

## Appendix F: Inclement Weather and School Closures

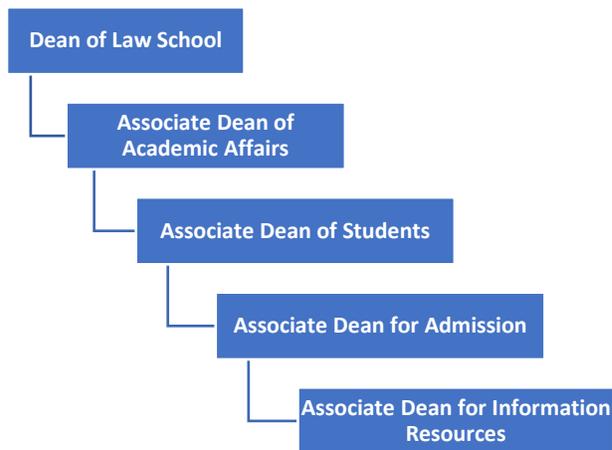
The Emergency Preparedness Plan identifies a series of recommended steps and measures designed to protect the students, Faculty and staff of the Charleston School of Law. Depending on the severity of the emergency, these recommended procedures are subject to change at any time.

### DECISION-MAKING IN CASES OF EMERGENCY

#### Chain of Command

Once the Charleston School of Law receives notice of a severe weather advisory or of any pending emergency situation potentially impacting the health and safety of the school, the Dean or, if unavailable, the next available Associate Dean will be immediately notified. All decisions regarding activation of the Disaster Response Plan are made by the Dean of the School of Law or in his absence, the appropriate Associate Dean.

In the event of any emergency, decisions regarding the status of the school will be made in this priority order:



### COMMUNICATION

#### Notifications

Emergency notifications and school closures are disseminated through the following internal and external. In times of emergency, effective communication is critical to the safety and well-being of the faculty, students and staff of the law school. This communication is both external (i.e., local media, authorities, social media, website, and others) and internal (i.e., students, faculty and staff).

Emergency notifications and school closures will be disseminated through the following internal and external communication channels detailed above and below:

- **E2Campus Text Alerts:** Urgent notifications sent via text message to faculty, staff and student cell phones will appear from “CSOL Alert.” To opt in for this service visit (<http://e2campus.com/my/charlestonlaw/signup.htm>);
- **Email Notifications:** an email with further instructions will be issued to the internal community via the “CSOL Alert” distribution list;
- **Website:** Visit <http://www.charlestonlaw.edu/> for updates;

- **Social Media:** The official Charleston School of Law [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages will publish emergency information via status updates;
- **TWEN:** Information will be posted on the School of Law community account under the “Announcements from the Administration” folder (<http://lawschool.westlaw.com>);
- **Message Boards:** Internal message boards will be posted to alert students in the event of an emergency.
- **News Media:** Local news will be informed to update the public on closures and delays.

These emergency notifications and updates will be drafted and published by a member of the Emergency Preparedness Team.

### **External Communications**

The Dean of the School of Law, or designee, will serve as the main spokesperson for the school. The Dean should be in direct contact with top school officials to be able to disseminate accurate, authorized information to the media when appropriate. The Director of Business Operations is tasked with working alongside the Dean to gather appropriate details, then they will inform the school’s communications consultant, if applicable, what to relay to the media. The school’s communication consultant will maintain a list of media contacts (email, cell phones, regular phone) in case of emergency. The communications consultant will advise the media of whom to contact at the School of Law involving specific events.

### **ANNUAL REVIEW AND TEST OF RESPONSE SYSTEMS**

The emergency notification systems, emergency response and evacuation plans shall be reviewed on a recurring basis at least once annually. The Director of Business Operations, Director of Facilities Management and Director of Security will work with the Charleston Fire Marshal to test the alarm systems annually. Additionally, floor captains will be briefed of any changes to ensure proper coverage for all facilities.

### **CHARLESTON SCHOOL OF LAW CLOSURE**

The Dean of the School of Law, or designee, will call for a closure when necessary. Faculty and staff will be instructed to secure their work areas if safety is not an issue. This includes, but is not limited to, unplugging all equipment, moving all equipment to higher ground should flooding be a concern, and covering all furniture, books and computers. Upon completion of these tasks, the staff will be asked to leave.

Once the school has been closed, students and non-emergency personnel are to leave campus and seek shelter outside the Charleston area. The law school is not to be used for shelter purposes. In the event the School of Law closes during an emergency, all scheduled law school events will be cancelled.

