manager is responsible for ensuring all fleet vehicles are properly stocked and maintained.

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## **Commuting Recommendations During Seasonal and/or Inclement Weather**

Southeast College recognizes that employees and students may regularly commute to work and classes. The College encourages all employees and students to prioritize personal safety when commuting during seasonal and/or inclement weather. While operations may continue, individual circumstances and travel conditions can vary significantly across the region.

### **General Guideline**

1. Employees and students should prioritize personal safety and preparedness, including:
  - Making personal safety decisions based on current and forecasted weather and road conditions
  - Carrying a personal winter safety kit in their vehicle
  - Planning for contingencies, such as identifying a safe location to stay overnight if travel becomes unsafe or returning home is not feasible
2. Commuter employees, with an approved Hybrid Work Agreement, are strongly encouraged to reserve their allotted hybrid workdays for use during anticipated weather-related challenges.
3. Where an employees' allotted hybrid workdays have been fully utilized, applicable leave may be requested, including:
  - Vacation
  - Banked time
  - Banked EDO/CTO, or
  - Leave without pay (if other leave options are exhausted)

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **College Responsibilities**

- Coordinate decision-making, consult with Facilities and campus leadership, and approve closures.
- Provide clear expectations for remote work readiness and ensure systems support online program delivery.
- Establish and enforce travel safety thresholds and ensure vehicle policies align with OHS standards.
- Evaluate reopening criteria and authorize campus reopening.

### **Managers and Supervisors**

- Ensure phone tree communication is executed within their division and confirm staff have received closure notifications.
- Communicate expectations to staff, monitor remote work participation, and approve leave requests where applicable.
- Approve College business travel only when safe, confirm vehicle readiness, and monitor staff travel plans.
- Support staff in making safe commuting decisions and reasonably approve leave requests as appropriate.

### **Employees**

- To monitor official communication channels and respond to phone tree notifications as required.
- Prepare for remote work by taking necessary materials home and fulfilling work duties remotely when applicable. Request leave if unable to work.
- Follow fleet vehicle travel protocols, assess conditions, use safety kits, and maintain communication during travel.

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- Monitor weather conditions, prepare for safe travel, and communicate with supervisors if unable to commute safely.
- Prepare for winter conditions by ensuring personal vehicles are equipped with appropriate weather-ready supplies (e.g., winter tires, emergency/safety kit, warm clothing, and other essentials) to support safe and self-sufficient travel.

### REFERENCES

H202 Occupational Health & Safety  
H314 Hybrid Work Policy  
Environment Canada  
*The Occupational Health and Safety  
Regulations, 2020*

<b>Effective Date:</b>	Nov 13, 2025 Replacing OP007
<b>Date last reviewed:</b>	*New N/A OP007 Jan/18
<b>Scheduled review date:</b>	Nov. 2028
<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive Management Nov 13, 2025