



Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 309

To: Virginia Tech Faculty, Staff, and Students

From: Timothy D. Sands

Date: March 25, 2020

Subject: Process for Reducing On-Site Staff in Response to COVID-19 Emergency

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a framework and process for decisions needed in the event of a “stay at home” directive by the commonwealth or a need to further scale back on-site operations in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

Under such a directive or condition, the goal of Virginia Tech will be to continue the essential functions of life safety, online instruction, and essential research while reducing to the greatest extent possible the number of employees required to work on site at any university location. Reducing the number of people living and working on site will better enable us to monitor and protect the employees and students who do remain on site.

For purposes of this memorandum, **on-site** work means work performed in a university-owned building, university-owned land, or university-leased space in any location. **Off-site** work refers to work performed remotely, typically from home, using internet, telephone, email, and other remote work technologies.

In its initial response to the COVID-19 emergency, Virginia Tech has adopted and implemented a reduced operations level. If the emergency continues and if the need to reduce the number of people living and working on site increases, it may be necessary to move to higher levels of emergency operating conditions. In that event, the university may choose to operate under one of three possible **emergency condition levels**. These emergency condition levels supersede the operating conditions outlined in Policy 5600 – Authorized Closing Policy:

1. Reduced Operations—Current conditions may not pose severe safety risks or logistical challenges, but a current or recent event has significant potential to, or is already, negatively affecting important campus services or the efficient functioning of

campus buildings and grounds. Certain non-essential functions and services may be reduced at one or more on-site locations.

2. Essential Operations—Current conditions pose a safety risk or logistical challenges that are more severe and necessitate having a limited number of individuals travel to or remain on site. Non-essential functions and services may be suspended at affected on-site locations. Essential functions continue on site where needed and off site where they can be supported through off-site work.

3. Closure—Current conditions pose a severe risk to health and safety or present difficult logistical challenges that will severely impede the efficient and effective functioning of operations. On-site facilities may be closed. Essential services may be reduced further across the university or at selected sites as necessary.

These emergency condition levels may be declared university-wide, affecting all locations of the institution, as in the current COVID-19 emergency, or the levels may be set site by site as needed.

In response to the COVID-19 emergency, the university will prioritize limited resources toward functions and services that are deemed essential. ***Essential functions and services*** are those that must continue in order to ensure the health and safety of the campus community, the operation of essential facilities and infrastructure, and the support of critical technological capabilities and programs, or are those activities that support the future reopening of the university after an emergency. Administrative, operational, and student support services that support essential functions are also deemed essential services.

In order to carry out essential functions and services, certain employees must continue their work, even in the emergency condition. A designation is needed to identify these employees as distinct from those who may continue to work off site in non-essential functions or may be placed in an “on-call” designation as needed. For purposes of this policy memorandum, a ***designated employee*** is a person required to report to or remain at work with responsibilities involving an essential function or service or otherwise support an essential function.

In an emergency condition level, on-site housing and dining services will be prioritized for ***students*** who meet the following criteria:

1. Students, including international students, whose health, safety, or access to food and shelter would be at risk unless they are housed on campus.
2. Students who would lose access to health care and mental health care.
3. Students who can only access online learning through university infrastructure.
4. Students employed in an essential function or the support of an essential function.

The application of these criteria may be used to request that students return in the event of a stay-at-home order or another need to reduce on-site populations.

The Process: The process that Virginia Tech will follow to reduce the number of people on site consists of three steps:

1. Identifying essential functions and the units that must operate to complete those functions.

Table 1 of the memorandum lists the essential functions by broad area and the specific organizational units that are involved in providing essential functions under the three emergency condition levels. This list of essential functions and units is subject to expansion or reduction by request of a dean, vice president, or institute director, subject to the concurrence of the Incident Response Team (IRT). Table 1 also describes criteria for scaling that will be applied under each emergency condition level, and includes links to supporting documents for broad areas of essential functions and services.

2. Identifying, informing, and supporting designated employees who are needed to carry out essential functions.

The vice president for human resources has requested that all colleges, VPs, and institute directors report the status of all full-time employees as follows:

1. On campus and needed on site even in the event of “stay at home”
2. On campus but not needed on site in the event of “stay at home”
3. Teleworking
4. On call
5. On leave

Designated employees are those who are reported in categories 1, 2, or 3, and are associated with an essential function as described in Table 1.

Designated employees who need to continue working on site will be given a letter of designation as an essential employee and provided protective equipment as needed, training, and support to work safely and productively on site in the emergency condition level.

Designated employees who are able to continue working off site will be provided a letter of designation as an essential employee, technology, training, and support to work safely and productively off site in the emergency condition level.

Non-designated employees may continue to work in functions that do not impact other support services or may be placed on standby. Employees on call (category 4) are subject to recall and should be available for recall to work on short notice unless using an approved form of leave (annual, sick, family sick, or Public Health Emergency Leave).

