STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

DOCUMENT ID: **SOP-143** **VERSION #3**	TITLE: **COLLEGE CLOSURE – DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS**	*SEARCH KEY:*
PURPOSE:	• **To outline the processes concerning closing the College (i.e., cancelling classes and College services, including student practicum sites) due to weather conditions and the communication and reporting protocols for employees.**	POST TO: Public Website ☒ DC Connect ☒
SCOPE (Applies To):	• **COLLEGE EMPLOYEES** • **DC STUDENTS ON PRACTICUM** • **FACILITIES SERVICES** • **HUMAN RESOURCES** • **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE** • **SAFETY, SECURITY & RISK MANAGEMENT** • **SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS & ADMINISTRATORS**	
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QUALITY ASSURANCE FORMAT APPROVAL: ☒ **ADMINISTRATORS' COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (ACP) SOP SUBCOMMITTEE** ☒ **THOR BORGFORD, VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST**		DATE APPROVED: **2019/12/16** (yyyy/mm/dd)
RELEVANT POLICY:	Douglas College Administration Policies: • College Closure • Occupational Health & Safety Douglas College Collective Agreements & Terms and Conditions of Employment	

RELEVANT ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS:	**AVPASA:** Associate Vice-President, Academic and Student Affairs **Clinical Placement:** Clinical practice education is a requirement of various programs throughout the College and provides opportunities for students to participate in the care of patients. Student clinical placements occur in a variety of settings, including hospitals, community and other agencies, throughout B.C. **College Closure:** Refers to a decision to suspend all College operational services and activities. If a College closure is announced, employees who are scheduled to work are not required to report to work, unless responsible for providing required services and designated as *Required Services Personnel*. Students scheduled to attend classes, practicum or other College activities, are not required to attend. Decisions to close each campus may be made separately and may affect each campus differently. **DC:** Douglas College **MCO:** Marketing and Communications Office **Required Services Personnel**: Are personnel from areas that provide critical services to the College and College Community (i.e., Security, Facilities Services, Safety, Security and Risk Management (SSRM), College Daycare, Biology / Veterinary Technology (VTEC) Labs and the Centre for Educational & Information Technology (CEIT). **SSRM:** Safety, Security and Risk Management **Supervisor:** A person to whom a College employee reports, whose title may or may not be 'Supervisor'. For students on practicum, the faculty overseeing the practicum is the Supervisor.

PREAMBLE:

As per Douglas College (DC) policy *College Closure*, this SOP provides information to **employees** and **students** regarding a **College closure** due to **weather conditions**.

If a decision is made to close a College facility due to severe or adverse **weather conditions**, every reasonable effort will be made to notify **students, employees** and the **College community** as quickly as possible. A **College closure** will result in cancelling all scheduled classes and activities, or may result in cancelling and rescheduling final exams to ensure public safety.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will describe the process for determining whether the College should be **closed due to weather conditions,** and addresses:

- Communicating the decision to the Douglas College community and the public;
- The process for cancellation and postponement of final exams;
- Reporting protocols for College employees.

PREAMBLE: (cont.)

All efforts will be made to make a decision regarding closures prior to 6:30 am on the day. **The Douglas College website is the best source for up-to-date information.** **Employees** can also get the latest updates by calling the College's Emergency Information Line: **1 877 679 0823** or by signing up for **DC Alerts**, the College's emergency communication system that will send alerts to subscribers via text/voice/email message.

A. DETERMINING A COLLEGE CLOSURE DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS (For **Director, Facilities and Ancillary Services** and **Director, Safety, Security and Risk Management**)

STEPS:

In the event of **snow conditions** or an **extreme weather advisory**, **Douglas College** will make a decision to:

i. Remain open (e.g. all classes and activities to proceed as scheduled); OR,
ii. Close the College, and cancel classes and all other scheduled activities and services.

Decisions will be made with the information available at the time and will take into consideration what may happen in the coming hours. Following any decision, weather conditions will be closely monitored to provide updates as soon as they are available.

1.1 The **Director, Facilities and Ancillary Services** together with the **Director, Safety, Security and Risk Management (SSRM),** will conduct a risk assessment taking into account the following factors:

- Student and employee safety
- Campus conditions
- Transit availability
- Road conditions
- Weather forecast
- Other post-secondary closures

Overnight Snowfall:

1.2 Each morning during severe weather, the **Director, Facilities and Ancillary Services** together with the **Director, Safety, Security and Risk Management** will conduct a risk assessment, as described in Step 1, commencing at **5:45 am**.

1.3 If a decision is made to close the College, the **Director, Facilities & Ancillary Services** will notify the **Associate Director, Communications (MCO)** by **6:15 am** (**for day time classes**).

