

Cooke's-Portsmouth United Church Inclement Weather or Emergency Closure Policy

Adopted by: Cooke's-Portsmouth United Church Official Board

Date of Adoption: September 28, 2025

Effective Date: September 28, 2025

Date Posted on the Website: October 2025

SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

Cooke's-Portsmouth United Church (hereinafter "CPUC") values our weekly in-person worship services and is committed to providing such services when it is safe to do so. CPUC also acknowledges the safety of congregants, renters and staff is paramount in any situation, recognizing that these individuals must make their own decisions regarding whether to attend services based on their unique circumstances of their health and safety.

Inclement weather resulting in unsafe conditions or other emergencies may affect the church's ability to be open and provide services or rental space, or prevent employees from getting to and/or from work safely. Using the safety of congregants, renters and staff as the criteria, in-person worship may be cancelled and CPUC may be closed, if required.

SECTION 2: POLICY DETAILS

When weather conditions or emergency situations as outlined below (see Section 2) occur, or are predicted, CPUC may be closed.

a. Decision-Making Authority

The decision regarding the closure of CPUC shall be at the discretion of the following persons:

- Chair of the Official Board,
- Minister,
- Chair of Ministry and Personnel Committee,
- Chair of Session (Note: If the Minister holds this position, the Minister shall have one (1) vote only), and

- Chair of Stewards.

The decision shall be made by a majority vote of the above-noted persons via email, a virtual meeting or an in-person meeting. A quorum for such decision shall be three (3) persons.

b. Reasons for Closure of CPUC

CPUC may close if:

- i. The electricity is scheduled to be out for over four (4) hours;
- ii. There is no heat in the building and it is expected to be out long enough for the internal temperature of the building to fall to an uncomfortable level for an extended period of time;
- iii. Significant accumulation of snow or freezing rain, a flash freezing or a tornado warning result(s) in or is predicted to result in unsafe road and walkway conditions;
- iv. Extreme heat; and/or
- v. Environment Canada or other provincial or local authorities, including, but not limited to the Province of Ontario, City of Kingston or Kingston Police, issue warnings or declare a weather emergency and ask people to stay home.

c. Part Day Closure

If a weather or emergency situation arises while CPUC is open, the Decision-Making Authority (see Section 1) will determine whether CPUC should be closed. All occupants will be asked to leave before conditions worsen.

d. Notifications

Every effort will be made to notify the congregation, renters and staff that CPUC is closed as follows:

Action	Person Responsible
i. Notify CPUC Staff	Chair of Ministry and Personnel or Designate
ii. Announce the closure on CPUC's answering machine message at 613-542-4545	Church Secretary or Designate
iii. Notify the CPUC congregation members using the current newsletter email contact list.	Newsletter Coordinator
iv. Notify any renters, if applicable.	Chair of Stewards or Designate
v. Notify the CPUC congregation members and/or renters without email.	▪ Chair of Session or Designate for CPUC congregation members ▪ Chair of Stewards or Designate for Renters
vi. Notify Guest Musician(s), if applicable.	Director of Music
vii. Post the CPUC closure on the website home page at www.cookesportsmouth.org	Webmaster
viii. Post a sign regarding the CPUC closure on the building front door and/or lobby window (only if this action can be done safely).	Chair of Official Board or Designate
ix. Post the CPUC closure on the outdoor electronic sign.	Sign Monitor(s)

If the CPUC closure falls on a Sunday or other day of the week when a special worship service is being held, the notification shall include an explanation regarding the church service(s), as to whether it will be: held virtually (with a link to be provided); cancelled; or re-scheduled to another date.

SECTION 3: POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed at the discretion of the CPUC Official Board.