

Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities

PROCEDURE

Procedure #: 02-ALL-ALL-0719 (VH) **Subject:** Transportation During Tornado Watch/Warning
Effective Date: 02-01-08 **Last Revision:** 12-13-2024
Person Responsible: Health & Safety Coordinator
Approvals/Date: Brent Olson 12-12-24 Scott Myer 12/16/24
Superintendent, WCBDD Date Department Director/Coordinator Date

1. In accordance with Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Rules and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC), this procedure provides a course of action for dealing with Tornado Watches and Tornado Warnings. (OAC 3301-83-15)
2. In the event of potentially unsafe weather conditions, the Health & Safety Coordinator, or designee, shall communicate current weather conditions to bus staff. Weather conditions and radar shall continue to be monitored in the Transportation office by the Health & Safety Coordinator or designee. The weather radio, commercial broadcast radio and the internet shall be used to monitor conditions. Any conditions affecting transportation operations will be discussed with the Health and Safety Coordinator or Superintendent.
3. If a Tornado Watch is issued by the National Weather Service, all transportation shall operate as normal. Bus staff shall be alerted to the Tornado Watch and instructed to monitor conditions.
4. If a Tornado Warning is issued by the National Weather Service:
 - A. All vehicles not in operation shall be grounded until the warning has expired.
 - B. During a Tornado Warning, individuals shall not be permitted to leave a WCBDD site or activity in a Board owned vehicle.
 - C. Vehicles and School buses already in operation shall be alerted to the Tornado Warning and will be asked to report current location. All drivers/aides will be given specific instructions by the Health & Safety Coordinator or designee.
 1. Specific area of Tornado Warning area within the county shall be determined.
 2. Buses and Vehicles not in the Warning area will be permitted to operate but will not be allowed to travel in or near the Warning area.
 3. Buses and Vehicles already in the Warning Area will be directed to find a place of safety and evacuate the bus. Bus staff shall report to the Health & Safety Coordinator or designee where the place of safety is and which passengers are on the bus/vehicle.
 4. A place of safety will be defined as a structure with sufficient accessibility and capacity to allow for all passengers to be safely taken indoors. Passengers and staff will take shelter in an accessible basement if possible. If not possible, passengers will gather in the center of a structure on the lowest level away from all windows. If no structure is readily available or if weather conditions do not permit locating a safe building, pull the bus/vehicle off of the road and evacuate the passengers to a location away from the bus, preferably in a low-lying area or ditch.
 5. The Health & Safety Coordinator or designee will contact all parents/guardians to inform them about buses/vehicles that will be delayed due to the Tornado Warning and also will be informed of the location of the vehicles.
 6. Conditions of the evacuation area will be communicated to the Health & Safety Coordinator or designee via cell phone or two-way communications throughout the event.
 7. When the "all-clear" is issued by the National Weather Service, passengers will reload the buses or vehicles. Staff will report the conditions including passenger status, need for emergency or medical personnel, vehicle condition, and staff's ability to perform tasks.
 8. Health & Safety Coordinator or designee will coordinate all buses, vehicles, staff, parents and guardians to determine how to best and most safely transport remaining passengers to home or program site after the Warning has passed.

References: OAC 3301-83-15
OAC 5123:2-1-03
Ohio Preservice School Bus Driver Training Manual

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