

**MassHire Career Center Situational Closings
Policy QA**

100 MDCS 08-117

Q1. Why are career centers considered state agencies when most are operated by non-profit organizations and/or municipalities? The state does not hold leases and less than half (in our case) are state employees. I understand that the state plays a critical role in moving money to us and in overseeing our work, but the state plays that role with many organizations which are not considered state agencies. Clarification would be appreciated.

A1. This policy has long been under development and is in direct response to requests from the Local Boards and Career Centers. The policy is not intended to convey that Career Centers are state agencies. There are however, MassHire Career Centers, that house State employees so, as stated in the Background section, this policy is intended to provide consistent guidance to MassHire Career Center management as it pertains to ensuring MDCS employees are in compliance with the Commonwealth's HRD policies regarding time and attendance.

Q2. We believe that the Workforce Board and Chief Elected Official should be the final determinant of decisions around closing, with the Career Center management staff providing recommendations based on weather, facilities issues, etc. Career Centers are contractors of the WB and should request/recommend closing rather than making the final decision and informing the WBs/CEOs. The WBs can inform the state once such decisions have been made.

A2. The policy states that the protocols should be followed in the event that a MassHire Career Center is closed by the local Chief Elected Official (CEO) or local MassHire Career Center Management Team. Local boards were implied within "management team," but for greater clarity, MDCS has revised the language to specify the inclusion of local boards in the decision process. MassHire boards can determine local protocol in terms of who makes the final decision, but protocols should include contingency strategies for circumstances that may arise where it is not practical or not safe to wait for a board determination (e.g., there is a need for a situational closing and the Director and Chair are not readily available). This policy has been written for that exact reason (and finally agreed to by all parties). This will ensure that protocols are in place both locally and at Central Office to expedite and support local decision-making related to situational closures.

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Q3. Page 3 – Adverse Weather Closing - 3rd Arrow – Must post signs. If we are in the office and close early due to weather, we always post a sign and on our website or if we know in advance that we will have a weather closing. However, for weather related events where we won't know until the day of the storm whether we will close it is not possible to ask a staff person to come to the office to post a closing. We will do our best to post a notice the night before to notify people we MAY have a weather related closing and to check our phone, website, and local media for closing notices before coming to the office.

A3. The policy is attempting to ensure that best efforts are made to avert situations where customers show up at a career center that is closed.

Q4. Page 3 Arrow 5 – MDCS will inform the local management teams of the appropriate protocols for recording staff time and attendance – I assume this means State staff time and attendance not local staff which is a local organization decision.

A4. Yes, this refers to MDCS staff.

Q5. Page 4-Situational Closing b. – Same comment as Q4 above.

A5. Yes, this refers to MDCS staff.

Q6. Page 4 – Holiday Closings b. – Same comment as Q4 above.

A6. Yes, this refers to MDCS staff.

Q7. Page 5 – Local Staff Meetings – last Arrow – Not sure why a partner staff person would want to be in our office when it is closed for a training if they are not attending the training because they would not be able to serve customers or communicate with Career Center staff during this closed time.

A7. This conveys an option. Some career centers provide space for Rapid Response or other partner staff who perform other work that doesn't necessarily involve seeing customers.

Q8. Career centers may have a schedule of closings due to multiple new operator trainings. Is it necessary to have someone update the DCS website each time a local closing occurs?

A8. The policy is attempting to ensure that best efforts are made to avert situations where customers show up at a career center that is closed.

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