

UW POLICY DIRECTORY

Rescinded 03-24-26

APS 40.2 – Designation of Classified and Professional Staff Employees Who Perform Essential Services

(Approved by the Vice President for Human Resources by authority of Executive Order No. 9)

1. Purpose

In accordance with Executive Order No. 27, the purpose of this policy is to describe:

- How University officers identify classified and professional staff employees who perform essential services; and
- How employees who perform essential services are so notified.

The policy statement does not apply to academic personnel.

2. Definition

For purposes of this policy, an essential service is one that must operate or continue to be provided even during an emergency in which nonessential University operations have been suspended. An essential service can be specific to a position's responsibilities (e.g., maintaining cultures of cells or organisms for research); it can be inherent in an entire unit, such as the UW Medicine Health System; or it can be a nonessential service that becomes an essential service due to the length of time or root cause of the suspension (e.g., when a program can be suspended for a day or two but not multiple days/weeks or when research animals must be moved immediately due to flooding). An essential service can be ongoing or it can be intermittent, as when the performance of a task is critical, but the task is only performed once or twice a month.

3. Annual Evaluation and Identification of Essential Services

At least annually, by November 1, University officers, including, but not limited to, the chancellors, vice presidents, vice provosts, vice chancellors, and deans are expected to evaluate the operations under their control and identify and record the units and/or individual positions that perform essential services.

4. Employee Notification

Each employee in a position or unit that performs an essential service must be notified of that status. The notification must be written and the designation of a position as one that performs an essential service should be included in the position's job description, e.g.: "This position is designated as performing an essential service and is required to report to work during any suspension of University operations, unless specifically notified otherwise." Annual reminders of a position's status as performing an essential service are desirable but not required.

Where an entire unit performs an essential service it is sufficient to establish this status with new hires and to communicate it to all employees in the unit (e.g., all employees of UW Medicine Health System perform an essential service and must report to work in the event the University suspends nonessential operations). Where most employees in an organization perform essential services but some do not, it is sufficient to communicate to new hires and employees that all employees in the unit perform an essential service and must report to work in the event the University suspends nonessential operations unless specifically notified otherwise. Where an individual or a small number of employees performs an essential service, they are notified on a position-by-position basis.

Where an employee performs an essential service intermittently, the employee must be notified of the period(s) during the month or year in which the essential service is performed, and of the requirement to report to work if the University suspends operations during the designated period(s). Where an employee's services that are otherwise nonessential services become essential services due to the length of a suspension or root causes of a suspension, the employee may be designated as essential and required to report to work.

In the event of a suspension of operations, any employee who has the skills necessary to perform an essential service may be designated as essential and required to report to work regardless of whether the employee normally performs that service.

5. Additional Information

For additional information or assistance, see the [Suspended Operations](#) web page, or contact the appropriate Human Resources Service Team Member listed on the [Human Resources Service Team Assignments](#) web page.

6. History

July 19, 2011.

For related information, see:

- Administrative Order [No. 11](#), Delegation of Authority for Taking Necessary Actions to Protect the University's Interests and Operations in Response to an Emergency Situation
- Administrative Policy Statement [45.2](#), "Time Off Use and Compensation for Classified and Professional Staff During Suspended Operations and During Inclement Weather"