Essential Personnel Guidelines

Essential personnel ensure the University’s essential operations continue during modified operations or an emergency closure (including delay or early release) and normal operations resume as quickly as possible. The following guidance for designating and documenting essential personnel, communicating essential personnel responsibilities, and carrying out essential operations is maintained in support of Clemson University’s Essential Personnel Policy.

1. ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL LEVEL GUIDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Personnel Level</th>
<th>Level Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Required to respond during an emergency closure or modified operations in order to provide the University’s initial response to the emergency situation, including the execution of mission essential functions. Some positions in this category may be required to work remotely or be on-call.</td>
<td>Possible examples include but are not limited to police officers, firefighters, and emergency management positions; Occupational and Environmental Safety positions; the University’s Executive Leadership Team; and certain University Facilities, IT, Housing and Dining, and campus medical positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Required to maintain/resume essential support functions, deliver direct care services, and/or provide recovery support before normal operations resume. Some positions in this category may be required to work remotely or be on-call.</td>
<td>Possible examples include but are not limited to certain animal care, non-critical direct care services, grounds/facilities/custodial, essential research, IT, Payroll, HR, and administrative support positions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1. By default, employees without an essential level designation are considered “Normal Operations.” These employees should follow closure or modified operations directives and are not normally expected to work on site during emergency situations.

1.2. However, any employee may be required to report to work in person and/or remotely during a specific emergency or modified operations, as directed by their supervisor and/or their department/division leadership.

2. DOCUMENTING AND MAINTAINING RECORDS OF ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

2.1. Department/division leaders are responsible for updating their respective emergency plans or Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) to maintain a current list of all employees who may be called upon to report to work as essential personnel during emergency situations. Each listing should include the employee’s designated level of essential.
2.2. Supervisors are responsible for adding, removing, or changing essential personnel designations for their direct reports.

2.3. Supervisors must notify the Office of Human Resources when making changes to the essential personnel designations of their direct reports. The supervisor must submit a written request which indicates the desired designation and briefly describes the employee’s essential function(s).

2.3.1. To update a staff member’s essential level or Normal Operations designation, supervisors must update the employee’s designation in the appropriate section of the position description form and submit the updated form to a member of their HR Service Team.

2.3.2. To update a faculty member’s essential level or Normal Operations designation, supervisors must contact a member of their HR Service Team.

2.3.3. To update a student worker’s essential level or Normal Operations designation, supervisors must contact a member of their HR Service Team.

2.4. Based on information from supervisors, the Office of Human Resources maintains a record of each employee’s essential level or Normal Operations designation.

3. EXPECTATIONS DURING EMERGENCY CLOSURES AND MODIFIED OPERATIONS

3.1. An employee’s first point of contact regarding work expectations is their supervisor, which, for some positions, may include the supervisor/director on-call.

3.2. Supervisors are expected to ensure each of their direct reports knows and understands work expectations during emergency closures and modified operations, including where and when to report for duty.

3.3. If the University is closed or delayed, employees should follow the direction of their supervisor for that specific event.

3.3.1. Not all employees designated Level 1 or Level 2 necessarily need to report during every emergency closure. Some employees with an essential level designation may be required to report during all emergency closures.

3.3.2. Employees designated as Normal Operations should not work from or access any University facility without approval from their supervisor and/or department/division leadership.

3.4. If an employee deemed essential during an emergency closure (Level 1, Level 2, or a Normal Operations employee activated during a specific event) is unable to perform their essential functions due to a personal situation such as childcare or elder care issues, medical issues (self/immediate family member), damage to home, impassible roads, or unsafe travel conditions to report to work, they must immediately inform their supervisor.

3.4.1. Employees deemed Level 1 or Level 2 are expected to develop contingencies related to family needs in case they are required to respond during an emergency closure.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES: In addition to observing the Essential Personnel Policy and all associated guidance, the following responsibilities apply.

4.1. Essential Personnel have the following responsibilities:

4.1.1. Obtain information on emergency conditions and pertinent announcements about the University’s operations.

4.1.2. Know and understand their essential responsibilities.

4.1.3. Escalate questions to their supervisor.

4.2. Employees designated as Normal Operations have the following responsibilities:

4.2.1. Obtain information on emergency conditions and pertinent announcements about the University’s operations.

4.2.2. During an emergency closure, do not report to/access any University facility without supervisor and/or department/division leadership approval.
4.2.3. During modified operations, follow guidance provided by their supervisor and/or department/division leadership.

4.3. **Supervisors** have the following responsibilities:
   4.3.1. In conjunction with department/division leadership, identify and document essential personnel levels for direct reports on the department/division BCP and review assignments annually.
   4.3.2. Submit essential personnel updates to the Office of Human Resources, as needed.
   4.3.3. For new employee requests, supervisors will select an employee’s essential level or Normal Operations designation on the Position Description form. Supervisors must ensure this designation aligns with the department/division BCP.
   4.3.4. Inform direct reports of level of essential designation and related responsibilities in an emergency.
   4.3.5. During an emergency closure, obtain information on emergency conditions and pertinent announcements about the University and communicate responsibilities to essential personnel, including when, where, and how to report to work.

4.4. **Department/division leaders** will identify and document essential personnel levels for department/division employees on the department/division BCP and review annually.

4.5. The **Office of Human Resources, Business Continuity Management, and Emergency Management** will assist supervisors with determining and applying essential level designations as needed.

5. **INCIDENT RESPONSE**

5.1. During an emergency closure or modified operations, employees designated as Level 1 or Level 2 are required to report to work, which may include working remotely, as directed by their supervisor.

5.2. Employees who are considered Normal Operations should follow closure designations and are not normally expected to work on site during emergency closures. However, any employee may be given an essential level designation by their supervisor and/or their department/division leadership during a specific emergency and may be required to report to work in person and/or remotely. Ultimately, supervisors are responsible for making final essential level determinations for each of their direct reports for each event.

5.2.1. If an employee has entered into a hybrid/remote work agreement and their primary workplace is closed due to an emergency, the employee will be required to work remotely, even if they were scheduled to work from the primary workplace during the time the workplace is closed.

5.3. Supervisors should communicate any updated expectations regarding where and when to report for duty. If an employee deemed Level 1 or Level 2 is unable to perform their essential functions due to a personal situation such as childcare or elder care issues, medical issues (self/immediate family member), damage to home, impassible roads, or unsafe travel conditions to report to work, they must immediately inform their supervisor.

6. **RELATED RESOURCES**

6.1. University Policies and Documents
   6.1.1. [Essential Personnel Policy](#)
   6.1.2. [Emergency Closing Policy](#)
   6.1.3. [Emergency Closing Procedures](#)
   6.1.4. [Nonexempt Employee Timekeeping Policy](#)

6.2. External Resources
   6.2.1. [South Carolina Emergency Management Division](#)