

ADVERSE WEATHER PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER:	HRPG53
VERSION NUMBER:	2
KEY CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSION	Three year review – amendments to s1.2, 1.3, 4.1, 4.3, 5.6.2, 5.6.3, job title amendment at 6.2, policies removed from s7
AUTHOR:	HR Business Partner
CONSULTATION GROUPS:	Policy Sub-Group Workforce Transformation Committee Joint Partnership Committee
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	April 2017
LAST REVIEW DATE:	February 2021
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	February 2024
APPROVED BY WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION GROUP:	February 2021 (Chair's Action)
RATIFICATION BY FINANCE & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE:	February 2021 (Chair's Action)
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POLICY SUMMARY	
<p>The Adverse Weather procedure sets out the steps for the Trust's approach to circumstances when severe adverse weather may impede the ability of Trust staff to get to their place of work at their usual start time and to remain at work until their usual leave time. Maintaining high standards of care to patients/clients/service users at all times is a priority of the Trust.</p>	
The Trust monitors the implementation of and compliance with this policy in the following ways:	
<p>Reports are produced on an ad hoc basis in response to any internal / external audit requests, in particular Business Continuity responses.</p>	

Services	Applicable	Comments
Trust Wide	✓	

The Director responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy is the Executive Director of People & Culture

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SAMPLE ONLY

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Assurance Statement

This procedure sets out the arrangements in cases of adverse weather to ensure that the Trust maintains high standards of care to patients/clients/service users.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This procedure sets out steps to be followed in the event of adverse weather conditions; examples of adverse weather conditions can be defined as snow, ice, fog, floods, storms and extreme heat.
- 1.2 Adverse weather conditions may cause disruption and result in extremely hazardous conditions to normal forms of transport that people rely on to get to and from their place of work. Transport affected may be both public and private forms of transport.
- 1.3 This procedure also covers extreme heat and the equipment that can be used and the adjustments to uniform which must be in accordance with relevant Infection, Prevention and Control guidance.
- 1.4 The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the Trust adopts a fair and consistent approach, when normal travelling arrangements of staff to and from their normal work place, are disrupted by adverse weather conditions and managing whilst at work with adverse weather conditions.
- 1.5 Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis, as the need to provide a service to our clients, even in adverse weather/acts of nature, is the priority for the Trust.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all employees of the Trust.
- 2.2 This procedure only applies in the worst weather conditions where there is severe disruption to normal forms of transport and working conditions. This procedure also applies to severe unusual incidences, sometimes referred to as “acts of nature” and their impact on all forms of transport and working arrangements.
- 2.3 Where applicable this procedure should be considered in conjunction with local Business Continuity Plans.

3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 Attending for work:

3.1.1 Staff are expected to attempt to report for duty on time at their usual place of work or at an alternative EPUT base where agreed by their manager, or the nominated manager on duty, and remain on duty for their rostered period. If it is not possible to use transport, staff will be expected to walk to a place of work, depending on certain considerations i.e. walking distance to the nearest/most accessible EPUT work place. Whether or not it is possible for them to do so will be a matter of local judgement by the manager. The following considerations will apply:-

- The distance involved.
- The prevailing weather conditions and its impact on the environment.
- The time of day.
- The health of the member of staff.
- The degree of effort the employee has made to attempt their journey to work.

3.1.2 In exceptional circumstances including severe unusual incidences staff may be required to carry out duties not normally associated with their post during periods where there may be insufficient staff available to provide the appropriate level of care to patients. Staff will not be expected to carry out duties that require additional training or would put them or others "at risk".

3.1.3 It is recognised that a procedure dealing with this issue cannot be, or should not be completely prescriptive. It is expected to be used in a way which allows for pragmatic solutions to be developed by managers and staff, depending upon the particular circumstances faced at the time.

4.0 STAFF UNABLE TO ATTEND FOR WORK

4.1 If it is not possible for members of staff to attend their place of work, the employee should telephone their supervisor/line manager prior to commencement of the normal start time to discuss and agree what aspects of their work can be achieved in the absence of being able to attend their normal place of work. The practical alternatives outlined below in 4.4 should also be discussed. Alternatively employees can leave a message by telephoning a designated contact number where this has been put in place. If there is no alternative but to send a text message, this should be followed up with a telephone conversation at the earliest possible opportunity.

4.2 Employees have the responsibility of informing their managers, on a daily basis, when circumstances prevent them from attending work.

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- 4.3 Daily telephone calls are required where travel problems persist over a number of days. A discussion with the line manager is essential to agree the appropriate arrangements.

Should staff not be able to attend work and are not able to work from home or work from another Trust site (see alternative work arrangements outlined below in point 4.4), agreement will need to be reached between the member of staff and their line manager regarding how the time off should be categorised. Options are:-

- Paid annual leave from leave entitlement,
- Unpaid leave,
- Time off in lieu,
- Lost hours worked at an agreed date/time.

