

## Decision Process for a Delayed Opening or Closure of Campus during a Weather Event

The safety of students, faculty and staff at The University of Texas at Austin, is top priority for University Operations. We realize the impact our decisions have on the university community and we take them very seriously. We want to ensure that these decisions minimize negative impact on the student experience and the faculty and staff work day. We constantly weigh the pros and cons of every procedure, keeping your safety at the forefront of the process.

### How do we make our decisions?

We make the decision to open, close or delay opening in severe weather based on a careful analysis of facts. This is how we gather our information:

- o Conference calls occur (at various times throughout the weather event) with the following participants:
  - City of Austin
  - Travis County
  - Multiple area Independent School Districts (ISD's)
  - Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT)
  - Austin Police Department
  - Travis County Sheriff
  - Homeland Security
  - National Weather Service Meteorologist
  - Area Incident Meteorologist
- o TXDOT staff and local law enforcement officials are asked about road conditions. We must give careful consideration to the most dangerous roads in the area. Even if the street in front of your house looks passable, road conditions elsewhere may be dangerous. We must consider the risk of travel to our many students and employees who live as far away as San Antonio and Temple.
- o TXDOT staff and meteorologists are asked about the amount of water, snow or ice accumulated on roads and projected accumulations.
- o All weather conditions are considered as we are a large pedestrian campus. Many of our students and employees take busses to campus and have to wait outside, in the elements, at their bus stop.
- o After the call we consider campus conditions, such as interruptions in our buildings' electricity and heat, the condition of the parking lots, roads and sidewalks.
- o Weather predictions. We prefer not making our decision solely based on weather predictions, which are often inaccurate. However, often the forecast is the deciding factor.
- o We often give consideration to what area school districts and other agencies are doing. While school districts have unique factors to consider, their decisions affect our population as many students and employees have children in the school districts. **We do not always follow their lead**, but we do consider their input and decisions.

### Who makes the decision?

The president of the university is ultimately responsible for the final decision, based on the above factors and recommendations from University Operations staff, including the Campus

Safety and Security department.

**How is the public notified?**

We send a text messages to those who have signed up for UT Safety Text Alerts ([register here](#)), and an email to every UT Austin student, faculty and staff with an email address (approximately 70,000 people). We also post on the [emergency website](#) and on social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)) In addition, we notify local media so they can broadcast the updates.

**When is the decision made?**

Decisions are made during a weather event as soon as the facts of the event are evident. If possible, we try to make the decision by 5:00 a.m. or earlier so we can notify local media and post the information on our website and start the text messages, emails and social media posts by 6 a.m.