

Central Regional Hospital

<u>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY</u> <u>MANUAL</u> Subject: ADVERSE WEATHER AND STAFFING PLAN	Policy Number: APM.A-0008 Effective Date: March 22, 2021 Supersedes: February 28, 2018 April 27, 2015 March 3, 2015 March 2, 2015 September 30, 2014 July 1, 2008 April 26, 2011
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Purpose:

To establish a plan to maintain essential operations and provide for adequate staffing during adverse weather events.

Policy:

Adverse weather may necessitate the implementation of emergency measures to ensure sufficient staffing resources to provide continuity of care for services to our patients and maintain essential operations. Central Regional Hospital (CRH) is a 24-hour operation and must remain open regardless of adverse weather conditions. Please see the Office of State Human Resources Adverse Weather policy for additional information: http://www.oshr.nc.gov/Guide/Policies/5_Leave/Adverse%20Weather%20Policy%20January%201%202015.pdf

Definitions:

- A. Adverse Weather Conditions: Adverse weather can be the result of different weather situations: snow/ice, floods, hurricanes, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.
- B. Adverse Weather Event: a situation in which CRH management declares either a "Stage I" or "Stage II" pursuant to section II of this policy below.
- C. Mandatory Employees: Employees who are required to work during an Adverse Weather Event because every scheduled employee in this category is needed to provide essential services and to ensure patient safety (see Appendix to this policy for a listing of Mandatory Employees). Employees in this category are expected to maintain readiness to report to work in adverse weather conditions. Maintaining readiness includes having alternative plans for transportation and childcare.
- D. Mandatory Operations: Operations or departments that must be covered by the hospital during Adverse Weather Events (see Appendix to this policy for a listing of Mandatory Operations). The Department Head is responsible for developing and implementing plans to ensure the Mandatory Operations of the department are covered during Adverse Weather Events. To accomplish this, a certain number of staff in these departments may be designated to be on site to cover specific duties and

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tasks. Other staff not designated to be on site during Adverse Weather Events are expected to report to work as weather conditions permit and perform their regular tasks.

- E. **Non-Mandatory Operations:** Operations that are not generally required during Adverse Weather Events to ensure the safe and efficient operations of the hospital (see Appendix to this policy for a listing of Non-Mandatory Operations). Under certain circumstances, a Non-Mandatory Operations department may have to make provisions to cover time-sensitive operations. Employees of Non-Mandatory Operations are to report to work as weather conditions permit and are expected to perform their regular tasks. They may, however, be asked to also assist in areas of the hospital where needs arise (i.e., assist in meal preparation, delivery of meals to Patient Care Units, etc.). Assignment to work outside of the regular job may be required.
- F. **Accounting for Time:** CRH adheres to the provisions as outlined in the State Human Resources Manual Leave Section, Adverse Weather Policy and Emergency Closing Policy.
- G. **Incident Commander:** Senior Administrator on Site (the highest listed staff member in the Chain of Command identified in section II.B of this policy) who is on site during the Adverse Weather Event.

Procedures:

I. Employee Reporting Requirements/Accounting for Time:

A. Failure of Mandatory Employees to Report:

1. A Mandatory Employee who fails to report to work or to remain at work during an Adverse Weather Event shall be required to take leave for all the time they are absent. If it is determined by their supervisor that their absence is unapproved it may be considered unacceptable personal conduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
2. Any hours missed due to adverse weather shall be charged to accrued compensatory time unless Adverse Weather Leave has been granted by DHHS and hospital management. Mandatory Employees will not be eligible to make up the time lost during the Adverse Weather Event if the absence is unapproved. If the employee does not have accrued compensatory time, vacation/bonus leave may be used, or the employee may request leave without pay. Employees are not eligible to use sick leave during an Adverse Weather Event unless the employee is actually sick.
3. The option of granting adverse weather make-up time will be determined by Hospital Executive leadership with Department Heads depending on the operational needs of the hospital following each individual Adverse Weather Event. If management approves adverse weather make-up time, the supervisor shall be responsible for scheduling make-up time within the same pay period as the Adverse Weather Event if possible. Employees with sufficient accrued

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compensatory time to cover the adverse weather absence shall not be eligible to make up the adverse weather time.

B. Failure of Employees in Mandatory Operations to Report:

Department Heads of Mandatory Operations are responsible for developing and implementing operational plans for each of their areas to ensure essential activities are covered. This may involve designating certain numbers of staff to be present during an Adverse Weather Event to cover essential operations of the department.

