



# *The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA Health Sciences Center

OUHSC Campus Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Local community spread of COVID-19 has made choosing a place of refuge much more difficult when severe weather threatens. During tornado threats, the University of Oklahoma will take as many precautions as possible to provide refuge for the reduced number of students, faculty and staff remaining on-campus. At this time, OUHSC Campus building access is limited to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to the campus community. Therefore, it is critical each individual reviews their home safety plans to prepare for Oklahoma severe weather.

### **Important Tornado Terminology:**

A Tornado Watch is used to notify you to pay attention to the possibility of tornadoes during the next several hours. Stay weather aware and have multiple different means to receive updates or changes to the weather. In addition, please make sure that your mobile contact phone number is accurate to receive important OUHSC Alert warning information. You can go to <https://ouhsc.edu/ecs/> to update, change or check your contact information.

When a Tornado Warning is issued by the National Weather Service, do not leave the building you are in. Proceed immediately to the appropriate severe weather refuge area in your building or the lowest level, center part of your building. A Tornado Warning means that a tornado is imminent and quick action is necessary. You will be advised of a Tornado Warning via the OUHSC Alert system. The locations of the severe weather refuge areas are listed at <https://www.ouhsc.edu/police/Emergency-Management/EOM-Severe-Weather-Refuge-Plan>.

### **If You Do Not Live On Campus, Prepare to Seek Refuge at Home**

You are highly encouraged to create a plan and prepare your home environment for a tornado threat. Identify safe refuge-in-home options utilizing the “get in - get down - cover up” strategy. Specifically, select an interior room away from doors and windows on the lowest level of your residence and prepare to use a bicycle helmet, pillows and blankets to protect yourself from possible debris. The shelter-in-home option will also assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Add masks, tissues, gloves, hand sanitizer and a plastic bag to your personal or family’s tornado refuge area supply list. Make sure any cough or sneeze is into a tissue or clothed sleeve. Use the gloves to dispose of used tissues into a plastic bag.

### **If You Are On Campus During a Tornado Event:**

- **Place of Refuge Protocol | 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.**
  - If a Tornado Warning is issued during traditional business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m.), all remaining on-campus students, staff, and faculty should take refuge using the building’s designated severe weather refuge areas or proceed to the lowest level, center part of the building. Individuals living at the University Village Apartments housing when the tornado warning is issued, if possible, seek refuge in the basement of the David L. Boren Student Union. Many of these areas are controlled access, meaning that you must swipe your OUHSC ID to enter the place of refuge. Exercise social distancing and use appropriate personal hygiene measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. The locations of each severe weather refuge areas are listed at <https://www.ouhsc.edu/police/Emergency-Management/EOM-Severe-Weather-Refuge-Plan>

- **Areas of Refuge Protocol | After Hours, Evenings, and Weekends**

- **Individuals who may be in OUHSC buildings**

When a Tornado Warning is issued, proceed immediately to the refuge areas or to the lowest level, center part of your building. Many of these areas are now controlled access, meaning that you must swipe your OUHSC ID to enter the refuge area. Exercise social distancing and use appropriate personal hygiene measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

- **Individuals Living in University Village Apartments**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals living in University Village Apartments, with a valid OUHSC ID, may also utilize the controlled-access refuge area at the basement of the David L. Boren Student Union, but pay close attention to weather conditions and arrive at the David L. Boren Student Union refuge area well in advance of the tornado threat. Make sure to bring your OUHSC ID for card-swipe access. Exercise social distancing and use appropriate personal hygiene measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

### **OUHSC Buildings will Remain Closed After Hours Until Further Notice**

OUHSC buildings will remain closed to the public to reduce COVID-19 spread. If a tornado threat occurs and you have historically used an OUHSC building as your primary tornado refuge, prepare now to seek safe refuge at home. Use the “get in - get down - cover up” strategy. Specifically, select an interior room away from doors and windows on the lowest level of your residence and prepare to use a bicycle helmet, pillows, and blankets to protect yourself from possible debris. The refuge-in-home option for tornadoes will also assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

This policy will be in place for the remainder of the Spring Semester 2020, and is subject to change.