Students are responsible for their own travel and lodging arrangements in the event of hazardous weather and evacuations. Students are encouraged to share rides and sheltering opportunities with other students who are unable to provide their own transportation or who do not have a safe shelter.

### **STUDENT EVACUATION**

If a Hazardous Weather Condition alert is declared and the Dean of the School of Law, or designee, issues a mandate for the school’s closure, students may be advised to leave campus and seek shelter inland. **The**

**number one priority is student safety.** In the event of a school closure, no students will be allowed to remain in any of the buildings on campus. **Students are responsible for their own travel and lodging arrangements in the event of inclement weather conditions and evacuations.** Campus buildings will be closed.

### **REMOTE CLASSROOMS, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT**

In the event that the Charleston School of Law must physically close its facilities due to an emergency, classes will continue remotely. To accomplish this, faculty should:

- Create and establish a [TWEN](#) page for each of their course;
- Post copies of lectures and power points under TWEN's Course Materials link;
- Record lectures in audio format, digitize these lectures and then upload a URL link Professors can record lectures in audio format, digitize these lectures with the assistance of IT and AV services and then upload the audio lecture to their course on TWEN; and
- Create a discussion forum on TWEN in which questions are posted to which students must respond.

Training will be offered to students and faculty on the creation and use of a TWEN course. Students should review the [Student Use Guide](#) while faculty should print out and review the [Faculty Use Guide](#).

Librarians and IT staff will establish hours and an off-site phone line and email address in which to provide IT and research support. School of Law patrons will be able to access primary sources of American law as well as secondary sources electronically. Other materials can also be obtained by the library in electronic format and submitted to faculty and students as requested.

### **FLOOR CAPTAINS**

In an emergency, floor captains utilize the "last person out" procedure. This means that they ensure everyone is out of each room and off of each floor prior to their departure of the floor and building. They may mark doors of offices with Post-Its to indicate those offices are empty. When possible, floor captains should notify security that their designated area has been safely evacuated. However, floor captains should never remain in a situation when it may jeopardize their personal safety.

### **TYPES OF EMERGENCIES**

#### **a. Severe Storms and Hurricanes**

Attached herein are internal departmental plans for the Facilities Department, Office of Academic Affairs and the Sol Blatt Jr. Library and Department of Information Technology. Understanding the differences between a weather watch and a weather warning is important for being prepared for severe weather conditions. The terms below are defined by the National Hurricane Center:

- **Watch.** During a weather watch, conditions are favorable for a hazard to occur. It literally means "be on guard." During a weather watch, gather awareness of the specific threat and prepare for action; monitor the weather to find out if severe weather conditions have deteriorated and discuss protective action plans.
- **Tropical Storm Watch.** An announcement that tropical storm conditions are *possible* within the specified area.
- **Hurricane Watch.** An announcement that hurricane conditions are *possible* within the specified area.

*\*\* Watches are issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm force winds*

- **Warning.** A warning requires immediate action. This means a weather hazard is imminent – it is either occurring (i.e., a tornado has been spotted) – or it is about to occur at any moment. During a weather warning, it is important to take action: grab an emergency kit previously prepared in advance and head to safety immediately.
- **Tropical Storm Warning.** An announcement that tropical storm conditions are *expected* within the specified area.
- **Hurricane Warning.** An announcement that hurricane conditions are *expected* within the specified area.

### 1. Preparation Mode

- The Dean of the School of Law, or designee, will convene the Emergency Preparedness Team and ensure that the plan is current each year.
- All department heads are responsible for the following:
  - o Brief all departmental staff members on the Emergency Preparedness Plan;
  - o Gather all necessary Emergency Contact Information for their staff as well as other important documents; and
  - o Maintain all essential supplies for their department.
- The Director of Information Technology will ensure that all internal and external communications channels are current.

### 2. Threat Mode

The emergency weather level is raised to **Threat Mode** once a storm is active and its presumed landfall is on or near Charleston, SC. During **Threat Mode** the following action is taken:

- The Dean will call a meeting of the Emergency Preparedness Team;
- The Dean, or designee, will coordinate internal communications for the Charleston School of Law community regarding the potential for inclement weather conditions and remind everyone to monitor the communication channels for more information;
- The Department of Student Affairs is responsible for sending out an email to students requesting that they update or make any necessary changes to their emergency contact information on CSOL Access; and
- The Director of Information Technology will review the list of internally hosted systems and applications that have been deemed critical to the daily business function of the Charleston School of Law.

