

Mary Greeley Medical Center  
Ames, Iowa

Administrative Operational Policy

### **Inclement Weather Emergency Staffing Plan**

#### **PURPOSE:**

To provide adequate staffing in the medical center when an “inclement weather emergency” is declared.

#### **SCOPE:**

All employees of Mary Greeley Medical Center (i.e. hourly, salaried, and all management staff).

#### **POLICY:**

It is the responsibility of the Medical Center to provide medical services regardless of the weather and always remain open. It is the responsibility of all employees to make every reasonable effort to arrive at work as scheduled during any period of inclement weather. Such periods of time may result in staff shortages in some departments. Employees in departments affected by staff shortages may be asked to work additional hours and/or shifts to maintain necessary staff to patient ratios.

For the purpose of this policy, an inclement weather emergency is defined as hazardous weather conditions which prevent employees from traveling to or from work.

#### **Weather Watch:**

A predictive weather forecaster found on the Mary Greeley Medical Center Intranet provides details of the likelihood and nature of any anticipated inclement weather incident in Ames. Weather reports are also available on the main intranet webpage (either by using left column or the “Other” drop down tab-click on “Weblinks”) or the main internet webpage (bottom of page, click on “For Employees & Medical Staff”, then on “Emergency Management”). Other resources available include radio, weather radios, television, and computer technology. When inclement weather is expected, line managers should take reasonable steps to make advance plans. These could include:

- Reviewing schedules so that staffing is not significantly reliant on those living further away or who will need to attend to domestic responsibilities.

- Ensuring there are sufficient staff to cover unplanned absences.
- Postponing attendance at events outside the work place.

### **Declaration of an “Inclement Weather Emergency”:**

The President and CEO or administrator on call will assess the weather situation for any given period of inclement weather. Only the President and CEO or administrator on call is permitted to declare an “inclement weather emergency” for the medical center and any of its outlying areas of operation. When this policy is enacted, it will be announced through an overhead page and using WENS (our text/phone message mass communication system). Employees may also listen to local radio and television stations for policy enactment. Other ways to communicate that an inclement weather emergency has been declared include Cisco Wireless phones, WENS, an internal mass email message to all employees and notification via the MGMC Internet (mgmc.org) and the MGMC Intranet (mgmc.com). The communication goal is two hours before each shift if possible.

When the weather conditions improve and surface transportation is no longer hazardous, the President and CEO or administrator on call will notify staff by using the same communication systems listed above to announce the weather emergency.

### **PROCEDURE:**

In order to meet the needs of patients in the medical center and those who may present for care during inclement weather, each department in the medical center shall have an inclement weather department staffing plan.

When the inclement weather emergency staffing policy is initiated, an incident command team will be established. Their task is to assess staffing needs, handle staff deployment and provide respite accommodations as needed. Employees currently on duty, including management, shall remain until relief staff can be provided. Each department director determines which personnel are necessary to department operations. If excess staff are available, the director will communicate this to the incident command team so that staff can be deployed elsewhere in the medical center if necessary. If there are no other needs, then the staff will be released from duty.

All on call staff required to respond within 20 minutes will remain on-site until the inclement weather staffing policy is lifted.

All 24-hour patient care units may assume 12-hour shifts to provide maximum staffing. Every effort should be made to match the employees’ personal needs with the medical center’s need for staff to provide patient care. At no time will staff be expected to work greater than 16 consecutive hours.

It is expected that any employee scheduled to work shall notify their respective department director, manager, or their designee, if they anticipate being late or unable to report to work. Employees reporting for work during a declared inclement weather emergency within a three hour period from their designated starting time will be paid for this late time as hours worked. **No incident of tardiness will be given to any employee who makes it into work for their regularly scheduled shift.**

**Guidelines for Time and Attendance:**

- Employees who do not report for work and do not call in will not be paid.
- Employees who are unable to report to work due to inclement weather and hazardous surface conditions and provide required notice will use Paid Time Off (PTO). **This will not be recorded as unscheduled absence or subject to corrective action.**
- Employees who are required by their department director or designee to remain on-site at the medical center after completing their assigned shift and are on-call and immediately available will be paid their base hourly rate for hours required to be on site while on call.
- If an employee is unable to work due to weather conditions and the Inclement Weather Emergency Staffing Policy has not been called, they should follow their own department policy for reporting their absence. Employees not reporting to work, reporting to work late, or leaving early due to weather when an inclement weather emergency has not been declared will use PTO. If the need exists, and at the discretion of the department management, employees may make up missed work time within the workweek. It will be left to the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor if this incident will be recorded as an unscheduled absence and/or subject to corrective action.

New: 2/98

Reviewed: 2/99, 5/02, 3/05, 2/08, 5/19

Revised: 10/98, 1/00, 6/01, 1/02, 12/07, 2/09, 2/10, 5/13, 5/16