

Campuses secured, food and water distributed to students ahead of Hurricane Sally

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Michael Augustine with Facilities Services removes a banner from a McAlister Place lamppost. Over 100 banners across campus were taken down in preparation for Hurricane Sally. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Tulane President Michael Fitts, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Patrick Norton, and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Robin Forman sent the following update on Hurricane Sally to the university community on Monday, Sept. 14:

Dear Tulane Community:

We have completed our storm preparations for Hurricane Sally on all of our

campuses and are confident that our students, personnel and facilities are safe and secure. We have distributed food and water to our on-campus students, and those off-campus who requested it. Students who are quarantining or isolating have also received assistance with storm preparations and provided extra food and water. We have added more onsite staff in our quarantine and isolation locations. We have also switched to backup power should the city experience any outages during the storm.

According to the latest report from our nationally recognized weather partners, Hurricane Sally is projected to make landfall near the Mississippi/Alabama border, more than 80 miles east of New Orleans, as a Category 2. This forecast places New Orleans on the weaker and drier side of the storm, which reduces our expected impacts significantly. Sustained winds overnight (Monday) will be in the 30 to 40 mph range, increasing to between 30 to 45 mph tomorrow (Tuesday) with gusts up to 50 mph. Total rainfall is expected to be between 1 and 3 inches. While this is a much improved forecast, Sally could still be a severe weather event for us, and we are ever mindful of our friends, family, alumni and neighbors to the east who are projected to bear the brunt of this storm. As we pray for their safety, we pledge to be with them in their recovery.

We closed the university at noon today, and it will remain closed tomorrow as we continue to closely monitor the weather in consultation with our weather partners and city and state officials. We are very hopeful that we will be able to return to in-person classes and normal campus operations on Wednesday. We will share more details regarding Wednesday's plans tomorrow, once the storm has passed.

In the meantime, it is crucial that everyone continue to strictly adhere to all COVID-19 safety protocols, including social distancing, wearing face coverings and practicing good hand hygiene. This is especially important overnight and through tomorrow when sheltering in place will keep us in closer quarters than normal.

With the cooperation of our students, and all members of the Tulane community, our COVID-19 positivity rate is lower than the city's and state's. We are very proud of this fact and especially the behavior and spirit of the vast majority of our students. We ask that you continue your efforts – which are truly not for one's self, but for one's own – especially during this time when so many are working so hard to keep you safe and your education on track. As a reminder, no city, state or university official has ever recommended evacuation for the New Orleans area for this

storm. But if any student decides to leave during this time, they must inform the university by completing this [form](#) and they must be tested and cleared before returning to campus.

This semester has certainly come with its challenges, including the ongoing pandemic and now our third weather threat. Please know that we are available should you need to talk to someone during this time. Students can access The Line for confidential counseling services at (504) 264-6074 or reach out to the Student Affairs Professional On-Call at (504) 920-9900. Students may also email SRSS@tulane.edu to communicate with a Case Manager. The Employee Assistance Program is available for all employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are free of charge and completely confidential. Employees can reach New Directions professionals by telephone at 1-800-624-5544 or visit the website at www.ndbh.com, company code: Tulane.

Before, during and after the storm we are here for you. So let's stay safe, stay well, stay together and stay Tulane strong.