Preparation and Response for All Units

**Hurricane Season is Here**

and now is the time to prepare for potential emergencies, especially those related to weather. All employees should make sure their contact and emergency information is correct and up-to-date in their [uReady](https://www.ready.org) profile. To review and update your information, visit [www.miami.edu/myUM](https://www.miami.edu/myUM) and on the right under the “Personal & Biographical Info” section, click “Personal, Address and Emergency/Evacuation Information.” When a situation warrants, emergency information may be sent via email, text messages, voice messages, and social media through the [Emergency Notification Network (ENN)](https://www.miami.edu/enn).

Supervisors and unit emergency planners should confirm through the [uReady](https://www.ready.org) that their unit’s continuity plan is up-to-date and that all relevant emergency plans and policies are readily accessible. Each unit’s human resources representative should download contact information from the [Prepare Data Warehouse](https://preparedata.miami.edu) and keep printed copies in multiple locations. In addition, unit leaders should confirm that all personnel who have any role in emergency/disaster mitigation, planning, response, or recovery have completed the appropriate level of [National Incident Management System (NIMS)](https://www.naturaldisasters.org) guidelines.

Be sure to outline evacuation guidelines and list emergency responsibilities assigned to each employee. For insurance purposes, all capital equipment should be photographed, compiled in a document, and uploaded in the UReady system in accordance with the [Photo Documentation Process] established by Risk Management. Ensure all employees have the Miller School/UHealth Risk Management and Emergency Information Hotline number (305-243-6079) and hold a mandatory staff meeting to distribute and discuss the preparedness and continuity plan.

If essential employees have not been identified, select them at this meeting and communicate their role clearly to them and the entire staff to avoid confusion about who will remain or return as a storm approaches. Use the meeting to address special circumstances of employees, such as family matters or transportation issues. Also, appoint at least two alternates to the supervisor in case of absence. If a hurricane or tropical storm warning is issued, hold an additional staff meeting to review these guidelines.

All essential employees who will need to remain on campus during a storm are required to receive advance approval through security. Contact Security Emergency Management at 305-243-9466 for the request form. Back up all computer files and gather all necessary emergency supplies, including plastic tarps and tape for covering office equipment. Materials can be purchased from Physical Plant Materials Management by calling 305-243-6019.

**Additional Preparations for Research Personnel**

**In the Event of a Hurricane**

safeguarding your lab’s work, personnel, and laboratories is vital for your continued research. Aside from securing your workspace, critical steps should be taken to minimize disruption and downtime after a storm. This includes preparing lab equipment, storing samples, securing your data, and updating your emergency phone tree.

Critical equipment, such as freezers and incubators, must be labeled with contact information and registered through the Department of Security’s [Critical Equipment Registration and Alert Monitoring website](https://www.miami.edu/critical-equipment-registration). Inventory the contents of each freezer and cold room. For insurance purposes and FEMA reporting, take digital photos of your equipment. It is important to label and secure all hazardous agents in cabinets and retain relevant [EHS forms]. Fume hoods are not secure areas during a storm and must be emptied.

Be cautious when starting equipment that operates in multi-day cycles, as both line and emergency power could be lost mid-cycle. Non-essential equipment should be unplugged from both emergency and non-emergency power outlets to prevent possible damage to the equipment and reduce the strain on electrical circuits. Plugging equipment into emergency power outlets with extension cords will overload the circuit and shut down all emergency power for the building.

Consider sending critical samples out of the area through pre-existing arrangements with bio-repositories and non-local collaborators/colleagues. If you do not currently have any arrangements, you may establish such through a University-approved vendor.

If your work includes animal models, the Division of Veterinary Resources requests that you work with them to identify irreplaceable lines. In the research community, only preapproved (by the director of security) essential personnel may remain on campus during a storm. The Miller Office of Research can assist lab managers in identifying and procuring hurricane preparedness kits.

Principal investigators and laboratory managers should meet with their staff prior to an event and discuss preparations. Detailed checklists for pre- and post-disaster preparedness are available online.
Our Clinics and Hospitals

The University of Miami Health System (UHealth) mission of providing quality patient care makes the institution unique among the University’s programs and calls for special concerns in the event of an approaching hurricane. Emergency announcements issued from the Miller School and its hospitals and clinics may differ from statements released by the Coral Gables and Rosenstiel campuses.

For Miller School faculty and staff, announcements from Miller School leadership and updates from the Miller School of Medicine/UHealth Rumor Control and Emergency Information Hotline (305-243-6079) are the most reliable sources for information on developments on the medical campus during an emergency.

Emergency unit plans for clinical departments at the Miller School should include a list of essential employees who will remain on site to address patient needs as a hurricane approaches. If Miller School leaders announce that clinics will be closed due to conditions that make it unsafe to travel or dangerous for essential employees to remain on campus, every effort must be made to contact patients and reschedule appointments.

“A commitment to our patients is one of the top priorities at the medical school,” says Pascal J. Goldschmidt, M.D., Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs and Dean, and CEO of UHealth. “Not only are we responsible for their health and safety in our clinics every day, our mission dictates that we do all we can to keep our community from harm in all situations, especially during an emergency.”

University of Miami Hospital

During a hurricane or tropical storm warning, the University of Miami Hospital will continue to operate under its established response plan. Department directors will brief hospital employees on their department’s proper procedures and their specific responsibilities in the event of a hurricane. The best source of information for hospital employees is the University of Miami Hospital Rumor Control and Emergency Information Employee Hotline (305-689-5900).