1. Designated Employees:

- a. Failure of an employee who has been designated by his or her Department Head to cover the Mandatory Operations of the department during the Adverse Weather Event may be subject to disciplinary action as determined by their Supervisor and in accordance with the State Human Resources Policy if the absence is identified as unapproved.
- b. Any hours missed due to adverse weather shall be charged to accrued compensatory time unless Adverse Weather Leave has been granted by DHHS and hospital management. If the employee does not have accrued compensatory time, vacation/bonus leave may be used, or the employee may request leave without pay. Employees are not eligible to use sick leave during an Adverse Weather Event unless the employee is actually sick.
- c. Designated Employees will not be eligible to make up the time lost during the Adverse Weather Event if the absence is unapproved.

2. Non-designated Employees:

- a. Employees who have not been designated by their Department Head to cover Mandatory Operations during the Adverse Weather Event are expected to report to work as weather conditions permit and are expected to perform their regular tasks.
- b. Any hours missed due to adverse weather shall be charged to accrued compensatory time unless Adverse Weather Leave has been granted by DHHS and hospital management. If the employee does not have accrued compensatory time, vacation/bonus leave may be used or the employee may request leave without pay. Employees are not eligible to use sick leave during these Adverse Weather Events unless the employee is actually sick.
- c. The option of granting adverse weather make-up time will be determined by Hospital Executive leadership with Department Heads depending on the operational needs of the hospital following each individual Adverse Weather Event. If management approves adverse weather make-up time, the supervisor shall be responsible for scheduling make-up time within the same pay period as the Adverse Weather Event if possible. Employees with sufficient accrued compensatory time to cover the adverse weather absence shall not be eligible to make up the adverse weather time.

C. Failure of Employees in Non-Mandatory Operations to Report:

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1. Employees in Non-Mandatory Operations are expected to report to work as weather conditions permit and are expected to perform their regular tasks.
2. Any hours missed due to adverse weather shall be charged to accrued compensatory time unless Adverse Weather Leave has been granted by DHHS and hospital management. If the employee does not have accrued compensatory time, vacation/bonus leave may be used or the employee may request leave without pay. Employees are not eligible to use sick leave during these Adverse Weather Events unless the employee is actually sick.
3. The option of granting adverse weather make-up time will be determined by hospital leadership with department heads depending on the operational needs of the hospital following each individual adverse event. If management approves adverse weather make-up time, the supervisor shall be responsible for scheduling make-up time within the same pay period as the Adverse Weather Event if possible. Employees with sufficient accrued compensatory time to cover the adverse weather absence shall not be eligible to make up the adverse weather time.

II. Management of the Adverse Weather Event:

A. Declaration

The declaration of an Adverse Weather Event is made by the Chief Executive Officer or his or her designee. The Senior Administrator on Site serves as Incident Commander for the Adverse Weather Event until relieved by one of higher authority on the list in Section II.B below. Adverse Weather Events may warrant the implementation of the CRH Emergency Management Plan.

Central Regional Hospital is always open and operational. All staff designated as Mandatory Employees and Designated Mandatory Operation employees are expected to report to work during an Adverse Weather Event. Lodging is provided for staff that may be required to stay at the hospital. Meals will be provided to staff during Stage II, but employees are encouraged to bring extra food from home.

B. Chain of Command

1. Chief Executive Officer or designee
2. Chief Medical Officer or designee
3. Chief Operating Officer or designee
4. Chief Nursing Officer or designee

(Note: after hours, on weekends and on holidays the Senior Administrator on Site is the House Coordinator)

C. Media Announcements

The Chief Executive Officer or Senior Administrator on Site designates a staff member to contact local television and radio stations to make media announcements regarding the implementation of the Adverse Weather Plan at CRH. All staff are

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encouraged to tune to the designated local television for adverse weather announcements.

Local Media Contacts: WRAL-TV, Channel 5; WTVD-TV, Channel 11; Spectrum News

D. Adverse Weather Numbers

CRH has an Adverse Weather Information Number for staff and other callers to verify the hospital's status during adverse weather conditions. During adverse weather, these numbers may be dialed and the caller will hear a recording that gives the current stage of CRH's adverse weather plan. The recording is changed to reflect updated stages as quickly as possible following the announcement of the change. Staff are encouraged to use the Adverse Weather Information Number and should not call the hospital operator for Adverse Weather Information or ask to be transferred to the Adverse Weather Information number.

1. Within the hospital: Dial 5-2600
2. Within the (919) calling area: Dial 919-575-2600
3. Out of State/Outside the (919) calling area: Dial 1-888-575-2699 (Toll Free)

E. Planning for Adverse Weather

1. Some situations may allow for pre-planning to avoid a disastrous situation or threat to the patients, staff, visitors and structures of CRH and its campus. Adverse weather conditions have the potential to impact upon CRH's ability to maintain normal operating conditions at any time during the year. These weather events include but are not limited to tornadoes, thunderstorms, hurricanes, floods, and snow/ice.
2. CRH has two stages of planning and response for weather-related conditions: Stage I Planning and Stage II Emergency Implementation. All Departments/Units that are required to be operational during Adverse Weather Events must have an operational plan.

