

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning State Office Closures
DAS-HRSD, December 14, 2009

Q 1: How likely is it that state offices might be closed due to weather or other emergency?

A 1: Closure of state facilities is not very likely. State agencies will close operations only under extreme conditions.

Q 2: What would be potential reasons for closing?

A 2: The state may close some offices or operations due to the presence of hazardous material or chemicals, flood, fire, earthquake, contagious illness, inclement weather, or for other situations potentially affecting the health or safety of employees or the public.

Q 3: When is the decision to close state offices made?

A 3: Before 5 a.m. for inclement weather that occurs overnight and other issues as they occur.

Q 4: How will we be informed?

A 4: You may obtain information through the news media (radio/television); the Internet (www.oregon.gov/DAS/); or your supervisor. For the Portland and Salem metro areas, you may also obtain recorded closure information by calling 503-373-0850.

Q 5: Who makes the decision to close state offices?

A 5: For Portland and Salem metro areas: the DAS director will make the decision in consultation with the appropriate agency representatives, such as the Portland State Office Building manager and Public Health Officer, Department of Transportation (state or regional offices), and local government officials.

Q 6: What about inclement weather affecting areas outside of Portland and Salem?

A 6: For all other geographical areas, an appropriate Department of Transportation Highway official makes the decision to close for inclement weather affecting the transportation system.

Q 7: Who makes decisions regarding closures for hazardous conditions (not related to inclement weather) that affect regions outside the Portland and Salem Metro Areas?

A 7: The DAS director may curtail state operations, or close worksites or facilities after consultation with appropriate parties (agencies, building managers and partner agencies).

Q 8: When can an agency decide to curtail agency operations or close worksites or facilities?

A 8: An agency head or authorized designee can make individual agency decisions when hazardous conditions solely interfere with the operations of their agency.

Q 9: *What do employees of 24-hour facilities do in case of closure or curtailment?*

A 9: For agency facilities that operate on a 24-hour basis (e.g., state hospitals, correctional facilities, state operated group homes, state operated school facilities): the agency director decides who needs to report to work. Those employees who are uncertain of their status should contact their workplace for instructions about whether they need to report to work. Your agency is responsible for maintaining a plan that describes those procedures.

Q 10: *What if state offices are open, but my employees think it is not safe to come to work?*

A 10: That is their decision, to be made with their supervisors. They must use appropriate leave, or take leave without pay. With prior approval, make up time or telecommuting/teleworking may be other options available to employees.

Q 11: *My agency is not a 24-hour facility, but I still may need some personnel to report. How do I handle this situation?*

A 11: Each agency director may designate essential personnel. The employees need to be aware that they have been identified as essential personnel and need to report regardless of closure or curtailment.