

Adverse Weather Policy



Policy Title	Adverse Weather Policy
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS
Policy Issue date	August 2025
Policy Review date	August 2029, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Policy Readers Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service/SHDC Council

Adverse Weather Policy and Procedure

Introduction

During periods of adverse weather, the Council aims to continue delivering services and keep offices open, where possible, to safely maintain and support the community and vulnerable individuals. Employees have a responsibility to report for work. In the event of adverse weather, all employees are expected to make every effort to report for work. This includes attempting to travel by alternative means than those used in normal weather conditions or making use of the Council's Agile Working Policy, where relevant to their role.

The Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of its employees. Adverse weather can impact working conditions, especially where employees are required to travel for work. In such circumstances, appropriate measures must be implemented to manage any increased risk to employees.

The Council recognises that adverse weather conditions may occasionally make travel to and from work difficult. However, the priority of all employees should be to maintain services wherever possible, whilst considering their own personal safety. Mutually agreed arrangements and the flexibility and cooperation of People Managers and employees will help 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.

Aim

This policy is intended to assist People Managers in implementing a sensible and caring approach to individual employee circumstances whilst balancing this against the need to maintain the provision of services.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and consistent approach is adopted when normal daily travelling arrangements or work locations of employees are disrupted by adverse weather conditions. It will be applied when employees are unable to attend work or have to work a shorter day than normal due to adverse weather conditions. It does not apply to personal emergencies which should be addressed by requesting annual leave or other forms of leave as outlined in Time Off Policy. This policy applies to all Council employees.

Adverse weather is defined as weather conditions that:

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

This can include snow, ice, fog, floods, or high winds which render travel extremely hazardous. 'Extremely hazardous' is defined as conditions in which the Police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise the public not to make unnecessary journeys or not to travel unless necessary.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Aim	2
Scope.....	2
1. Responsibilities Under this Policy - Employees.....	3
2. Responsibilities Under this Policy - People Managers	4
3. Weather Deterioration During Working Hours	4
4. Weather Alerts	5
5. Communication	5
6. School Closures	5
7. Payment	6
8. Other Considerations	6

1. Responsibilities Under this Policy - Employees

- 1.1 All employees are responsible for making their own arrangements to get to work on time. In the event of adverse weather conditions causing delays or difficulties in travelling to work, employees should take all reasonable steps to attend their normal place of work as soon as they possibly can, while considering personal safety.
- 1.2 If an employee is unable to get to work, they should contact their People Manager at the earliest possible opportunity to explain the situation and agree on the next steps. If they are unable to reach their immediate manager, they should contact another senior manager at their place of work.
- 1.3 Employees should continue to monitor the weather conditions during the day to determine if they can attend work later, such as in the afternoon. Employees who are unable to attend work at their normal work base / site are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work at an alternative work base / site where appropriate for their job role. Arrangements to work elsewhere should be discussed and agreed with their People Manager. Employees should report to the appropriate person on arrival at

the alternative work base / site and inform them of their arrival. If it is agreed to work at home, normal recording arrangements will apply for hours worked.

2. Responsibilities Under this Policy - People Managers

2.1 A People Manager should be nominated for each establishment to take overall responsibility for implementing this policy during adverse weather. The People Manager should activate contingency plans when adverse weather conditions are predicted or occur unexpectedly overnight. The plans should address situations where the People Manager or the employees may be unable to get to work and inform staff who to contact. The contingency plans should also aim to maintain the standard and level of service wherever possible. Options may include:

- Organising minimum cover arrangements with 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 where possible, considering 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.

2.2 The People Manager should assess the situation, including the location of individual employees, any health and safety implications, and the impact of staffing levels on service provision.

2.3 The People Manager may choose to apply some provisions of the Agile Working Policy to enable employees to continue working.

3. Weather Deterioration During Working Hours

3.1 The People Manager should monitor adverse weather conditions and the availability of transport throughout the day, ensuring that all employees are kept informed and notified immediately of any up-to-date decisions made.

3.2 Employees facing particular difficulties in getting home may need to leave work early, taking into account their personal safety. The People Manager must follow the service's contingency plan, ensuring that the actions detailed in those plans are met to maintain the standard and level of the service.

3.3 Where employees remain at work, health and safety requirements must continue to be met. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to close an establishment. If this becomes necessary, the People Manager should seek authorisation from the Chief

Executive Officer and inform all affected staff. The People Manager 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.

4. Weather Alerts

4.1 The [Met Office matrix](#) is a key tool for providing a visual indicator for severity of weather impact. To understand how likely the Met office think the forecast impacts are, always check the matrix to see which box has been ticked and read the supporting forecast information.

4.2 Yellow and Amber warnings

These warnings represent a range of impact levels and likelihoods, as set out in the Met Office matrix. These impacts can include damage to property, travel delays and cancellations, loss of water supplies, power cuts and, in the most severe cases, bring a danger to life.

4.3 Red warning

Dangerous weather is expected. It is very likely that there will be a risk to life, with substantial disruption to travel, energy supplies and possibly widespread damage to property and infrastructure.

5. Communication

5.1 The Council updates information throughout the day during periods of adverse weather by the use of Corporate Communication channels and by updating its web pages.

6. School Closures

6.1 It is recognised that adverse weather situations often impact on educational premises and the availability of extended childcare providers, causing additional difficulties for parents or carers with dependants.

6.2 In the event of unexpected or unforeseen adverse weather and subsequent school closures, employees may use Dependants Leave which covers emergency situations for parents/carers. Any continuance of adverse weather and ongoing closures which are communicated in advance are not unforeseen. Employees should take steps to make alternative suitable arrangements for dependants to enable their attendance at their normal place of work. People Managers will be expected to apply this and other associated policies (Time Off Work Policy) fairly and consistently on a case-by-case basis, ensuring the continued delivery of services are maintained.

6.3 In accordance with the Agile Working Policy, employees may only work from home if they have a suitable environment in which they can perform their work. Employees must not work from home, in the event of a school closure due to adverse weather, if they are providing primary care for their dependants. Employees should use alternative leave as mentioned above.

7. 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 sections (except unpaid leave).
- Absence is due to the workplace being closed to employees due to the weather conditions and no alternative working arrangements are available

8. Other Considerations

8.1 Special care should be taken when applying this policy if it is known that an employee has a medical/health condition which may be exacerbated by adverse weather conditions or impact their mobility.

8.2 Departments which offer a service or operate essential services may have more detailed local arrangements in place to maintain these services during adverse weather . This policy should be read in conjunction with those arrangements. Local arrangements may supersede this policy where reasonable.

8.3 Employees who are already on leave (annual, maternity, sickness etc.) will not be entitled to a day off in lieu if their department is closed.