

OU-Tulsa Severe Weather Tornado Shelter Policy Spring 2021

MANAGING TORNADO THREATS ON THE OU-TULSA CAMPUS DURING COVID-19

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 any essential staff on-campus. At this time OU-Tulsa Campus building access is restricted to students, faculty, and staff, 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.

In the case of severe weather, 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**

If a ***Tornado Warning*** is issued during a time when you are already on campus, students, staff, and faculty should take refuge using the building’s designated severe weather refuge areas. Please use social distancing to the best extent possible and use appropriate personal hygiene measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. The University will not limit the number of occupants in a refuge area for social distancing. The locations of each campus building’s severe weather refuge areas are listed in the OU Emergency Preparedness brochures.

Most OU-Tulsa Buildings Remain Closed Until Further Notice

Most OU-Tulsa buildings will remain closed entirely or at a minimum, closed to the general public to reduce COVID-19 spread. If a tornado threat occurs and you have historically used an OU-Tulsa building as your primary tornado refuge, prepare now to seek safe refuge at home. However, the University will not turn you away if you feel unsafe in your current location during a tornadic event.

This policy will be in place for the remainder of the Spring Semester 2021, and is subject to change.