

# Board of Lucas County Commissioners



**TITLE:** Winter Weather Emergency Policy

**POLICY NUMBER:** 57

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 2023-1075

**SUPERSEDES POLICY:**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** December 5, 2023

**PAGE:** 1 of 3

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## I. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees under the appointing authority and jurisdiction of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners, subject, where applicable, to collective bargaining agreements.

## II. PURPOSE

Except in the most extreme circumstances, all Board of Lucas County Commissioners' agencies and departments will remain open for their regularly scheduled times. However, in situations of extreme weather, winter weather emergencies, or other emergency situations, offices may be closed to protect the health and safety of employees and the public.

## III. POLICY

The Lucas County Sheriff has the authority to declare a winter storm or snow emergency for the County. These emergencies are categorized in three levels – *Level 1*, *Level 2*, and *Level 3* as defined below.

### Limited Cancellation of Operations

In the event the Sheriff declares a *Level 3 Emergency* for Lucas County, agencies and departments under the jurisdiction of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners will be closed to the public. When possible, the Sheriff will declare *Level 3 Emergency* status between 5:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. on affected days. This decision will be broadcast to local media and County Administration will contact all department heads notifying them of the *Level 3 Emergency*.

**Non-essential staff**, as determined by each department director, will not be required to report to work and will be compensated for their normal work day. If an employee has previously submitted a request for leave (vacation, sick, personal, or compensatory time) which has already been approved prior to the work day being declared to be a *Level 3 Emergency* day, then this approved leave will still be charged to the employee. Non-essential staff who are capable of working remotely may be required to do so without additional compensation.

**Essential staff**, as determined by each department head, will still be required to report to work. In addition to receiving their normal compensation for the work day, they will also receive compensatory leave at straight time for each hour of their normal day worked. For those essential employees who work outside of their normal work hours, employees will receive the appropriate overtime compensation where applicable.

Those scheduled for in-office work on the day of a *Level 2 Emergency* who are capable of working from home may request hybrid work instead.

### Weather Emergency in Non-Lucas County of Residence

In the event that a *Level 3 Emergency* is **not** declared for Lucas County, but **is issued** in an employee's other county of residence, or if employees living in Lucas County or other counties request approval not to report to work due to driving conditions or young children being home from school due to school delays or closures such as may occur in a *Level 1* or *Level 2 Emergency*, department heads are asked to be flexible in granting such time off requests

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through the use of emergency vacation, compensatory time, personal leave, or an approved leave without pay if the employee has no such leave balances available. Sick leave may not be used for this purpose. Employees must still contact their supervisor as normal to make their request and receive approval.

#### Early Release

In rare situations, weather conditions and guidance from local emergency response officials may cause the Board of Lucas County Commissioners to release employees from work early. This release may be limited to non-essential staff. In the event that employees are officially released from work before the end of their normal work day, employees will receive compensation for the rest of that work day and will not be required to use accrued leave.

Essential employees who are required to remain at work will receive their normal compensation for the day, as well as compensatory time at straight time for each hour or portion of an hour that they are required to remain at work after the early release has been announced. Employees will also receive the appropriate overtime compensation if they are required to work outside of their normal work hours where applicable.

However, if an employee is not at work at the time the early release has been approved (for example, they are already on approved vacation, sick leave, compensatory time, or personal time), then the leave balances will be charged as previously approved.

#### Non-Weather Emergencies

The Board of Lucas County of Commissioners and/or the County Administrator can declare other, non-weather-related emergencies resulting in the closure of County facilities. Examples of these types of emergencies include, but are not limited to, power failures, gas leaks, loss of access to water, emergency construction or repairs, and road closures. In these situations, specific instructions will be relayed to the employees impacted.

#### Lucas County Alerts System

Employees are encouraged to sign up for the Lucas County Alerts system to receive emergency notifications from the Lucas County Emergency Management Agency. Signup is available on the Emergency Management Agency [webpage](#) or by visiting [Lucas County Alerts](#) directly.

## **IV. DEFINITIONS**

#### Level 1 Snow Advisory

A Level 1 Snow Advisory is when conditions caused by ice, blowing and drifting snow, make county roadways hazardous. Residents should drive cautiously. This advisory can be upgraded or discontinued.

#### Level 2 Snow Advisory

In addition to elements detailed in a Level 1 Advisory, a Level 2 Snow Advisory includes ice, blowing, and drifting snow causing low visibility on roadways. Only persons with a real and important need to be out on roads and streets should do so. This advisory can be upgraded, downgraded, or discontinued.

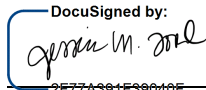
#### Level 3 Snow Advisory

A Level 3 Snow Advisory is for all roads and streets in Lucas County. This declaration does not apply to traffic on the Ohio Turnpike but does apply to all other roads and streets in Lucas County.

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Travel on these roadways is limited to emergency and essential personnel only. No one should be on these roadways during the duration of this Snow Emergency unless absolutely necessary. All employees should contact their employer to determine if they should report for work. All non-emergency and nonessential personnel traveling the roadways during this Snow Emergency may be subject to arrest and prosecution under section 2917.13 of the Ohio Revised Code for "misconduct at an emergency."

The Lucas County Sheriff's Office is without authority to arbitrarily determine what occupations, job descriptions, or duties constitute essential or nonessential employees.

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Signature of County Administrator

1/5/2024

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Date