3. Scaling activities, both on site and off site, to accomplish essential activities and reduce the number of students and employees who remain on site.

Virginia Tech will reduce the number of students and employees working on site in each emergency condition level by:

Suspending non-essential functions and activities and informing employees of their status as a designated or non-designated employee: Using the scaling criteria in Table 1, as many designated employees as feasible will be asked to continue performing their work remotely. Non-essential employees will also be asked to continue appropriate work remotely or will be placed in on-call status.

Reducing face-to-face and other in-person services: If Virginia Tech moves from reduced operations to essential operations, face-to-face interactions for continuing essential services and functions will be reduced. Where possible, those services will be continued through online, phone, email, and other methods that comply with social distancing expectations.

Securing additional sites from public access and limiting on-site work to only designated employees.

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Table 1 – Essential Functions by Broad Area, Organizational Unit, and Emergency Condition Level.

	Emergency Condition Level Essential Functions		
Broad Area	Reduced Operations	Essential Operations	Closure
Instruction	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> All colleges and the faculty involved directly in on-line instruction and the associated support staff.</p> <p>Technology Enhanced Learning and Online Systems</p> <p>College Advising</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Continue as much instruction as possible through means of online delivery.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> All colleges and the faculty involved directly in on-line instruction and the associated support staff.</p> <p>Technology Enhanced Learning and Online Systems</p> <p>College Advising</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Potential need to differentially scale back or defer instruction if access to facilities is limited.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Essential faculty and instructional support scaled to any remaining instructional activity.</p> <p>Instruction reduced or ended.</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Continue only instruction that can be feasibly completed with minimal access to facilities and reduced support services.</p>
Student Housing and Dining	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Housing and Residence Life</p> <p>Select Residence Halls Select Dining Halls</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Housing and Residence Life</p> <p>Select Residence Halls Select Dining Halls</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Housing and Residence Life</p> <p>Select Residence Halls</p>

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	<p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Elective choice for students to remain in on-campus housing.</p> <p>Food service provided for on- and off-campus students.</p>	<p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Apply categories 1 to 4 for students who are supported with on-campus housing.</p> <p>Food service provided for on-campus students only.</p>	<p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Apply categories 1 and 2 to determine students who are supported with on-campus housing and dining.</p> <p>No other housing or dining services, except for life/safety needs.</p>
<p>Research <link to come></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Those with research activities deemed by the dean, vice president, or institute director as viable and necessary to continue in the emergency condition level.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Those with research activities that meet the criteria below will be listed by the OVPRI as approved for continued operation.</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is associated with human or animal care and well-being. ● If discontinued would pose a safety hazard. ● Is related to COVID-19 research with a timeline for deployment to support the current crisis. ● Is necessary to maintain key equipment, facilities, data, samples, materials, or other basic capacities that will be needed quickly upon change of operational status back to normal. ● Involves an activity that has U.S. or Virginia government-mandated security and access 	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Those with research activities that meet the criteria below will be listed by the OVPRI as approved for continued operation.</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is associated with human or animal care and well-being. ● If discontinued would pose a safety hazard. ● Is related to COVID-19 research with a timeline for deployment to support the current crisis. ● Minimal maintenance of equipment and facilities. ● Involves an activity that has U.S. or Virginia government-mandated security and access requirements, cannot be performed

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		<p>requirements, cannot be performed remotely, and is deemed essential by the U.S. or Virginia government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be performed off site with little or no significant impact on support services as they are delivered in the emergency condition level. • Is deemed otherwise essential or able to continue by the dean, VP, or institute director with the concurrence of the VPRI. <p>OVPRI and related subunits</p>	<p>remotely, and is deemed essential by the U.S. or Virginia government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be performed off site with little or no significant impact on support services as they are delivered in the emergency condition. • Is deemed otherwise essential or able to continue by the dean, VP, or institute director with the concurrence of the VPRI. <p>OVPRI and related subunits</p>
Public Safety	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VT Police Department VT Rescue Squad Emergency Management Environmental Health and Safety</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> All services, including customer-facing services remain operational in all conditions.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VT Police Department VT Rescue Squad Emergency Management Environmental Health and Safety</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> All services, including customer-facing services remain operational in all conditions.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VT Police Department VT Rescue Squad Emergency Management Environmental Health and Safety</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> All services, including customer-facing services remain operational in all conditions.</p>
Health Care	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Schiffert Health Center Cook Counseling Center</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Schiffert Health Center Cook Counseling Center</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> Schiffert Health Center Cook Counseling Center</p>

