

Policy Name: Catastrophic Events and Continuity of Operations  
Policy Number: ADM 9.13  
Title of Policy Owner: Executive Council  
Approved by: Executive Council  
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Version: 1.0  
Policy Status: Approved

I. Policy

Emergency planning, including continuity of operations planning, is a critical function for Southside College of Health Sciences (SCHS). SCHS will mitigate the impact of operational disruptions to its campus community by implementing policies, procedures, and capabilities that provide continuity of operations in case of a catastrophic event.

II. Purpose

To provide guidance for a safe and efficient response to disruptive events that impact SCHS associates and students.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all SCHS associates and students.

IV. Definitions

None.

V. Policy Details

**Catastrophic Events and Continuity of Operations**

SCHS uses specific policies and procedures regarding catastrophic events and program discontinuances in order to limit the length of time that students are displaced.

### **Continuity of Operations**

By leveraging highly available educational technologies such as a Learning Management System (LMS) and Student Information System (SIS) which are hosted in the “cloud”, the likelihood of noticeable service interruption is minimized. This is achieved by ensuring third parties providing such services adhere to Bon Secours Mercy Health’s policy CP-PO-12.0-R1.0 which requires them to, “ensure the continued availability of identified services and information systems through the development of Disaster Recovery Plans and Business Continuity Plans.”

The following SCHS policies and procedures are also intended to help mitigate the impact of emergency events on College operations:

- ADM 1.04 Records Management: provides guidance for ensuring the integrity, confidentiality, and security of all documents and records created, received, or maintained in the course of institutional business.
- ADM 5.01 Financial Refunds: provides guidance for ensuring that financial refunds are processed timely and consistently and in accordance with SCHS policy, and applicable federal, state and accreditation requirements. In the event that a catastrophic event occurs, SCHS’s Executive Council maintains the authority to enact additional financial refunds to students that are deemed appropriate during such circumstances.
- ADM 9.10 Campus Safety and Security: provides guidance for preventing or minimizing threats while also preparing to effectively handle any emergencies that may occur.
- Established emergency procedures provides instructions for SCHS associates, students, and visitors to ensure safety and protection of property during fire, severe weather, loss of utilities, acts of God, and other such emergencies.

### **Program Discontinuances**

SCHS has the financial commitment of its parent health system – Bon Secours Mercy Health (BSMH). In the unlikely event that SCHS cannot deliver the instruction for which students have contracted, SCHS commits to one or more of the following courses of action, depending on each individual student’s needs:

- Providing a reasonable alternative for delivering instruction and/or services for which students have paid.
- Providing reasonable financial refund for the education students did not receive.
- Providing assistance for transferring earned credits to other institutions.

SCHS students will be notified in person by College administration. In accordance with 602.24(c) of federal requirements for catastrophic events, a teach-out plan will be submitted to the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) prior to its implementation.

VI. Attachments

None.

VII. Related Policies

ADM 1.04 Records Management.  
ADM 5.01 Financial Refund.  
ADM 9.10 Campus Safety and Security.

VIII. Disclaimers

Nothing in this policy creates a contractual relationship between Southside College of Health Sciences (SCHS) and any party. SCHS, in its sole discretions, reserves the right to amend, terminate or discontinue this policy at any time, with or without advance notice.

IX. Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Prepared by
1.0	8/1/2021	New policy and template	Executive Council