

ALASKA COURT SYSTEM  
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR  
ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN NO. 60  
Amended Effective November 15, 1996

TO: ALL HOLDERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN SETS

All Justices	Senior Staff
All Judges	Administrative Associate
Area Court Administrators	Rural Court Analyst
Clerk of the Appellate Courts	General Services Manager
Rural Training Assistants	Judicial Services
All Full-Time Clerks of Court	APD Warrants
All Magistrates	
Law Libraries at Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau & Ketchikan	

SUBJECT: Emergency Closure Protocol

I. Emergency Closure Plan

A. All trial courts, appellate courts and administrative departments must develop a written emergency closure plan incorporating the policies of this Bulletin, using the guidelines listed in sections II, III and IV below. It will be the responsibility of the following individuals to develop the plan:

- < Area Court Administrators in their resident locations
- < Clerks of Court (outside the ACA's resident locations)
- < Clerk of the Appellate Court
- < Senior Staff responsible for staff divisions as designated by the Deputy Director

B. Plans must be submitted for approval by February 1, 1993, to the following:

- < Area Court Administrators for the trial courts
- < Clerk of the Appellate Courts for the appellate courts
- < Deputy Director for Administration

- C. After approval, copies of the written plan must be given to all employees. Employees should be instructed to keep a copy of the procedure at home. New employees should receive a copy of the plan from their supervisor during orientation.

## II. Authority to Close or Partially Close Courts and Offices

The decision to close or partially close the courts and administrative offices will be made by the Administrative Director or his/her designee in consultation with the Chief Justice or his/her designee.

Employees must be advised that closure of state Executive Branch offices by the governor does not constitute authorization to close court offices.

## III. Leave Policy

- A. In the event of an authorized closure or partial closure of a court or office, all personnel released from work in that office will be given administrative leave.

If the court closure extends beyond three (3) days, the Supreme Court will determine the terms of the extended closure. These terms may include continuing the affected employees on administrative leave, placing the affected employees in layoff status, or reassigning the affected employees to other duties or locations.

- B. In the event of a partial closure of a court, affected employees may be reassigned to other departments or areas. If employees are assigned to duties generally performed by employees in higher job classifications, they will be compensated for such work at the appropriate level in the higher classification. If employees are released from work, they will be given administrative leave.

- C. If an employee is on previously approved personal leave or in another location at the time of the emergency closure or partial closure, that employee is not entitled to administrative leave or other compensation.
- D. If closure or partial closure of the court has not been authorized, employees not present in the work place will be required to take personal leave.

IV. Guidelines

- A. Each court and administrative division will designate an employee (judicial officer, area court administrator, clerk of court or administration supervisor) to be the "emergency closure" employee and another employee to act in the absence of the designated emergency closure employee. The emergency closure employee will hereinafter be referred to as the "designated employee".
- B. Each court and administrative division will designate emergency personnel who may be required to work in the event of a partial closure of a court or office. At a minimum, court or department supervisors will be deemed emergency personnel. Other personnel may be designated emergency personnel if needed.
- C. Each court and administrative department will set up a systematic way to notify employees of an emergency closure or partial closure (e.g. phone tree or record-a-call). Each court will also set up procedures for notifying jurors of an emergency closure.
- D. If the governor or mayor closes or partially closes state or city offices or if the designated employee has reason to believe there is an emergency, the designated employee must contact the person listed below to determine if the court or office will be closed.
  - 1. Designated employees for the trial courts must contact the Area Court Administrator or in his/her absence, the presiding judge. The

Area Court Administrator will be responsible for contacting the Administrative Director for authorization to close or partially close a court.

2. Designated employees for the appellate courts must contact the Clerk of the Appellate Court or in his/her absence the chief deputy clerk. The Clerk will be responsible for contacting the Administrative Director for authorization to close or partially close a court.
  3. Designated employees for Administration must contact the Deputy Director or in his/her absence the Fiscal Officer. The Deputy Director will be responsible for contacting the Administrative Director for authorization to close or partially close a court.
- E. In the event an emergency arises before 8:00 am, the designated employee should call for authorization between 6:00 and 7:00 am. This will allow ample time to notify employees and jurors of the closure.
- F. The designated employee should call and ask local radio and tv stations to announce whether or not the court is closed or partially closed. In the event of closure, radio and tv stations should be asked to 1) announce that the Alaska Court System is closed and that employees need not report to work, or if partially closed, that only emergency personnel need to report to work; and 2) advise jurors to remain home and advise jurors to either report or to call-in for jury duty the following business day. In Anchorage, the designated employee for the Anchorage Trial Courts or his/her designee will be responsible for notifying local radio and tv stations.
- G. The designated employee will notify employees as provided in the emergency closure plan for that court.
- H. The designated employee should ask local police to place a sign on all entrance doors to the court advising employees and the public of the

emergency closure.

- I. If the emergency may affect the court's electronic equipment (e.g. volcanic ash fall, flood or power outages), the designated employee must make arrangements to have the equipment (including computers) turned off or otherwise protected (e.g. covering the equipment, moving it off the floor, etc.) If the designated employee has any questions concerning turning off the computer or other equipment, the designated employee should contact Technical Operations in Anchorage at 264-8211.
  
- J. Within three days after the closed court has reopened, the designated employee must notify Administrative Accounting of the emergency closure or partial closure and of all necessary details (e.g. dates and duration of the closure, authorized amounts of administrative leave or FLSA overtime and a listing of employees involved in the closure.)
  
- K. If the designated or back-up employee terminates employment, the court or administrative division will designate a new person and immediately notify the Area Court Administrator, Clerk of the Appellate Courts or Deputy Director. The written plan must be amended and distributed to employees.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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Arthur H. Snowden, II  
Administrative Director

Originally issued December 29, 1992.