

Adverse Weather Policy

Adverse weather is defined as weather conditions which:

- have unusual consequences which affect working conditions.
- prevent staff getting to work.
- cause significant problems for staff getting to and from work.

This Practice recognises that staff may face difficulties attending work and returning home during periods of adverse weather conditions such as heavy snow falls, flooding, or other adverse weather conditions which may result in journeys to work being extremely hazardous. However, while the Practice is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its staff, it must ensure that disruption caused to its services remains minimal.

Responsibilities of Staff

Staff should not put themselves at unnecessary or inordinate risk when attempting to attend work.

It is the responsibility of the staff member to make every effort to attend for duty at their normal place of work, in accordance with their contract of employment. This includes adapting their means of travel if necessary, or using a combination of travel options, even if this results in arriving late for work. It should be noted that where additional expense is incurred as a result of using different travel methods these expenses cannot be reimbursed by the Practice.

In the event of adverse weather conditions staff will take all reasonable steps to report their inability to attend work to their manager as soon as is practicably possible. This should be in line with the normal arrangements for reporting sickness absence or other unanticipated absence and this will apply for each day that the member of staff is unable to attend work. Please note that failure to comply with reporting arrangements may amount to unauthorised absence and could therefore be unpaid.

Responsibilities of the Manager/Owner

The following factors should be taken into consideration by the Practice Manager or Practice Owner when agreeing the appropriate action to take:

- The employee's safety.
- The operational requirements of the Practice
- Distance travelled to work.
- Prevailing weather conditions and their expected duration.
- Information and guidance from the AA, police and/or local radio, e.g., about safe travelling.
- Modes of transport available to staff.
- The degree of effort exercised by staff and whether they have made attempts to make alternative travel arrangements.

- Working from home; this may be considered, dependant on the nature of employment and where circumstances permit. Any working from home arrangements should be closely monitored to ensure that it is productive.
- The use of existing on-call arrangements to establish contingency arrangements where adverse weather conditions are foreseeable.
- The caring or childcare responsibilities of the staff member.
- The health of the staff member; for example, where it is known that they have a mobility or other health/medical condition special care should be taken in reaching a decision relating to attendance and pay.
- Other factors pertaining at the time.

The Practice Manager or Practice Owner should decide on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate for staff to leave work early. In taking the decision, they should consider the factors outlined in section above. If the total time lost is no more than half the staff member's normal working day, then there will not be a deduction in pay.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for the Practice to close. In such circumstances staff should be paid as normal.

Practice Closure

The decision to close the practice will be based on the reported incident and resulting situation, or the local weather conditions, including the state of the roads and public transport availability and the element of risk that team members may be exposed to in making the journey to and from work.

Unless advised of closure, team members are expected to make every effort to reach the practice by the start of their working day and if they are unable to do so (e.g., due to flooding, road closures, blocked access as a result of snow, lack of public transport) they must immediately telephone the practice or appointed Practice person to advise of their situation.

Please note:

- Absence from work in these circumstances will be considered to be unpaid leave unless the team member is owed time in lieu, wishes to use annual leave or it is possible to work additional hours to make up the time missed.
- The practice reserves the right to revise or amend this policy and procedure to reflect changes in business needs or other circumstances or to reflect new legislation

Document Control

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Version	Status	Date	Author / Editor	Details of Change (Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)
1.0				Original document created
1.1	Final	25.03.23	PG	Updated policy. Expanded on the responsibilities of staff and management.

The latest approved version of this document supersedes all other versions, upon receipt of the latest approved version all other versions should be destroyed, unless specifically stated that previous version(s) are to remain extant. If any doubt, please contact the document Author.

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