4.4 **Alternative Work Arrangements.**

All staff must attempt to attend their work base. Where the difficulty in getting to work is accepted and justifiable by the line manager (or other more senior manager), one or more of the following arrangements will apply:

- Work from an alternative EPUT base or other NHS Trust base (where agreed) which is accessible during the period in which the employee is unable to attend their normal work base;
- Work from home, where this is possible (all Work Smart users must ensure they carry the relevant equipment at all times when a weather warning has been issued);
- Take paid annual leave/unpaid leave/ accrued lieu time (with line manager's agreement);
- If practicable the employee may make up the time lost by either working an alternative day/shift or agree extended hours over a short period, or;
- Any combination of the above.

5.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR STAFF TO LEAVE WORK EARLY OR ARRIVE LATE

- 5.1 During periods of adverse weather, where there is concern for travel arrangements of an employee, the decision about whether to allow staff to leave work early or arrive late will normally be taken by the appropriate line manager. Where such a decision is required overnight or at the weekend, the senior manager on call will be authorised to make the decision.

- 5.2 It is recognised that staff will be anxious regarding their domestic arrangements and employees will be allowed to use the telephone facilities where appropriate, where they are not in possession of a personal mobile

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phone whilst on duty. Line Managers have the discretion to allow staff to leave early; all requests must be considered based on the individual circumstances.

5.3 Regular updates of the weather and road conditions will be obtained by the Communications Team who will ensure regular communications are made available to the Senior Management Team and other line managers.

5.4 Line managers are responsible for keeping their staff informed and for monitoring:

- staffing leave and using discretion where necessary depending on individual circumstances
- The taking of paid annual leave/unpaid leave/ accrued lieu time (with line manager's agreement).

5.5 Where practicable the employee may make up the time lost by either working an alternative day/shift or agree extended hours over a short period.

5.6 **School/ Nurseries Closures**

5.6.1 In the event of schools and/ or nurseries being closed for a short period i.e. a few days, employees should in the first instance exhaust all options for alternative child care arrangements. However, it is accepted that in these circumstances child care may not be immediately available and where this is the case employees may be entitled to Carers Leave (providing that they have not exhausted their maximum entitlement of 5 days in a rolling 12 month period). Carers leave should only be used in an emergency situation. It is therefore expected that employees will make alternative child care arrangements during periods of prolonged adverse weather conditions or severe unusual incidences. If special leave arrangements have been exhausted please refer to the Special Leave Procedure (HRPG24c)

5.6.2 In situations of extended school and/ or nursery closures in the event of severe unusual incidences, for parents that have children at home and do not have alternative childcare arrangements, the line manager should consider if an employee is able to carry out their job working from home and be able to work as productively at home as they would in the workplace.

5.6.3 If schools and/ or nurseries close but continue to provide care for children of key workers, if the employee does not wish to access these provisions but would rather care for their children at home, then the use of carers leave can be considered together with paid annual leave/unpaid leave/ accrued lieu time (with line manager's agreement); or if practicable the employee may make up the time lost by either working an alternative day/shift or agree extended hours over a short period.

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5.6.4 The principles above will also apply to employees with other dependent responsibilities.

6.0 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring that agreed policies and procedures are implemented within their Directorates.
- 6.2 The Executive Director of People & Culture is responsible for developing, implementing and communicating HR policies and procedural frameworks.
- 6.3 The Human Resources team will give advice to line managers, supporting them in taking action in accordance with the agreed policy and procedures. They will also review the continued relevance and appropriateness of the policy and procedure on a regular basis.
- 6.4 Line Managers are responsible for managing staffing levels during times of Adverse Weather within their areas of responsibility, by ensuring that:
- 6.4.1 All staff are aware of any guidelines locally for their own particular areas
 - 6.4.2 All necessary documents are completed/submitted
 - 6.4.3 Effective communication methods are maintained during these periods
 - 6.4.4 Any breach of policy is discussed with the Service Director/HR Directorate
- 6.5 Employees are responsible for:
- 6.5.1 Complying with reporting procedures.
 - 6.5.2 Advising their line manager or designated deputy, as soon as possible, if they are experiencing difficulties reporting for duty due to Adverse Weather
 - 6.5.3 Maintaining agreed regular contact with their Line Manager throughout the period of Adverse Weather

7.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Adverse Weather Policy – HR53
- Flexible Working Policy and Procedure – (HR39 and HRPG39a)
- Special Leave Procedure – HRPG24c
- Annual Leave Procedure – HRPG24a
- Dress Code and Uniform Procedure; Staff working in Clinical Areas (CPG41a)
- Infection Control in Clinical Practice: ICPG1 Section 3 Appendix 12

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