

Now

Parkland

Information and stories for Parkland employees
March 23 – March 29, 2026

Severe spring
weather can strike fast.
Preparation is key.



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Severe spring weather can strike fast. Preparation is key.

In Texas, severe weather can turn an ordinary spring afternoon into a life-threatening emergency in minutes. Parkland disaster preparedness officials say the difference between chaos and confidence often comes down to one thing: preparation.

Texas consistently leads the nation in severe weather events. According to the National Weather Service, Texas averages more tornadoes annually than any other state — often exceeding 130 tornadoes per year. In 2023 alone, Texas recorded more than 120 confirmed tornadoes, along with hundreds of severe thunderstorms and large hail reports. North Texas remains particularly vulnerable during the peak spring months of March through May.

If you are at a Parkland campus, responses are outlined in the [Weather Hazards section of our Emergency Operations Plan](#). But what about when you're away from work? Parkland disaster preparedness officials want to remind you that awareness and preparation are critical long before dark clouds appear on the horizon.

"Severe weather in Texas is not a matter of if — it's a matter of when," said Chris Noah, MS, CHSP, cABCF, Parkland's Director of Disaster Management and Business Continuity. "Storms can strengthen rapidly and change direction with little notice. The decisions you make in those first few minutes can make all the difference... If you've already thought through what you're going to do and where you're going to go, you eliminate hesitation. That preparation can save precious seconds."

Part of that preparation means not relying on a single method for receiving warnings. Outdoor sirens are designed primarily to alert people who are outside and may not be loud enough to wake you at night or be heard indoors. Instead, officials recommend enabling wireless emergency alerts on smartphones, downloading trusted local media weather apps, programming alerts from the National Weather Service (NWS) and keeping a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio in both the home and workplace.

"These alerts can give you those critical extra minutes to seek shelter," Noah said. "Every household should have more than one reliable way to receive warnings. Redundancy is key."

- When a tornado warning is issued, the safest place during a tornado is an approved underground storm shelter or a certified above-ground safe room. If neither is available, take shelter on the lowest floor of a sturdy building in an interior room such as a closet, hallway or bathroom away from windows. Get low and protect your head and neck with blankets, pillows or a mattress.
- If you are driving when a tornado warning is issued, do not seek shelter under a highway overpass. While it may appear to provide protection, overpasses can create a wind tunnel effect that increases wind speeds and flying debris. Stopping beneath them also blocks traffic and prevents others from escaping the storm's path. Instead, officials recommend leaving your vehicle for a sturdy building if one is nearby. If no shelter is available, lie flat in a low-lying ditch or depression and cover your head and neck.
- If you are in a mobile home, leave immediately for more substantial shelter.

Families should establish a predetermined meeting location, identify multiple routes to reach that location and keep emergency supplies accessible, including water, flashlights, batteries and first aid materials.

"Preparedness isn't something you do once and forget about," Noah added. "It's something you revisit each season. The best time to prepare is before the sky turns dark. When a warning is issued, that's the time to act — not the time to start planning."

▶ Recognizing Parkland's Latest ICARE Award Winners

Congratulations to Parkland's most recent ICARE Award recipients! These exemplary employees, listed below, were recently honored for setting an outstanding example of living our ICARE values through their words and actions.

- **INTEGRITY:** Stacey Howell
- **COMPASSION:** Norma Chavez
- **COLLABORATION:** Renee Cormier
- **RESPECT:** Miranda Feemster
- **EQUITY:** Lilliana Gonzalez-Chavez

If you see an individual with an ICARE-branded badge reel or polo, you'll know they go above and beyond to embody our ICARE values! Our ICARE Awards are presented quarterly. Be sure to visit our [Recognition Platform](#) and nominate a fellow team member for our next ICARE Awards today!



Stacey Howell



Norma Chavez



Renee Cormier



Miranda Feemster



Lilliana Gonzalez-Chavez

▼ Lasting Impressions: Ebony Mitchell



Each week, “Lasting Impressions” features a Parkland employee who does exceptional work and provides excellent customer service. This week’s “Lasting Impressions” features Ebony Mitchell, Psychiatric Technician, 17 Behavioral Health Inpatient.

“Ebony brings her creative and selfless spirit to work every day. She finds ways to boost morale on the unit by engaging patients, assisting peers and pouring her art into our boards. She has gotten others involved in setting up the unit boards which inspire creativity and self-care. As a mental health tech, she is able to observe and notify others when patient behaviors are outside their normal or signal distress for the patient. She also documents events in a manner that is informative, helpful and dignified. She is currently training in the HUC position to assist with unit clerk and court needs. As this is a new role for her, she is diligently learning all the moving parts and graciously maneuvering through the system. It is safe to say Ebony’s charm brings a brightness to our unit.”



Want to nominate an employee who goes above and beyond? Tell us what makes them so fantastic by emailing Employees@phhs.org or calling ext. 28048.

