



ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS GUIDANCE

Title	Adverse Weather Conditions Guidance
Who should use this	All Staff
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Adverse Weather – Guidance for Employees

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These guidelines have been prepared to ensure consistency of application across the Board in respect of attendance at work for all employees during adverse weather conditions, for example, severe snowfall, extreme winds or flooding. The guidance sets out broad parameters whilst at the same time affording managers a degree of discretion depending on the circumstances at the time. In all events, when deciding how to respond to severe weather, managers must be conscious of the health, safety and welfare of employees and customers.

2. Scope

- 2.1 Adverse weather is a term which describes weather events which are particularly severe and challenge models of normal service delivery. Adverse weather can include heavy snowfall, flooding from heavy rain, very high winds, very cold temperatures and also exceptionally high temperatures (this list is not exhaustive). Adverse weather is associated with RED and AMBER weather warnings from the [Met Office](#). Information on flooding can be obtained via the Scottish Environment Protection Agency ([SEPA](#)).

The net effect of adverse weather can be to disrupt public services such as nurseries, schools, and public transport systems. Employees should always check their route before setting out and check all real-time traffic information provided.

3. Communication

- 3.1 In the event of adverse weather conditions, appropriate warnings are issued by the Met Office to South Ayrshire Council and forwarded to designated officers. The primary purpose of these warnings is to allow services to put into action a contingency plan to maintain employee and public safety and to minimise service disruption. Where severe weather conditions occur, updates will be made available to employees through South Ayrshire Council wide email and details will be posted on Re-Wired. Where employees do not have ready access to PC's, managers should keep them up to date on weather and transport issues via telephone, SMS or text message. In this respect employees who have not been provided with a mobile phone should provide their manager with their personal mobile phone number.

For information which requires public communication, the South Ayrshire Council Head of Employee and Customer Services will liaise with the Communications team over appropriate public communications to ensure a timely and controlled communication flow between the Board and the Public. In addition, this may include messages placed on our website, telephone answering machine messages and email messaging. In the event of closure, we may utilise South Ayrshire Councils Twitter and Facebook accounts.

4. Manager Responsibilities

- 4.1 When a line manager is contacted by an employee who is unable to attend for work, they should note the employee's circumstances and, depending on the type of work undertaken by the employee, the following options may be considered:

- A day's annual leave
 - Home working– if this has been set up
 - A day's unpaid leave
 - Flexi Leave
 - A paid day with the agreement to make up lost hours at a later date(s) within the following 8 weeks.
- 4.2 Consideration must be given to whether the employee could use public transport to get to their work location (<http://www.travelinescotland.com> or www.nationalrail.co.uk, including the degree of safety in reaching work under poor weather conditions e.g., the closure or potential closure of specific routes, [refer to www.highways.gov.uk] and any particular personal conditions such as mobility impairment.
- 4.3 If an employee needs to take time off to care for a dependant for reasons related to adverse weather (e.g., school/nursery closure) one of the options in 4.1 will be considered. It should be noted that the statutory right to take unpaid time off to deal with unforeseen events regarding dependants does not provide the right to take extended leave, but only the right to take off what time is reasonable to allow the employee to deal with the unforeseen event.
- 4.4 Where adverse weather conditions arise during the working day, managers have the discretion to release employees who will personally encounter difficulty in reaching their home at a reasonable time, taking account of employee's home location and mode of transport. Employees will be required to make up the time lost unless the closure of Board premises is sanctioned by the Assessor or designated Senior Officer as detailed in section 7 below. Subject to health and safety considerations, other employees, who are not affected, or any other essential staff should remain at work until normal finishing time in order to maintain services.
- 4.5 Managers must ensure that each workplace location operates a safe environment for employees, clients and members of the public, (as applicable). It may be necessary to appoint temporary fire wardens or maintain more stringent security procedures on such occasions. Nominated senior officers must be identified in each location to ensure that a safe working environment is maintained and that the necessary interim fire safety and building evacuation procedures are in place.
- 4.6 Managers are required to ensure appropriate emergency contacts and appropriate emergency procedures are in place to ensure continuity of service, during adverse weather and ensure these are published within the appropriate section in SharePoint.
- 4.7 Where an employee has pre-arranged to take annual leave or flexi leave on the day(s) of adverse weather, this will not be cancelled even although, had they not been on annual leave or flexi leave, they would have been prevented from attending work because of adverse weather conditions.
- 4.8 If the Boards building is closed due to severe weather and employees are unable to work from home, there will be no detriment to salary or holiday entitlement and employees will be recorded as being on authorised absence.