F. Stage I. Planning

1. Planning consists of information dissemination and specific pre-planning when there is a fairly reliable prediction of adverse weather affecting CRH's normal operations. Stage I should be considered when weather predictions indicate conditions are highly likely for adverse weather conditions in the area surrounding CRH. This stage should be considered as a notification to hospital staff and key personnel that some type of adverse weather is expected. ***Stage I should alert supervisory personnel to implement their operational plans associated with expected adverse weather.*** During normal business hours, a meeting to prepare for possible weather emergencies will be called by the senior administrator on site consisting of the Hospital Executive Leadership. After normal business hours, the Chief Executive Officer or senior administrator-on-call calls a meeting of the Hospital Executive Leadership in person or by phone.
2. **Stage I. Activation**

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Once the Incident Commander has determined that Stage I should be put into operation, the following procedures should be followed:

- a. Notify the switchboard operator to announce, "***CRH has implemented the Adverse Weather Plan STAGE I.***" This is repeated three times.
- b. The Incident Commander opens the CRH Emergency Operations Center (CRH - EOC) and plans for staffing as situation requires.
- c. Notify Nursing Supervision representatives to implement pre-planned procedures for the possibility of operating with limited or reduced staffing.
- d. Notify Nutrition Services representative that plans for providing meals to employees required to remain on-duty for extended periods may be implemented. Also review contingency plans for meal distribution to patients and staff should disruption of utilities occur.
- e. Notify Plant Operations Department Management that the hospital is in Stage I and ask that they assist with actions associated with maintaining campus accessibility, grounds safety, utilities service monitoring and emergency equipment readiness. Plant Operations Department Management should report any deficiencies in emergency equipment to the CRH - EOCC immediately.
- f. Notify Environmental Services that staff living areas may be occupied and that those areas are set up and supplied.
- g. Notify the Telecommunications Department to have cell phones and walkie-talkies charged and ready for distribution as directed.
- h. The Chief Executive Officer will notify the Hospital Team Leader for the Department of State Operated Healthcare Facilities (DSOHF) of the Stage I implementation.

3. Actions Required By Mandatory Employees:

Under Stage I there are several specific actions required by direct care staff and support staff. This stage serves as a warning that conditions are highly likely for adverse weather affecting the normal operations of the hospital and the safety of patients, staff and visitors. Stage I may also indicate that adverse weather is reliably predicted to commence at a given time. Given these considerations, the Mandatory Employees should do the following:

- a. Plans should be made to remain on duty should it be required due to critical staffing shortages or adverse weather conditions rendering travel from work exceptionally hazardous.
- b. Off-duty Mandatory Employees are encouraged to contact their supervisor in the event they are needed to work at times other than their regular schedule.
- c. Mandatory Employees reporting to duty should bring personal medications, toiletries and clothing for themselves in the event they are required to remain on duty for an extended period of time. Alternate plans for dependent care are to be made prior to the beginning of the Adverse Weather Event. Staff are reminded that neither dependents nor pets are allowed at the hospital during such events.

4. All Clear From Stage I

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Once the Incident Commander has determined the potential for adverse weather conditions adversely affecting normal operations has passed and no longer poses a concern for CRH, the Switchboard Operator announces, "***All clear from Stage I of the Adverse Weather Plan***" on the overhead page. This is repeated three times.

G. Stage II. Emergency Implementation

1. Stage II primarily consists of activities associated with the *imminent approach or actual commencement of adverse weather* that will affect CRH's normal operations. This should be considered for activation when weather predictions indicate that adverse weather or other significant weather emergencies will occur or have actually commenced in the area surrounding CRH.
2. Stage II should be considered as a notification to hospital staff and key personnel that some type of adverse weather will affect CRH's ability to maintain normal operations and/or will pose a significant hazard to the hospital's patients, staff and visitors. ***In addition, Stage II should serve to notify supervisory personnel to immediately implement their operational plans associated with Adverse Weather Events.***
3. At the discretion of the Chief Nursing Officer or designee, Nursing Services may initiate a 12-hour work shift schedule during Stage II. Nursing staff are expected to remain on duty during adverse weather, working beyond their normal 8 hour shift, up to an additional eight hours, if necessary, or until relief staff providing minimum coverage arrives for duty. Employees are not required to work more than 16 hours. However, supervisors may require employees to remain at the hospital beyond 16 hours to assure availability the following day or shift.
4. Appropriate breaks and mealtimes will be scheduled by supervisors for each employee (ensuring at least a 30-minute meal period every eight hours).
5. All standing committee meetings and training programs scheduled by Staff Development, etc. are cancelled during Stage II. Patient programming may be modified but will continue if at all possible.