Register for the blood drive on March 26

Parkland will host a Carter BloodCare blood drive from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, March 26, in the Private Dining Room. Online registration is encouraged and is available by [clicking here](#). There will also be a limited opportunity to accommodate walk-ups, based on availability. Blood donors should bring a driver’s license, know their medications, eat a good meal and drink plenty of fluids. For more information, contact Monique Barksdale at 469-419-1628 (ext. 71628) or Monique.Barksdale@phhs.org.



► Join the health equity discussion March 24

From noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, Parkland’s Women’s Resource Network Employee Resource Group (WRN ERG) will host “Health Equity: Parkland’s Inside-Out Approach.” The keynote speaker is Mona Kafeel, CEO of the Texas Muslim Women’s Foundation, and will take place in the MacGregor W. Day Auditorium, or virtually by [clicking here](#).

The WRN ERG strives to create opportunities for connection, mentorship and professional growth to support and empower women in healthcare. Through networking and advocacy, the group fosters an environment where women can develop their careers, share knowledge and contribute to improving health outcomes for the communities they serve. The Women’s Resource Network ERG meets on a monthly basis. To join or receive updates about their meetings, events and activities, email ParklandWRN@phhs.org.

► Application period for EAW 2.0 begins April 1

Ready to advance your career? Parkland is investing in your future with Education at Work 2.0 (EAW 2.0). This program offers Parkland employees with at least six months of service and no written warnings the opportunity to obtain an associate degree from Dallas College. Parkland covers tuition and books upfront with no out-of-pocket cost for the employee.

If selected, you will have the opportunity to attend the Dallas College campus of your choice while maintaining your part-time or full-time status at Parkland.

The application period for this program begins Wednesday, April 1, and is open through Wednesday, April 15. For more information or to apply, visit the EAW [SharePoint page](#).

Learn more about diabetes on March 24

All Parkland team members are invited to learn more about diabetes from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, outside Park Market. Stop by to talk with Parkland diabetes educators to:

- Learn your risk factors
- Receive educational materials
- Ask questions about prevention and management

No appointment is needed. Just stop by and take a step toward better health.

Important Kronos reminders

For departments still waiting on Kronos installation, the project team and Payroll will contact you to schedule installation. A 2-hour onsite window will be coordinated to complete all enrollments. Only Payroll staff will conduct enrollments going forward. Department administrators will no longer complete this process. Please submit all follow-up or re-enrollment needs through ServiceNow → Payroll Management → Kronos Device Access.

We do not expect disruption to clocking during installation. However, leaders should maintain an alternate method for documenting time as a precaution. Payroll will continue enrollments through April. As the deadline approaches, Payroll will report the list of non-compliant employees to senior management for support.

► Nominate a deserving team member for Mentor of the Year Award

Nominations are now open for the Parkland Mentor of the Year Award for Research, Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), or Quality Improvement (QI). This award recognizes an outstanding mentor who demonstrates exceptional commitment to advancing interdisciplinary inquiry and improvement across the organization. You can submit a nomination by [clicking here](#).

Presented by the Parkland Interdisciplinary Nursing Research & Evidence-Based Practice Council (PINREC), the award celebrates a mentor who cultivates curiosity, builds others' capacity and strengthens Parkland's culture of excellence. The recipient fosters an environment grounded in mutual respect, trust and support, empowering mentees to grow as clinicians, scholars, and leaders.

Eligibility and nomination details

The Mentor of the Year Award is open to eligible interdisciplinary health professionals, including:

- Nursing
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Pharmacy
- Advanced Practice Providers

To be eligible, mentors must be Parkland employees who actively guided a mentee in an IRB-approved research study, EBP project, or Quality Improvement initiative that was developed and/or implemented during the award year: January 2025 – December 2025.

Nomination requirements

Anyone may submit a nomination, with special encouragement for submissions from mentees who have worked directly with the mentor. Self-nominations are not permitted. Each nomination letter must include:

- Description of the project (IRB-approved research study, EBP project, or QI initiative)
- Mentor's background and expertise
- Concrete examples demonstrating the mentor's outstanding contributions, including:
 - Guidance, coaching and scholarly or operational impact
 - Specific mentorship activities during the 2025 award year
- How the mentor's engagement supported Parkland's organizational or professional strategic plans
- Demonstration of Parkland's ICARE values within the mentor-mentee relationship

Nominees and the award recipient will be honored during the Annual Mentor of the Year Award Ceremony on Thursday, May 7, in the MacGregor W. Day Auditorium.



Care. Compassion. Community.

Parkland Now is published by the Corporate Communications department at Parkland Health.

Please note the submission deadline for each issue of *Parkland Now* is by the end of day each Monday.

To publicize your news in *Parkland Now*, please send all submissions to Employees@phhs.org or call ext. 28048.