



Memorandum

To: All Administrative Services Directors

From: Curtis W. Thayer, DOA Commissioner *CT*

Date: November 19, 2014

Subject: POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR OFFICE CLOSURE
DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER OR UNINHABITABLE FACILITIES

State offices will be closed only at the direction of the Governor or the Governor's designee. No other state agency can independently make this determination. The Commissioner of the Department of Administration (DOA) shall be responsible for communicating decisions on office closures to the rest of state government, the media, and the public.

All State offices will be open during normal business hours unless closure is specifically directed by the Governor's Office or the DOA Commissioner for purposes of protecting the safety and health of employees and/or the public. The only exception to this policy is in the event of a state of emergency declared by properly-empowered authorities (e.g. police or fire officials). In such events, employees are to follow the direction of such authorities.

The DOA Commissioner has the delegated authority to close offices under 100 employees while the Governor's Office retains the ultimate authority for office closures for offices 100 employees or more. All available information on conditions will be used in the assessment of potential closures.

Employee Responsibility and Communicating

Those employees in areas where weather or building mechanical issues arise should communicate those issues up the chain of command in the following order:

1. immediate supervisor
2. your locations lease or facility contact (who can then communicate with the lessor)
3. your department's DAS Director (Administrative Services Director - ASD)

Your ASD will then coordinate and communicate with the DOA on the details of the situation.

All closed state offices that serve the public should display a closure sign on the door and message on the main phone with expected duration of closure and contact info in case of emergency. Optionally, agency website should reflect closure to inform the public.

Employees should monitor email and phones to report back if/when offices are reopened.

Receiving Updates

Please always work with your supervisor to stay informed about the status of any office closure.

There are several ways you can get office closure information:

- Sign up for alerts from DOA via email, text message or social media (Facebook and Twitter) by visiting <http://doa.alaska.gov/officeclosures>
- Check www.Alaska.gov for alert notifications and updates
- Check the State of Alaska Notification Hotline at 877-326-5551

What to Expect - Inclement Weather

The DOA Commissioner's Office will monitor weather conditions and recommend when it is in the best interest of the State to declare an office closure, to delay the opening of state offices, or to allow for the staggered release of employees.

The Governor's Office will determine when it is in the best interest of the State to declare an office closure. The DOA Commissioner's Office will confer with other state and local authorities to make an office closure recommendation. This normally includes one or more of the following; Alaska State Troopers, local police department, local school district, municipal officials, Court System, etc. "On-the-ground" weather observations that may require an office closure should be communicated through the chain of command listed above to the DOA Commissioner's Office.

Once a final decision is made regarding a closure, a public announcement will be made declaring which State offices are closed, the time the closure takes effect and the anticipated duration of the closure. Notification of employees is normally done through the options listed above under "Receiving Updates" but notice will depend on the size and location of the office closure.

A staggered release is not an official office closure and every effort should be made to maintain service within normal office hours.

What to Expect - Uninhabitable Office Conditions

The DOA Commissioner, in addition to the Division of General Services, is to be notified of uninhabitable office conditions which may include but are not limited to:

- very low or very high office temperatures;
- excessive noise;
- lack of running water;
- lack of available restroom facilities, etc.
- other impacts from a natural disaster such as a earthquake, flood, volcanic eruption, etc.

Prior to declaring any office closure due to uninhabitable office conditions, the expected duration of the condition will be considered in addition to the availability of an alternate worksite.

Once a final decision is made regarding a closure, a public announcement will be made declaring which State offices are closed, the time the closure takes effect and the anticipated duration of the closure. Notification of employees is normally done through the options listed above under "Receiving Updates" but notice will depend on the size and location of the office closure.

The Division of General Services will contact the owner of a leased facility to provide for necessary repairs; or work with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities or directly make arrangements for repairs to state-owned facilities.

What to Expect - Returning to Duty

All employees who are normally scheduled to work are expected to be ready, willing and able to return to work upon direction to do so; immediate supervisors should maintain a list of contact numbers.

When a State office is closed, permanent full-time employees not on leave initiated prior to the closure will be compensated for scheduled work time. Leave slips will not be adjusted for employees already on leave.

If you have any questions about office closures contact the Department of Administration Commissioner's Office: 907-465-2200.

CC: All Commissioners
Mike Nizich, COS