



**WHATCOM COUNTY**  
**EXECUTIVE ORDER \_\_ 96-06 \_\_**

Due to the severe inclement weather conditions existing in Whatcom County on this day, December 27, 1996, and the possible hazard that those conditions pose to life and safety, the Whatcom County Courthouse will be open for essential personnel only. An early closure of the Courthouse facility will occur at 2 p.m. All non-essential personnel shall be on standby and available to the County per Executive Order #92-01 (copy attached) which specifies how such emergencies shall be addressed. This weather based emergency shall be declared for this date only and all applicable County policies and Executive Orders shall apply.

Dated: December 27, 1996.

Whatcom County  
Executive

## **EXECUTIVE ORDER 92-01**

### **Establishing Procedures for Emergency Closure of County Buildings and Facilities**

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 2.54 of the Whatcom County Code requires certain hours of operation for County offices; and,

**WHEREAS**, inclement weather conditions, loss of power or other emergency situations may from time to time necessitate the closure of the courthouse or other operational facility; and,

**WHEREAS**, identification of essential personnel and establishment of procedures for closure of facilities is critical in such emergencies;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BY VIRTUE OF THE POWER VESTED IN ME BY THE HOME RULE CHARTER FOR WHATCOM COUNTY, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, AS FOLLOWS:**

1. All Whatcom County departments and offices shall designate positions that are considered "essential." An "essential" employee is defined as one who by virtue of his/her responsibilities must be on premises at the normal work place during normal work hours, even when an emergency closure of a County facility is declared. The Executive, a department manager or his/her designee may designate "essential" employee positions.
2. The employees filling the "essential" positions shall be informed what their responsibilities will be during an emergency closure of the work facility. A listing of these "essential positions" shall be filed with the Personnel Department and the Executive Office each November of each year.
3. The Executive or designee, as determined by the "Chain of Command" may declare an emergency closure of a county facility for extreme weather conditions, natural or manmade disasters or other event where the work facility must be closed.
4. The "Chain of Command" to declare such an emergency closure shall be as follows:
  - A. County Executive
  - B. Public- Works Director
  - C. County Sheriff

If the County Executive is out of town or otherwise unavailable to make such an emergency closure declaration, the County Public Works Director may do so. If the Public Works Director is also out of town or otherwise unavailable, the County Sheriff may make such a declaration.

5. When and if an emergency closure is declared by the Executive or designee, notification shall be made to each department head, if possible. Notification shall also be made through the broadcast media, including KGMI (790 AM) and KISM (92.9 FM). The Emergency Broadcast System and/or the Sheriff's Division of Emergency Management may also be used when appropriate to announce the declaration of emergency closure.
6. Each department head shall establish procedures to notify the respective employees of an emergency closure of their work facility.
7. Employees in positions not considered "essential" shall be on standby during the hours normally scheduled for work. These employees shall be required to remain at their normal places of residence to await duty calls. The normal place of residence is the location where they can be reached by use of the standby telephone number on file with their department. Standby employees will have access to a radio- and- listen to designated stations if telephone contact with other departmental personnel is impossible.
8. When and if an individual County work facility is rendered uninhabitable for any reason, the Executive or designee shall declare an emergency closure for that facility only.
9. Compensation during emergencies:
  - a. Employees who are normally scheduled to work and are considered "essential" during an emergency shall receive their normal rate of pay.
  - b. Employees who are normally scheduled to work but are informed that they are to be on standby during an emergency shall receive their normal rate of pay.
  - c. Employees who are normally scheduled to work and are essential during an emergency, but who are unable to be at the workplace as a result of the conditions that caused the emergency, shall elect in sequential order to have time charged to compensatory time off, vacation, sick leave or leave without pay.
  - d. Employees who are on standby but cannot be reached at the standby telephone number on file in their department or who are unable to be at the workplace when their presence is requested due to reasons other than the emergency conditions shall elect in sequential order to have time charged to compensatory time off, vacation, sick leave or leave without pay.
  - c. Employees who are scheduled prior to the declaration of an emergency, to take a vacation day, special leave day, sick leave day, holiday or scheduled day- off on a day when an emergency is declared, shall have time off charged to the leave allotment as originally scheduled. The Executive retains the right to

cancel such time off if an employee's services are required as a result of the emergency.

10. Annual review: Each year, by November 1. every department manager shall review the procedures outlined herein and ensure the designated "essential" employees know of their responsibilities under this order. The current list of "essential employees" must be forwarded to the Executive and Personnel Offices by all departments/divisions - each November.

Dated this 3rd day of March, 1992.

Shirley Van Zanten, County Executive

Subscribed and sworn to me this 3rd day of March, 1992.