5. Employee Responsibilities

- 5.1 Employees should make every possible effort, whilst having regard for their personal safety, and the current/future weather conditions, to report for work as normal, particularly in areas where public transport is running even if the journey might take longer than usual. All possible alternatives should be explored, including, where distance and fitness permit, walking to work.

- 5.2 In the event of being prevented from attending work, employees must speak directly to their line manager as soon as possible, to advise of the reasons for non-attendance and to discuss the most appropriate arrangement to deal with the situation (refer to 4.1 above). If the relevant manager cannot be contacted, the supervisor or other appropriate manager in the service should be contacted. Failure to notify a line manager of non-attendance without a reasonable explanation will count as unauthorised absence without pay and may lead to the matter being considered under disciplinary procedures.
- 5.3 Employees should review the situation throughout the day and if the weather improves to return to work, should contact their line manager to discuss the most appropriate course of action.
- 5.4 If non-attendance at work due to adverse weather continues beyond the first day, contact must be repeated on a daily basis.

6. Flexible Working

6.1 Flexi-time scheme:

- In respect of employees covered by the Flex-time Scheme, line managers may waive the application of the normal start and finish times for attendance.
- If it is agreed that an employee can carry out work from home, they should be credited with the hours spent on the activity, subject to a maximum of the normal working day.
- Any employee who incurs debit hours as a result of non-attendance or attending for part of the day will be allowed to exceed the maximum debit provision of 7 hours and 10 minutes and will be required to make up the time over the next two accounting periods.

7. Payment

- 7.1 Where weather conditions are extreme and the Assessor or nominated Senior Officer sanctions the early closure of offices, those employees sent home from work will not be required to make up the time lost or have any deduction from pay for the remainder of the normal working day.
- 7.2 Any paid absence from work (as opposed to annual leave/flexi or making up time) due to adverse weather conditions, will only be considered by the Assessor or Nominated Senior Officer on the basis of relevant information being sourced from external organisations, e.g., Met Office, COSLA. Decisions will therefore be made retrospectively. The South Ayrshire Council Head of Employee and Customer Services will liaise with the Nominated Senior officer and issue any special guidance as may be required for such situations.
- 7.3 A pro forma to gather appropriate information on which to base decisions in the event of extreme prolonged widespread weather conditions is attached at Appendix 1. The Boards Personnel Representatives will notify Employee Services of any pay adjustments for employees, and the employees concerned should be notified.
- 7.4 In exceptional circumstances, where weather conditions are extreme, the Assessor or Nominated Senior Officer may be required to take specific actions to ensure delivery of service and will decide on appropriate payments for such occasions as they arise.

- 7.5 Employees who have made every possible effort to report for work as normal but are denied access to Board property due to adverse weather conditions and/or cannot satisfactorily perform their duties on account of adverse weather will be paid the appropriate rate of pay for the normal working day.
- 7.6 Where an employee has made every effort to attend work and arrives late due to adverse weather, line managers have the discretion to waive the requirement for the employee to make up the time lost time or have any deduction from pay.

8. General Issues Arising from Working during Adverse Weather

- 8.1 Where an employee is required by management to remain at work when other employees have been released early and when, after normal finishing time, is unable because of adverse weather conditions to return home, hotel expenses reasonably incurred will be reimbursed. In such circumstances, certain other expenses reasonably incurred may also be reimbursed, provided prior agreement is reached with the Assessor or Nominated Senior Officer.
- 8.2 Employees who are away from home on Board business and are unable to return to work as a result of travel restrictions should inform their Line Manager. In this situation employees will not suffer detriment to their salary or annual leave entitlement as long as they have explored all alternative arrangements and they have notified their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity. Hotel or certain other expenses reasonably incurred may also be reimbursed, provided prior agreement is reached with the Assessor or Nominated Senior Officer.
- 8.3 Employees who are away on personal business using annual leave and are unable to return to work as a result of Travel Restrictions should inform their Line Manager. In this situation employees will be granted additional leave which will be deducted from their annual leave entitlement. It is expected that the employee explores alternative arrangements to ensure a return to work as soon as possible. (Travel Restrictions include, but are not limited to, airspace restrictions; ferry and train disruptions; or strikes affecting transport.)

Appendix1

Abnormal Adverse Weather - Employees Unable to Attend Work							
Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board						Date:	
Section	Employee's Name	Designation	Home Location	Method of Transport to Work	Date of non-attendance	Reason for non-attendance	Decision

Assessor or Nominated Senior Officer Signature:
Date: