S2021– R2 – Hourly Wage Compensation During the Snowstorm Crisis of 2021

WHEREAS, Texas and the Denton community were significantly impacted by a snowstorm, which took out UNT’s power, resulted in low-quality water, and made the trip to UNT perilous for a number of UNT employees.

WHEREAS, on February 14th, the UNT community were required to stay home after a notice was sent out that the campus would be closed for the week.¹

WHEREAS, upon returning to regular operations, UNT payroll sent out an email claiming that hourly wage employees would “only be paid for time physically work... Regardless of how much time an hourly (student or non-student) employee is scheduled to work, they do not receive any compensation for time not actually worked, only the hours the hourly employee physically worked should be entered.”²

WHEREAS, following public concern for this course of action, UNT changed its decision though an email sent to the UNT community, which stated, “Because of the closure, our student employees lost valuable work time. If possible, please allow them to work the hours they missed last week during the next few weeks – ensuring they do not exceed 40 hours in any one week or work during class time. This includes students on Federal Work Study as long as the hours are simply ‘make up’ of time missed and not additional hours overall. However, international students with work visas have strict rules that will not allow for ‘make up’ hours.”³

WHEREAS, UNT hourly employees are not permitted to work more than 25 hours per week, and there are no exemptions provided in UNT Policy 05.025 which would allow students to work more than 25 hours in this instance, UNT has adopted a course of action which is still detrimental to the hourly employees while also violating its own policies.⁴

WHEREAS, working more hours, which are capped at 25 per week, on top of the increased demand through UNT coursework make-up, will have a negligible positive effect on monthly income with a considerable negative impact as a result of lost wages for the week not worked.

WHEREAS, hourly employees rely on UNT wages for housing, food, and other necessary monthly expenses.
WHEREAS, there is a moral imperative, which was codified in a bipartisan CARES Act passed by the federal legislature regarding COVID-19 relief, for employers to compensate employees for time not worked during a period of crisis in which the employee was required to not come into work.⁵

WHEREAS, UNT has caused great concern for employees who rely on the wages received as dedicated employees of the University, the majority of whom would have worked the week had a significant snowstorm prevented such work.

WHEREAS, a petition garnering no less than 750 signatures, including the signature of Denton City Councilperson Deb Armintor, demands pay for employees who were unable to work due to UNT closing its campus.⁶

WHEREAS, in doing so, UNT has acted irresponsibly, without consideration for its employees which work tirelessly to make the university best for all who benefit from it, and with disregard to the moral imperative previously mentioned.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the Student Government Association Senate demands compensation for hourly employees at the University of North Texas, student and non-student alike, for the week of February 15th through the 20th without placing an undue burden on the hourly employee through negligible hours in “following weeks”.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the University provide a statement informing the public of this change.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the University work to develop contingency policies which address these concerns in a more equitable and appropriate way to prevent this from occurring again.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this resolution be sent to the following individuals:

1. Dr. Neal Smatresk, University of North Texas President
2. Katy McDaniel, University of North Texas System Human Resources Executive Director
3. Bob Brown, University of North Texas Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration
Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Luecke
*Student Government Association President*

Savannah Phifer
*UNT Student*

Devon Skinner
*UNT Student*

Paola Rojas
*Senator of the College of Business*

Stephanie Villarreal
*Senator of the College of Business*

Andy McDowall
*Senator of the College of Engineering*

Bushra Alharbi
*Senator of the College of Engineering*

Casey Jimenez
*Senator of the College of Health and Public Service*

Hector Morales
*Senator of the College of Health and Public Service*

Maleeza Silva
*Senator of the College of Health and Public Service*

Jermaine Turner
*Senator of the Honors College*

Grant Johnson
*Senator of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences*

Maria Lawson
*Senator of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences*

Stefania Santos
*Senator of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences*
David Munoz-Sarabia  
*Senator of the College of Merchandising, Hospitality and Tourism*

Sophia Vomvoris  
*Senator of the College of Music*

Alexica Johnson  
*Senator of the College of Science*

Bryan La Beau  
*Senator of the College of Science*

Jordan Gus  
*Senator of the College of Science*

Tara Williams  
*Senator of the College of Science*

Victoria Nguyen  
*Senator of the College of Science*

Navya Chintaman  
*Senator of the College of Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science*

**Sources:**

1. Appendix A
2. Appendix B
3. Appendix C
4. [https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/05.025.EmployStudentsHourly.Published2019_0.pdf](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/05.025.EmployStudentsHourly.Published2019_0.pdf)
In Witness thereof, I hereby certify the Student Senate of the University of North Texas Student Government Association has approved this document and is referred to the office of the President.

Cameron Combs  
Speaker of the Senate  

President of the Student Government Association

Michael Luecke  
Vice President of Student Affairs

2021/02/26
Date

2021/02/26
Date

6.21.2021
Date
Appendices

Appendix A:

20160201
Mail - Skinner, Devon - Outlook

Eagle Alert - UNT closed through Saturday

UNT <noreply@everbridge.net>

To: Skinner, Devon <DevonSkinner2@myunt.edu>

The following is an IMPORTANT message from the University of North Texas.

This is an Eagle Alert! UNT will remain closed through Saturday due to inclement weather and hazardous roads. For updates, watch the UNT Facebook page or follow @untalert on Twitter.

https://outlook.office365.com/mail/

1/1
Appendix B:

If you have any additional questions regarding the updated schedule, please contact Payroll at 940-359-5500 or payroll@untsystem.edu.

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**Time Entry Guidelines for Weather Closures**

Due to inclement weather, the University of North Texas System and its campuses closed from Feb. 15-19. Please read below for details on how to enter your time during this closure. Please note that employees will need to enter time for each day of the closure (Feb. 15-19) into the EIS Time and Labor system.

**Hourly Employees**

- Hourly employees will only be paid for time physically worked.
- Regardless of how much time an hourly (student or non-student) employee is scheduled to work, they do not receive any compensation for time not actually worked; only the hours the hourly employee physically worked should be entered.
- Employees who are not eligible to receive leave require no special data entry.

**Salaried Employees**

- The amount of **Leave – Weather Closure-EMG (WCEMG)** each employee should receive during this university closure is eight hours per day for full-time benefits-eligible employees and is prorated based on FTE for those who are part-time benefits-eligible. For example, a part-time benefits-eligible employee who is 50 percent would receive four hours.
Eagle Alert - UNT will reopen Sunday

UNT <noreply@everbridge.net>
Sat 2/20/2021 6:45 PM
To: Skinner, Devon <DevonSkinner2@myunt.edu>

The following is an IMPORTANT message from the University of North Texas:

IT Services are being restored and Canvas is now functional. We will be resuming operations Sunday and look forward to returning to in-person and online/hybrid classes Monday. However, we are still healing and assessing damage across campus, and many we cannot resume as quickly as possible.

Although most buildings will be open and operational, they won’t be running at peak performance just as repairs from this catastrophic event will take time. Some buildings may not be ready for occupancy by Monday. Faculty will notify students on Sunday if their class will meet in an alternative format. Supervisors will notify employees if they will need to work remotely Monday. Everyone should assume buildings will be cooler than expected and prepare accordingly, as well as take care while driving on campus roads, in parking lots, and walking on sidewalks. Pay attention to flipping on and off.

In addition, students on campus can check Facebook through the weekend. Monday, open dining halls include Brummett, Chappell, Mean Greens and West. Eagle Landing will likely be closed at least all this week but will re-open as soon as possible.

During the storm, we had several staff members from dining, facilities, IT, police and risk management on campus to keep things as safe and secure as possible, making our return Monday possible. They deserve our deep appreciation and thanks.

Because of the closure, our student employees lost valuable work time. If possible, please allow them to work the hours they missed last week during the next few weeks - ensuring they do not exceed 40 hours in any one week or work during class time. This includes students on Federal Work Study as long as the hours are simply "make up" of times missed and are additional hours overall. However, international students with work visas have strict rules that will not allow for "make up" hours.

Please note when the City of Denton lifted its boil water advisory this morning, our teams began following the guidelines for flushing lines and restoring safe water to campus. Those guidelines for household or in the city include:

- Run all cold water faucets for 5 minutes
- To flush automatic ice makers, make 3 batches of ice and discard
- Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle

We're ready to eattested.com at the Union and Castle front service testing Sunday, Curves, Inc. will resume testing in the Union and Gateway Monday. Visit curves/Union or curvesGateway.

Staff and faculty, should see the message from UNT System HR for instructions on reporting time.

https://uhxvw7.munique9.com/dmPvQeU8aEhS1hZdytMmWt1VUWZVUItc/9fN19LmOPmWJ3Q"e7Mm/3VvGwGxwXQc?97bL3lybU9uI7EcHJ%...