H. Stage II. Activation

1. Once the Incident Commander has determined that Stage II should be activated, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. Notify the switchboard operator to announce, "CRH has activated Stage II of the ADVERSE WEATHER Plan". This is to be repeated three times.
 - b. Notify local television stations that CRH is operating under Stage II of the ADVERSE WEATHER Plan.
 - c. Open the CRH Emergency Operations Command Center (CRH-EOCC) and plan for staffing CRH-EOC on a 24-hour basis until the adverse weather conditions are no longer a threat and demobilization procedures have been completed.
 - d. Notify Nursing Services Supervisory representatives to immediately implement pre-planned procedures for operating with limited or reduced staffing.

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- e. Notify Nutrition Services representative that meals are required for employees who will remain on duty for extended periods, and to make preparations in the event utility services are disrupted or discontinued.
- f. Notify the Plant Operations Department that the hospital has entered Stage II and request that they assist with maintaining campus accessibility, grounds safety, and continuation of vital utility services.
- g. Notify Environmental Services representative that specified locations will be designated as staff quarters. Environmental Services staff may also be assigned as needed by the Incident Commander or designee.

2. **Actions Required By Mandatory Employees:**

Under STAGE II, there are several specific actions required by Mandatory Employees.

- a. All on-duty Mandatory Employees are to remain on duty until released by the Incident Commander or his/her designee.
- b. Off-duty Mandatory Employees are encouraged to contact their supervisor and report for duty if requested. Should the supervisor inform them they are not needed at that time, they are to remain on stand-by and available in the event the situation changes and their presence is required.
- c. Mandatory Employees reporting to duty should bring extra clothing, toiletries and personal medication for themselves and are to be prepared to remain on duty for an extended period of time. Alternate plans for dependent care are to be made prior to the beginning of the Adverse Weather Event. Mandatory Employees are reminded that neither dependents nor pets are allowed at the hospital during such events.

3. **All Clear From Stage II:**

Once the Incident Commander has determined the adverse weather conditions have passed and no longer pose a concern for CRH, he/she will declare an "All Clear". The switchboard operator will announce, "***All clear from the STAGE II of the Adverse Weather Plan***" on the overhead page. This will be repeated three times. Notification will also be made to local television stations indicating the "all clear" status.

I. **Debriefing**

After the "All Clear" has been given, all members of the Emergency Operations Command Center will meet at a location and time specified by the Incident Commander. This allows a debriefing of the Adverse Weather Event and all operations involved.

J. **Training**

Staff are trained during New Employee Orientation as part of the Emergency Management Plan on how to respond to Adverse Weather Events. Staff also receive annual refresher training during the annual update and participate in tornado or

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adverse weather drills. Employees are notified upon hire by their supervisor of their mandatory/non-mandatory status.

Related Documents/Forms:

CRH Safety Manual: Emergency Management Plan

Related Documents/Forms: None

Review/ Approval History:

Review/Approval Date	Reviewed/Approved By
June 2008	CRH Management Team
April 2011	CRH Policy Review Committee
September 2014	CRH Executive Team
February 2015	CRH Executive Team
April 2015	CRH Policy Review Committee
February 2018	CRH Policy Review Committee
March 2021	CRH Policy Review Committee

Responsible Owner: ADMINISTRATION

CEO Approval: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX

MANDATORY EMPLOYEES:

Environmental Services Department staff
Nursing Department staff (RNs, LPNs, TSSs)
Nutrition Services Department staff
Plant Operations Department staff

MANDATORY OPERATIONS:

Advocacy Services Department
Budget/Cashier's Office
Business Office
Child and Adolescent Programming
Employee Health Services/Clinic
Executive Team
Hospital Operators
Infection Prevention Services
Laboratory Department
MIS Department
Patient Safety/Risk Management Department

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Pharmacy Department
Physical Therapy Department
Psychology Department
Psychosocial Treatment
Quality Management Department
Radiology Department
Respiratory Therapy Department
Safety Department
Social Work Department
Speech Language Pathology Department
Staff MDs & Physician Extenders
Unit Administrative Directors
Warehouse Department

NON-MANDATORY OPERATIONS:

Attorney General's Office
Chaplain Services
Foreign Language Interpreters
Health Information Management Department
Human Resources Department
Mail Room
Print Shop
Purchasing Department
Reimbursement Department
Staff Development Department
Utilization Review Department
Volunteer Services Department