



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Melvin Kleckner
Town Administrator

TOWN of BROOKLINE

Massachusetts

Policy on Inclement Weather and Emergency Conditions

The Town of Brookline strives to maintain high quality, uninterrupted operations and services to its citizens. Even during inclement weather or other natural or man-made emergency conditions, Brookline citizens expect Town operations to continue to the maximum extent possible, that their taxes will be expended wisely and that all employees are treated fairly and equitably. This Policy is intended to meet those expectations.

It is possible that in some severe weather or emergency conditions, the Town may reduce or suspend certain non emergency operations. The purposes of such modifications would be to minimize the hazards to employees and citizens, and to reduce the possibility that employee transportation to and from work might impede the emergency efforts of the Public Works, Police or Fire Departments.

The following guidelines are to be followed in the event that snow, other weather-related events or emergencies cause delayed opening, early closing or closing of Town services and/or operations.

I. AUTHORIZATION FOR MODIFICATIONS OR CLOSURE OF SERVICE AND OPERATIONS

Emergency Operations: The Town Administrator, in consultation with the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Works Commissioner and other department heads as applicable, will monitor conditions and assess the overall state of the weather or other emergency situations as they relate to Town operations. *A declared Governor's State of Emergency shall be a factor in this assessment but shall not, in itself, determine whether Town operations shall be modified.*

For purposes of this policy, the Police Department, Fire Department and Public Works Department are considered Emergency Services, and employees who work for these Departments are generally considered emergency personnel.

There may be some emergency events where other departments, e.g., Public Health, may be considered emergency personnel. Such determination shall be made in the sole discretion of the Town Administrator.

Routine Services and Operations: The Human Resources Director, in consultation with Department Heads, will monitor weather or other conditions and assess the need for the operation of routine, non-emergency Town services and operations. Any modification of regularly scheduled operations or services due to weather or other emergency conditions will be authorized by the Town Administrator upon recommendation of the Human Resources Director. Any such decision will be made as early as feasible.

The Human Resources Office will communicate the authorization to modify routine services and operations to all departments immediately upon the approval of the Town Administrator. Each Department Head will be responsible for contacting all of their department employees of the decision as outlined below.

II. TYPES OF MODIFICATIONS OF SERVICES AND OPERATIONS (Non-Emergency only)

A. Fully Operational

Employees should always assume that Town services and operations will be fully operational unless otherwise notified by their Department or Division Head. If an emergency employee believes he cannot safely travel to work he should contact his Department or Division Head who will make appropriate arrangements to get the employee to work safely. Non-emergency employees must make reasonable efforts to report his or her inability to attend work to their manager as soon as is practicably possible.

This should be in line with the particular department's normal arrangements for reporting a sick day or other unanticipated absence.

Reasonable late arrivals during adverse weather conditions will be excused at the discretion of the Department Head.

B. Delayed Start

Delay of non emergency operations will be authorized by the Town Administrator based on recommendations presented by the Human Resources Director. Any such decision will be made as early as feasible. Employees reporting to work on a delayed start due to inclement weather or other emergency event will be paid for a regular day of work. Leave banks will not be charged for non emergency employees in the event that work is delayed.

C. Early Closures

All offices are expected to remain open through normal hours unless explicitly authorized by the Town Administrator.

Unless authorized by the Town Administrator, department heads may not dismiss personnel due to weather or other emergency conditions without a charge to appropriate leave banks. Leave taken by an employee to depart early will not be restored if a subsequent early closure is authorized.

Leave banks will not be charged for non emergency employees in the event that work is

closed early in accordance with the above.

D. Closure of Non-Emergency Departments

Closure of non emergency operations will be authorized by the Town Administrator based on recommendations presented by the Human Resources Director. Leave banks will not be charged for non emergency employees in the event of a closure.

III. NOTICE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Town Administrator and Human Resources Responsibilities

For inclement weather or other natural or man-made emergency situations, the Town Administrator, in consultation with the Human Resources Director, will make the determination as early as feasible as to whether non emergency Town Services and/or Operations should be reduced or cancelled.

Immediately upon the approval of the Town Administrator, the Human Resources Director will communicate the decision whether to remain fully operational, to delay opening, to close early or to cancel services and/or operations to each Department Head.

B. Manager Responsibilities

The Department Head and Division Heads should ensure that all staff are made aware of the Town's Inclement Weather Policy, and that all employees are treated fairly and equitably under this policy.

The Department and Division Heads should ensure that reporting arrangements are clearly communicated to all employees.

C. Staff Responsibilities (Non-Emergency)

It is the responsibility of the employee to make every effort to attend for duty at their normal place of work. This includes adapting their means of travel if necessary, even if this results in arriving late for work. Employees should not put themselves at unnecessary or inordinate risk when attempting to attend work.

Personal safety in travel to and from work is an important individual consideration for employees to decide based on their individual circumstances. Appropriate, available leave (personal leave and vacation) may be requested by non emergency employees who decide that they should stay at home due to the weather or other emergency event. Sick leave is not an appropriate leave for such purpose unless the employee is actually ill and the Department Head authorizes the leave.

Non-emergency employees must make reasonable efforts to report his or her inability to attend work to their manager as soon as is practicably possible. This should be in line with

the particular department's normal arrangements for reporting a sick day or other unanticipated absence.

D. **Library and Recreation Departments - Evening, Weekends, Holidays**

The Recreation Director and the Town Librarian will determine if operations in their respective departments should be delayed, cancelled or curtailed due to weather on evenings, weekends and holidays and notify the employees concerned as early as possible.

The Town Administrator should be notified of any such action, but need not be consulted except under unusual circumstances.

E. **Employee Parking During Emergency on street Parking Bans**

Employees are expected to observe any parking restrictions established by the DPW Commissioner during snow storms. Employees located at work sites distant from the Town Hall and who cannot utilize their usual parking location because of parking bans, may park their automobiles in the central garage under Town Hall and report to their manager or department head if they need a ride to and from their work site. The Recreation Director and Town Librarian will provide arrangements if necessary on weekends.

Please refer any questions on these matters to the Human Resources Director.

Melvin Kleckner,
Town Administrator