

ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY



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POLICY ON ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Introduction

The Council recognises that adverse weather conditions may occasionally make travel to and from work difficult. However the priority of all employees when this happens should be to maintain services wherever possible, whilst taking into account their own personal safety. Mutually agreed arrangements and the flexibility and co-operation of managers and employees will help to achieve this.

This policy provides guidance to managers and employees on the considerations to be taken into account and the options available when adverse weather occurs.

A manager should be nominated for each establishment to take overall responsibility for implementing this policy in the event of adverse weather

Scope

These guidelines apply to all County Council employees and are recommended to those schools where the Governing Body performs the function of the employer.

Weather Deterioration during the Day – Leaving Work

Manager Guidance

You should monitor adverse weather conditions and availability of transport during the day and ensure that all employees are kept informed of decisions made. Up to date information on road conditions will be made available on Dnet.

You should allow employees who are likely to face particular difficulties in getting home to leave work early, taking into account their personal safety.

You should have contingency plans in place to maintain the standard and level of your service wherever possible including:

- Minimum cover arrangements provided by employees who do not have a particularly long or difficult journey home to ensure continuity of service
- Provision to divert services elsewhere as necessary
- Arrangements for employees to take work home, taking into account issues relating to access, security and confidentiality of data
- Arrangements for employees to report to work at an alternative workplace
- Ensuring employees are aware of contact arrangements

Where employees remain at work, health and safety requirements must continue to be met. Further guidance on health and safety issues relating to extremes of temperature can be found in the Extreme Temperature Policy and Guidance document on DNet.

In exceptional circumstances you may consider it necessary to close an establishment. If this becomes necessary, you should seek authorisation as appropriate and inform all affected staff. You should also ensure that suitable notices are displayed at the entrance of premises to inform the public of the closure and how they may obtain emergency assistance if needed. Answering machine messages with appropriate details should be used where available.

Employee Guidance

You should keep yourself informed of the developing situation and make any decision about leaving work early with your manager, taking into account the need to maintain services and your own personal safety.

Where possible you should take work home for that day and for following days if the weather conditions are expected to persist. You should take security and confidentiality of data into account in doing this.

Failure to Report for Work/Late Arrival

Manager Guidance

You should put contingency plans into operation where adverse weather conditions are predicted or where they occur unexpectedly overnight. The contingency plans should cater for the situation where you may not be able to get into work.

You should assess the situation and the location of individual employees and impact of staffing levels on service provision. Where you decide it is necessary to close your service, you should obtain authorisation as appropriate and inform all affected staff.

Employee Guidance

Where adverse weather conditions cause you delays or difficulties in travelling to work, you should take all reasonable steps to attend your normal place of work as soon as you possibly can, taking into account your personal safety.

If you are unable to get into work, you should telephone your manager at the earliest possible opportunity to explain the situation and agree what to do. You should continue to monitor the weather conditions during the day to see if you can attend work later, for example the afternoon.

Where you have agreed to work at an alternative base, you should report there and inform your manager of your arrival.

Where you have agreed to work at home, normal recording arrangements will apply for hours worked.

Time Recording

Employees on Flexitime

Where you leave early or arrive late because of adverse weather, hours worked should be recorded as normal under the flexi-time scheme i.e. actual departure and arrival times. The same recording arrangements will apply where your manager advises that you can leave early because of deteriorating weather conditions and local circumstances. An exception to this is where the closure of a building is authorised during the working day because of the adverse weather conditions. In this case a standard day should be recorded.

Where you attempt to attend work but are unable to do so because of adverse weather conditions and where no alternative arrangements, e.g. working from home or from an alternative work base, can or have been made, the work time lost should be recorded as flexi-leave, within the terms of the scheme. Alternatively you should book annual or unpaid leave.

Employees on Fixed Working Hours

Working time owed because of early departure (where your manager advises that you can leave early because of deteriorating weather conditions and local circumstances) or late or non-arrival should be made up through discussion and agreement with your line manager. This should be by balancing the time off against additional hours, overtime hours or use of annual or unpaid leave. Again an exception to this is where the closure of a building is authorised because of the adverse weather conditions. In this case there will be no working time owed.

For all employees - where normal dependent care arrangements break down at short notice e.g. school closures or unavailability of day care for older or disabled dependents, up to one day's leave may be requested under the Special Leave Scheme.

Payment

Employees should be paid normally in the event of absence from work because of adverse weather conditions when:

- Time has been recorded appropriately and any absence has been covered by the provisions set out in the previous section (except unpaid leave).
- Absence is due to the workplace being closed due to the weather conditions and no alternative working arrangements are available.

Where employees have a complaint about the implementation of this policy, they may have recourse to the Grievance Procedure.