

Office of Selectmen

Town of Moultonborough
6 Holland Street - PO Box 139
Moultonborough, NH 03254
(603) 476-2347

Policy Statement # 28

Closure of Town Buildings and Facilities Due To Inclement Weather and Emergencies

1.) Authority:

In accordance with RSA 31:39 and its role as the Governing Body, the Board of Selectmen (the "Board") has the authority to adopt ordinances and statements of policy to order its affairs and guide the administrative functions of the corporate body politic of the Town of Moultonborough and further, as governing body, the Board of Selectmen is charged with the safety of buildings and facilities under its control, the safety of its employees, and ensuring the general health, welfare and safety of the public at large.

2.) Purpose:

This policy is to prescribe uniform procedures for the closure of all town buildings and facilities to the general public, or its staff, the manner in which such decisions will be communicated, and the treatment of employee absences from work during periods of inclement weather and other emergencies.

3.) Administration:

This policy shall be administered by the Town Administrator, after consultation with the Board of Selectmen Chairman or in their absence the Vice Chairman, and the heads of the Public Safety and Emergency Management Departments, or his designee, on behalf of the Town of Moultonborough (the "Town").

4.) Policy:

a.) Closures:

Whenever it is determined that the health or safety of citizens, clients, or employees would be placed at risk, or that conditions or events prevent performance of regular operations, conducted within or upon a Town building or facility, it may be determined it is necessary to delay the opening of, or closure of, one or more buildings or facilities to the general public or a complete closure of one or more segments of the work units. Such delays or closings to the general public may or may not result in the excusing of staff from their normal workday responsibilities.

In the case of a delayed opening or closure, the building or facility shall remain closed to all official Town business until the next regular business day or a date and time established in the closure order.

b.) Timing of Decision:

- i.) Closing/delaying of normal business hours:** The decision and announcements are to be made as early in the morning as possible, preferably by 6:00 a.m.
- ii.) Closing/starting after normal business day has begun:** To the extent possible, one hour of lead time will be provided, in order to inform all staff and customers and allow the closing of accounts and transactions, and all affected facilities are to close at the same time. Departments notified of a closing are asked to assist in communicating closing announcements in whatever ways they can.

c.) Manner of Communication:

Annually, the Town Administrator shall develop a “phone tree”, taking into consideration travel distance and opening times for the ordering of calls to be placed, in case conditions develop during the night and warrant delayed opening or official closing.

If inclement weather or other emergency conditions requires a closure during the workday, affected employees will be notified by telephone and/or email of the conditions of the closure and re-opening. Any Boards, Commissions, agencies or organizations using the facility between the hour of closure and re-opening shall be notified in the same manner. The affected building or facility shall be posted with a notice, in a prominent type face, upon the entry doors.

Official announcements of any closure will be made by the Town Administrator through the Town web site with communications to Public Safety Dispatch, WMUR and such other media as may be determined, from time to time, to be advisable. These announcements will be made as soon as possible following any such decision.

d.) Treatment of Absences:

- i.) Essential Employees:** Because of the nature of their activities, some units must be staffed during an emergency closing and the employees therein are declared to be essential to the organization’s operation. These include, but are not limited to, Highway, Buildings and Grounds, Police (except civilian clerical), Fire and Rescue, and Emergency Management. Employees in these functional areas are expected to report to work during emergency closings unless specifically informed by their supervisor that they are not to report. Essential staff, notwithstanding any closures under this policy, is not paid any additional compensation during closures other than that ordinarily due them.

- ii.) **Non-Essential Employees:** All employees not defined as essential are thus defined as non-essential. If their scheduled work is cancelled, they shall be paid for their regular schedule.

If an employee is scheduled to report to work but does not feel comfortable in driving in inclement weather or a condition they perceive to be an emergency, they may use personal or vacation time to take the day off. However, their decision must be conveyed to a supervisor prior to the start of the work day and will hold for the entire work day notwithstanding any subsequent closure.

If an employee is not comfortable staying at work, they may use accumulated personal or vacation time to leave their posts. However, their decision must be conveyed to their supervisor prior to leaving and will hold for the remainder of their work day notwithstanding any subsequent closure.

- iii.) **Unscheduled Employees:** Employees who are not directly affected by the conditions warranting closure, or who are not scheduled to work during such times, shall not accrue any right to, and shall not be compensated in any manner for, any absence that may be authorized for the employees directly affected.

e.) Staying of Deadlines:

To the extent permitted by law, any such closure shall stay any deadline, for application, payment or other such matter, until the first business day following the closure. For matters before the Planning Board for approval, any deadline for action shall be stayed until its next regular business meeting as if it had made, and been granted, a formal application for such an extension under RSA 676:4 I (2) (f) or other similar equivalent statute.

5.) Evasion of This Policy:

The intent of this policy is to standardize the treatment of employees. It shall be a violation of this policy, and a disciplinary offense, to act in any manner other than prescribed herein.

6.) Periodic Review and Revisions:

Annually, at the time of goal setting for the budget, the Town Administrator shall review this policy with staff and managers to determine how effectively it is meeting its purpose. Suggested revisions shall be submitted to the Board of Selectmen for consideration and adoption with the annual budget message submitted by the Town Administrator.

Adoption:

Whereas this fulfills our intent for uniform procedures throughout the organization, we do hereby adopt the provisions of this policy on this

16th day of October, 2008.

Effective Date

This policy shall be effective on October 16, 2008

Karel A. Crawford, Chair
Edward J. Charest
James F. Gray
Joel R. Mudgett
Betsey L. Patten
BOARD OF SELECTMEN