

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES
CHANCELLOR'S POLICY ON THE SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS
DUE TO PANDEMIC

Approved 9/16/09

In the event of pandemic flu or other pandemic disease, every effort will be made to continue essential programs and services at the colleges and in the Chancellor's Office. In consultation with public health officials and if deemed in the best interest of public safety, the President, in consultation with the Chancellor, may elect to suspend classes, selected operations and public functions. If deemed in the best interest of public safety, the Chancellor may elect to suspend selected operations in the Chancellor's Office. Each college and the Chancellor's Office will maintain pandemic emergency plans, including procedures related to decision-making, communications, maintaining essential services, and academic continuity. The colleges will work with faculty to ensure that student attendance policies, in the face of a confirmed health crisis, will be fair and flexible. Academic continuity plans may differ by academic program and institution; particular programs such as allied health may require special processes and/or safeguards. Suspension of classes or selected operations may require extension or modification of the academic calendar. Essential personnel, as determined by the President in consultation with the Chancellor, may be required to continue specific job functions during suspension of classes and/or operations.

Those with flu-like illness should stay away from classes or work and limit interactions with other people, except to seek medical care, for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. Students who live off-campus and employees are expected to stay home if they or someone in their household develops flu-like symptoms. In the event of pandemic, the VSC may require employees to not be at work for the following reasons: 1) the employee demonstrates flu-like symptoms, in which case the employee shall use accumulated sick days; 2) the employee is not ill, in which case the employee shall be compensated for the time they would have worked had they not been asked to stay at or go home. An institution may advance additional days of sick leave at the discretion of the President in consultation with the Chancellor.

In the event of suspension of classes and/or selected operations:

- Every effort will be made to continue processing payroll, as long as reasonably feasible, at the discretion of the Chancellor and taking into account the capacity for payroll personnel to continue working as needed and the financial circumstances of the institution(s) affected by suspension of operations.
- If a prolonged suspension of operations or other circumstances impact the institution's ability to reasonably sustain full pay rates, the Chancellor may determine that pay rates should be reduced and/or that lay-offs should occur; any such action will be implemented in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable VSC policies and negotiated agreements.
- Some employees may be given assignments to maintain essential programs and services, which may require working from a remote location.
- The decision to restore campus or site operations will be made by the President in consultation with the Chancellor and public health officials.

The CDC has issued specific pandemic flu recommendations for higher education and has created a communications tool kit and other preparation checklists, all available at:

http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/school/colleges_universities.pdf