

Severe Weather Preparedness Checklist

This checklist will help ensure your organization is ready for any severe weather or natural disaster scenario, minimizing disruptions and keeping employees safe.

- Identify Risks
 - Assess potential weather-related risks based on your location and business operations.
 - Include impassable roads, utility failures, employee displacement, and facility damage.
- Draft and Communicate an Emergency Plan
 - Create a plan that includes clear evacuation routes, safe zones, and procedures for both on-site and remote employees.
 - Assign roles so everyone knows who to contact for updates or assistance.
- Set Up Reliable Communication Systems
 - Implement tools like automated text and email alerts or web pages that can be updated with critical information.
 - Train employees on what to do if communication systems fail or they lose access to updates.
- Prepare for Utility Failures
 - Plan for power outages and service disruptions. Ensure essential operations can continue if utilities are down for extended periods.
- Be Flexible with Attendance Policies
 - Build flexibility into your attendance policy during severe weather. Allow for management discretion when employees cannot commute due to unsafe conditions.
 - Consider allowing remote work or providing paid time off when employees feel unsafe.
- Clarify Pay Policies for Business Closures
 - Nonexempt employees only need to be paid for hours worked, but allow PTO or vacation use during closures.
 - Exempt employees should receive their salary if the closure lasts less than a week, with PTO deducted if applicable.
- Support Employee Evacuation Needs
 - Consider covering hotel and travel costs if employees need to evacuate their homes due to natural disasters. Offering financial relief helps ensure their safety.
- Post-Disaster Support
 - Organize community relief efforts or provide paid time off for employees to volunteer after the disaster. These actions foster team unity and contribute to recovery efforts.
- Reevaluate Business Hours and Operations
 - Adjust business hours or suspend operations if it's unsafe for employees to commute or work during severe weather conditions.