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	On- and off-campus students	On- and off-campus students	<u>Criteria for Scaling</u> On- and off-campus students
Animal Care	<u>Organizational Units</u> Office of University Veterinarian and Animal Resources Animal Care Units in Colleges Veterinary Teaching Hospital Equine Medical Center <u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Care for all laboratory, teaching, and production animals with community services provided through teaching hospitals.	<u>Organizational Units</u> Office of University Veterinarian and Animal Resources Animal Care Units in Colleges Veterinary Teaching Hospital Equine Medical Center <u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Care for all laboratory, teaching, and production animals with community services provided through teaching hospitals for emergency cases only.	<u>Organizational Units</u> Office of University Veterinarian and Animal Resources Animal Care Units in Colleges Veterinary Teaching Hospital Equine Medical Center <u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Care for all laboratory, teaching, and production, and already hospitalized animals, but limit the acceptance of additional community animals into the teaching hospitals.

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Utility and Technology Infrastructure and Maintenance of Buildings	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF and VPIT Building Maintenance (Electrical, Elevator, Fire, Mechanical, Plumbing, Trades) Chiller Plants Electric Service Housekeeping IT Infrastructure Power Plant Utility Distribution Grounds Services Waste Management</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Scale operations to number and types of facilities that remain operational in this emergency condition level.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF and VPIT Building Maintenance (Electrical, Elevator, Fire, Mechanical, Plumbing, Trades) Chiller Plants Electric Service Housekeeping IT Infrastructure Power Plant Utility Distribution Grounds Services Waste Management</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Scale operations to number and types of facilities that remain operational in this emergency condition level.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF and VPIT Building Maintenance (Electrical, Elevator, Fire, Mechanical, Plumbing, Trades) Chiller Plants Electric Service Housekeeping IT Infrastructure Power Plant Utility Distribution Grounds Services Waste Management</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Scale operations to number and types of facilities that remain operational in this emergency condition level.</p>
Academic and Student Support Services	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP Dean Libraries Dean of Students Div. of Student Affairs Undergraduate Academic Affairs VP Dean of Graduate School VP Enrollment Management Bursar as subunit of VP Finance VP OIA/Study Abroad</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP Dean Libraries Dean of Students Div. of Student Affairs Undergraduate Academic Affairs VP Dean of Graduate School VP Enrollment Management Bursar as subunit of VP Finance VP OIA/Study Abroad</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP Dean Libraries Dean of Students Div. of Student Affairs Undergraduate Academic Affairs VP Dean of Graduate School VP Enrollment Management Bursar as subunit of VP Finance VP OIA/Study Abroad</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u></p>

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	<p>Services and space scaled to number of students and faculty continuing to need support in each emergency level.</p> <p>Community spaces in library and student centers remain open.</p> <p>Other student support services that can be performed on or off site with little or no significant draw upon other essential services.</p>	<p>Services and space scaled to number of students and faculty continuing to need support in each emergency level.</p> <p>Community spaces in library and student centers closed.</p> <p>Other student support services that can be performed off site with little or no significant draw upon other essential services.</p>	<p>Services and staffing essential and scaled to the life/safety requirements.</p>
<p>Administrative and Operational Support Services <link to come></p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> IRT and support staff IMT and support staff VP Finance VP Human Resources VP Business Affairs VP Information Technology VP Policy and Governance Internal Audit Legal Counsel Equity and Accessibility</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Services scaled to number of students and faculty continuing to need support in each emergency condition level.</p> <p>Other administrative activities that can be</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> IRT and support staff IMT and support staff VP Finance VP Human Resources VP Business Affairs VP Information Technology VP Policy and Governance Internal Audit Legal Counsel Equity and Accessibility</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Services scaled to number of students and faculty continuing to need support in each emergency condition level.</p> <p>Other administrative activities that can be</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> IRT and support staff IMT and support staff VP Finance VP Human Resources VP Business Affairs VP Information Technology VP Policy and Governance Internal Audit Legal Counsel Equity and Accessibility</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> Services reduced to those needed for minimal operation.</p>

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	performed on or off site with little or no draw upon other support services may continue.	performed off site with little or no draw upon other support services may continue.	
Capital and Non-Capital Construction	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> The following functions will continue: design, engineering, procurement, contract management, construction, project management, and inspection/permitting, and any support services.</p> <p>Construction support activities that can be performed off site with little or no significant impact on projects will be initiated.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> If still permitted through order/regulations, the following functions will continue: design, engineering, procurement, contract management, construction, project management, and inspection/ permitting, and any support services.</p> <p>Construction support activities that can be performed off site with little or no significant impact on projects will be initiated.</p>	<p><u>Organizational Units</u> VP CPIF VP Finance</p> <p><u>Criteria for Scaling</u> If a stop work order is issued, the “essential functions” to the left will all continue with the exception of physical construction.</p> <p>Construction support activities that can be performed off site with little or no significant impact on projects will be initiated.</p>