

**RESOLUTION NO. 20240321-035**

**WHEREAS**, the City may close or delay the opening of non-essential operations at the direction of the City Manager due to bad weather or other emergency situations; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of emergency closures and delayed openings has increased in recent years, necessitating the designation of essential employees to maintain critical operations; and

**WHEREAS**, employees are deemed essential when they are required to report, work, and/or remain at work during an emergency closure or delay; and

**WHEREAS**, there is currently no clear definition of “essential employee” in the City’s Personnel Policies, leading to ambiguity in designation and compensation; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of employees deemed essential during emergency closures has increased in recent years, and is expected to increase due to climate change and emergency weather situations; and

**WHEREAS**, when essential employees report to work during an emergency closure or delay, they receive pay for actual hours worked and any overtime to which they are otherwise entitled; and

**WHEREAS**, the City’s Emergency Closure/Bad Weather Pay Procedure may not adequately address the increased demand for essential personnel and their compensation; and

**WHEREAS**, essential employees receive administrative leave on an hour-for-hour basis, based on the hours that City operations are closed or delayed, and

requests to use earned administrative leave are subject to management's discretion;  
and

**WHEREAS**, with the increasing frequency of designating employees "essential" and the growing number of employees whose safety is compromised during hazardous conditions, it is imperative for the City to assess whether its Emergency Closure/Bad Weather Pay Procedure adequately reflects the value it places on the dedicated efforts of our essential workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, incentivizing and retaining essential employees is vital for maintaining a robust emergency response system that properly addresses the health and safety of our community; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Manager is directed to assess the effectiveness of the City's Emergency Closure/Bad Weather Pay Procedure, and this assessment shall include:

- Collection of data from departments to identify job titles designated as essential during emergency closures and delays, and the frequency of such designations; and
- Evaluation of the current process for designating essential employees and the discretion exercised in approving administrative leave requests.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is further directed to provide a comprehensive report to Council no later than May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 detailing all job titles currently considered essential with an analysis of the potential costs associated with providing emergency pay stipends to eligible essential employees for hours worked during emergency closures, to be considered as part of budget discussions during Budget Work Sessions for FY25.

**ADOPTED:** March 21, 2024 **ATTEST:** *Myrna Rios*  
Myrna Rios  
City Clerk