### 3. Watch Mode

The emergency weather level is raised to **Watch Mode** once a storm is active and its presumed landfall is on or near Charleston, SC. During **Watch Mode** the following action is taken:

- The Emergency Preparedness Team will be “on-call” for meetings;
- Department heads will brief all staff members on the Emergency Preparedness Plan;
- The Dean, or designee, will coordinate internal communications for the Charleston School of Law community regarding the potential for inclement weather conditions and remind everyone to monitor the communication channels for more information;

- The Department of Student Affairs is responsible for advising the students of possible evacuation routes; and
- The Facilities Department will prepare signage for all School of Law buildings notifying of closures and important information.

#### **4. Warning Mode**

The emergency weather level is raised to **Warning Mode** once a storm is active and its presumed landfall is on or near Charleston, SC. During **Warning Mode** the following action is taken:

- The Emergency Preparedness Team will be “on-call” for meetings;
- Department heads will brief all staff members on the Emergency Preparedness Plan;
- The Dean, or designee, will coordinate internal communications for the Charleston School of Law community regarding the potential for inclement weather conditions and remind everyone to monitor the communication channels for more information;
- All employees will take laptops offsite. Non-laptop users need to take copies of any critical data files with them;
- Department heads and their staff members will secure all office equipment and furniture; and
- The Facilities Department is responsible for the following:
  - o Inspect each department to ensure that all equipment has been properly protected and secured and evict all remaining students and personnel;
  - o Turn off electricity (where applicable);
  - o Bolt lock and key lock doors of facilities; and
  - o Turn off gas (where applicable).

#### **5. Recovery Mode**

The timeline to return to campus and/or re-open after an emergency will vary depending on the severity of the storm damage sustained. The Dean will determine and direct all recovery actions to include when the School of Law will re-open. Normal campus activities will resume once it is safe.

- The Facilities Department is responsible for the following:
  - o After arrival on site, inspect and establish the extent of damage;
  - o Attempt to report via telephone to the Director of Business Operations and Dean;
  - o Repair any immediate and obvious damage, if possible.

#### Students After the Storm

In the event of a School of Law closure, the procedures detailed herein will be used to disseminate information to students after the storm. Students should keep all available communication channels and visit the School of Law’s website and social media pages so that they will be aware of all decisions regarding continued closings, projected openings and other pertinent information.

The Charleston School of law will contact students via the emergency contract information stored on CSOL Access.

#### Employees After the Storm

In the event of a School of Law closure, the following procedures will be used to reach employees after the Storm:

- Employees will be required to check in with their immediate supervisor following the storm via cell phone;
- If an employee is unable to reach their supervisor, the employee should view the School of Law communication channels for updates on continued closings, projected openings and other pertinent information;
- The Charleston School of Law may try to contact employees via email should systems allow them to do so; and
- Employees will be required to return to work at the Direction of the Dean, or designee. During the recovery period, employees may be asked to performed duties that are not included in their normal job descriptions.

## 6. Resources

To track the storm or find preparedness checklists and information please visit the following websites:

- National Weather Service (<http://www.weather.gov>)
- National Hurricane Center (<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>)
- FEMA (<http://www.fema.gov>)
- Basic Disaster Supplies Kit (<http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>)
- National Hurricane Center (<http://nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/ready.php>)

### b. Earthquakes

Earthquakes occur without warning, therefore it is important to take steps now to prepare, so everyone knows how to respond.

- If indoors, seek refuge in a doorway or under a desk or table. Stay away from glass windows, shelves and heavy equipment. Exit the building only after the shaking has stopped. Do not use the elevators;
- After the initial shock, evaluate the situation and if emergency help is necessary, contact School of Law Security at 843-377-4911 or call 911. Protect yourself at all times and be prepared for aftershocks immediately afterwards;
- Assist people, especially those with disabilities, to evacuate the building;
- Once outside, move to a clear area away from buildings, utility poles, power lines or other structures; and
- After the earthquake is over, evaluate the situation and if emergency help is necessary, contact School of Law Security at 843-377-4911 or call 911. Be aware at all times of the dangerous structural conditions around you.

*Resources:*

- Ready.Gov (<http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes>)
- The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (<http://www.fema.gov/hazards/earthquakes/nehnp/>)
- U.S. Geological Survey (<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/>)

### c. Tornado

During a tornado warning:

- All School of Law students and personnel should disconnect electrical equipment and appliances;
- Seek shelter in the lowest level of the building. Interior hallways or rooms are preferable, away from windows;
- Take a flashlight, if available; and
- Assume a seated position on the floor with your head down and hands locked over your head. Stay close to the floor to avoid flying objects.