Day-time Snowfall:

1.4 Each afternoon during severe weather, the **Director, Facilities & Ancillary Services** together with the **Director, Safety, Security & Risk Management (SSRM)** will conduct a risk assessment, as described in Step 1, commencing at **1:45 pm.**

1.5 If a decision is made to close the College, the **Director, Facilities & Ancillary Services** will notify the **Associate Director, Communications (MCO)** by **2:15 pm** (**for evening classes).**

B. COMMUNICATING A COLLEGE CLOSURE (for **Associate Director, Communications (MCO)**, and **SSRM Director**)

STEPS:

2. By **6:30 am** (for day time classes) and/or by **2:30 pm** (for evening classes), the **Associate Director, Communications (MCO)** will:
    i. Post notification on the College website home page (for students and employees without access to DC Connect)
    ii. Post notification on DC Connect (for employees)
    iii. Update the College switchboard message
    iv. Contact local news media

3. By **6:30 am** (for day time classes) and/or by **2:30 pm** (for evening classes) the **Director, SSRM** will:
    i. Issue notification of the College closure via DC Alerts;
    ii. Update the College's toll-free Emergency Information Line;
    iii. Notify campus Security of the College closure.

C. CANCELLING AND RESCHEDULING FINAL EXAMS DUE TO COLLEGE CLOSURE (for **AVPASA & Registrar**)

In the event that the College must close due to **adverse weather conditions**, it may be necessary to cancel and reschedule exams for safety reasons. Cancelled exams will be rescheduled or alternate arrangements will be made. Where possible, rescheduled examinations will take place at the same time of day and location as originally scheduled – only the days will be changed.

STEPS:

1. The cancellation of final exams will be announced via notification on DC website home page and intranet.

2. The **Associate Vice-President, Academic and Student Affairs** (**AVPASA**), will forward the link notification to the **College Registrar**.

3. Upon receipt of a College closure during the final exam period, the **College Registrar** will reschedule final exams as follows, and post the information on DC website home page and intranet:
    - **If an entire day of final examinations is to be rescheduled**, that day will be added to the end of the final exam period.
    - **If some portion of a day of final examinations is to be rescheduled,** that portion of the date will be rescheduled and added to the end of the examination period.
    - **If two or more days of final exams are to be rescheduled,** then they will be moved to the end of the examination period in the same sequence as originally scheduled.
    - If the rescheduled examination is moved to the next Monday, which happens to be a statutory holiday, then the examinations will be rescheduled to Tuesday.

4. The **Registrar** will circulate notification date of rescheduled final exams to all **Deans and Directors** in each **Faculty.**

5. The **Deans/Directors** will distribute notification to their **Faculty.**

D. REPORTING PROTOCOL DURING ADVERSE OR FLUCTUATING WEATHER CONDITIONS (for **College Employees**)

A. If the College is officially closed, employees should not come to work, except those **employees** who are deemed Required Services Personnel, provided it is safe to do so. Employees who were scheduled to work the day of the snow closure will suffer no loss of pay. **Employees** required to provide essential services during a snow closure will receive compensating time off in lieu, at straight time.

B. If a decision is made to keep the College open during fluctuating weather conditions, an **employee** who is scheduled to work but may be delayed in getting to work, or is unable to get to work because of road or transit conditions, must advise their **Supervisor** or **Administrator** to whom they report as soon as possible. Missed time will be taken and recorded in accordance with the applicable collective agreement or the Excluded Working Conditions.

STEPS:

1. If an **employee** determines that it is not safe to attempt to come into work due to adverse weather conditions, they will immediately contact their reporting **Supervisor or Administrator** to indicate that they will not be coming into work that day.

E. CLINICAL PLACEMENTS DURING ADVERSE OR FLUCTUATING WEATHER CONDITIONS

A. The College acknowledges that Clinical Placement sites may remain open on days when the College has **closed** due to weather conditions. The College **supports clinical faculty making a decision,** in consultation with their **program coordinator** and/or **immediate supervisor**, based on their assessment of their specific site's contextual risk to:

- Cancel the Clinical Placement;
- Retain the Clinical Placement with **students and faculty** remaining at their Clinical Placement;
- Allow **students and faculty to** leave their clinical placement due to weather conditions.

B. Where the College remains **open** during snow conditions, and a particular Clinical Placement site may be adversely impacted by weather conditions, the College supports clinical **faculty** making a decision, in consultation with their **program coordinator** and/or **immediate supervisor** based on their assessment of their specific site's contextual risk to:

- Cancel the Clinical Placement;
- Retain the Clinical Placement with **students and faculty** remaining at their Clinical Placement;
- Allow **students and faculty to** leave their clinical placement due to weather conditions.

STEPS:

1. Clinical **faculty** who are unable to reach their **program coordinator or immediate supervisor** and need to make a decision regarding cancelling or leaving their Clinical Placement, must notify their **program coordinator or immediate supervisor** via email within two (2) hours of cancelling or leaving their Clinical placement.