After the tornado has passed, evaluate the situation and if emergency help is necessary, contact School of Law Security at 843-377-4911 or call 911. Be aware at all times of the dangerous structural conditions around you.

**d. Winter Weather**

In the event of inclement winter weather, the Dean, or designee, will determine and direct all actions regarding closures.

- The Dean, or designee, will coordinate internal communications for the Charleston School of Law community regarding the potential for hazardous conditions and remind everyone to monitor the communication channels for more information;
- All employees will take laptops offsite. Non-laptop users need to take copies of any critical data files with them;
- Department heads and their staff members will secure all office equipment and furniture;
- All students and non-essential personnel will evacuate; and
- Students, faculty and staff should check all available communication channels and visit the School of Law's website and social media pages so that they will be aware of all decisions regarding continued closings, projected openings and other pertinent information.

**e. Flash Flood**

Should a flood emergency occur, the Dean, or designee, will determine and direct all actions regarding closures.

- All students and employees should check the communication channels for important information and possible closures;
- The Dean, or designee, will coordinate internal communications for the Charleston School of Law community regarding the potential for hazardous weather conditions and remind everyone to monitor the communication channels for more information;
- All employees will take laptops offsite. Non-laptop users need to take copies of any critical data files with them;
- Department heads and their staff members will secure all office equipment and furniture;
- All students and non-essential personnel will evacuate; and
- Students, faculty and staff should check all available communication channels and visit the School of Law's website so that they will be aware of all decisions regarding continued closings, projected openings and other pertinent information.

**f. Fire**

If signs of smoke, flames and/or fire are detected in the building, the following actions should be taken:

- Pull the building fire alarm. The Charleston Fire Department has the primary responsibility of responding;
- If a phone is available, dial 911 and provide a location, name and purpose for the call;
- Evacuate the building in a calm and orderly fashion, closing office and classroom doors throughout the building;
- Individuals should assist others who have disabilities to exit the building;
- Once outside, walk quickly to designated assembly areas. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews;
- Notify an emergency official if someone is believed to be inside the building. **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING**; and
- No entry into any building on campus will be permitted until the Charleston Fire Department declares the area safe.

**g. Hazardous Material Incident**

A message will be sent through a communication channel if a hazardous material release (asbestos, chemical agents, chemical weapons or biological weapons, etc.) occurs outside or near the School. If conditions require an immediate evacuation from the building, directions will be sent. If conditions require everyone to remain inside the building the following actions should be taken:

- Close and seal all exterior doors and windows.
- Shut off any personal outside air system such as a window air conditioner.
- Remain in the building until advised of further action by the School of Law, City of Charleston Police Department, and Charleston Fire Department or HAZMAT personnel.

**h. Active Shooter**

A message will be sent through a communication channel if an active shooter is on campus. In the event of a sniper or an active shooter, seek cover immediately. If you are able, exit the building. Wait for authorities to advise if and when it is safe to re-enter the building. If cover is not available, seek concealment. If conditions require everyone to remain inside the building the following procedure should be followed:

- Contact a school administrator and/or security at 843-377-4911 or call 911;
- Barricade the door and turn out the lights;
- If outside, cover with material or objects that stop small arms fire. For example, concrete walls, brick fences, big trees, etc.; and
- When applicable, hide behind objects that obscure you from view. If a shooter cannot see you, they cannot hit you. For example, behind bushes, lying down inside a vehicle, etc.

**i. Bomb Threats**

If the School of Law or anyone in the surrounding area receives a bomb threat, the recipient of the call should:

- Remain calm. Do not hang up on the caller until all vital information is obtained. Listen and do not interrupt the caller, and try to get a person close by to call 911 and initiate a trace without alerting the caller. Respond in a matter-of-fact manner, asking the caller to repeat

what was said. Gather as much information as possible. Remember all details of the conversation.

- Contact a school administrator and/or School of Law Security at 843-377-4911 or call 911.
- DO NOT activate the fire alarm personally. The decision to activate the alarm will be made by the Dean, his designee and/or the School of Law Security. The School of Law Security supervisor will contact the City of Charleston Police Department and School of Law administrators.
- Officers at the bomb threat site will prepare the building for evacuation. Once the order to evacuate is given, evacuate immediately and take all of your belongings with you unless instructed otherwise. Floor Captains should ensure that everyone in their area has evacuated.
- City of Charleston Police Department will conduct a building search for a bomb.
- NO access to the building will be granted until the search has been completed, the suspicious package or device has been removed or deactivated and Charleston Police Department clears the building for reentry.

Emergency notifications and school closures will be disseminated through the following internal and external communication channels detailed above and below:

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