



ATTENDANCE AT WORK

Severe Weather Conditions

HR INFORMATION NOTE

Introduction:

This HR information note will provide managers and employees with information on key points for consideration during periods of severe weather which affect the ability of the employee to attend their normal place of work.

Background:

West Dunbartonshire Council covers a wide area and not all office locations/workplaces are readily accessible in periods of adverse weather conditions. It is also recognised that a number of employees travel to work from both urban and rural areas and severe weather conditions can disrupt normal travel arrangements. If bad weather makes travel to or from work difficult or dangerous, an employee should consider their personal safety and whether a journey is practical. Employees are encouraged to pay attention to weather warnings on TV and radio as well as specific instructions from the Police or other Emergency Services.

Purpose:

The purpose of this HR Information Note is to ensure a consistent and fair practice is adopted throughout the Council and employees are aware that there is no automatic right to payment in such circumstances and in normal circumstances an employee should use flexi or annual leave to cover the absence or agree with their Line Manager how the time can be made up.

Key Points:

- *Notification*
An employee unable to attend work due to severe weather conditions must telephone their Line Manager as soon as possible to advise of non attendance and must continue to notify the Line Manager each day that they are unable to attend work. Where practicable, an employee will be asked to report to the nearest accessible West Dunbartonshire Council workplace. In certain situations home working can be approved by the Head of Service where the employee has the facility to work from home, and sufficient work is available to be completed at home.

- *Use of Flexi Leave or Annual Leave*
During periods of severe weather conditions an employee unable to attend work should request flexi leave or annual leave to cover this absence. Employees not included within the flexi leave scheme may still request to cover the absence on a flexible basis and come to an agreement with their Line Manager in this regard.
- *School Closure*
Employees who are unable to attend work because of childcare commitments caused by School closure will be expected to use annual leave, flexi leave, unpaid leave or agree arrangements to make up the time. Employees have a statutory right to time off for dependents - this would include dealing with unexpected childcare requirements. This may be unpaid. Employees are allowed reasonable time off to deal with the emergency and make any arrangements that are needed.
- *Payment*
There is no automatic payment for non attendance and every instance of an employee requesting such payment will be considered by the Departmental Director who will consider what reasonable alternatives were available to the employee. In normal circumstances payment would only be made where the employee's place of work is closed and the employee has not been asked to report elsewhere.
- *Early Closure of Offices*
Where adverse weather conditions occur during the working day, Directors in consultation with the Chief Executive, may permit employees to leave early subject to the needs of the service. Managers should give priority to those employees most likely to have difficulty travelling home in a reasonable time. However, essential staff should remain at work until normal finishing time in order to maintain services.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Contact Line Manager as soon as possible to advise of non-attendance at work due to the adverse weather conditions.
- Discuss options with Line Manager on how absence will be covered i.e. flexi, annual leave or special arrangement made to recoup the time back.

Manager Responsibilities:

- Be considerate of reason for non attendance and what alternative arrangement can be put in place i.e. reporting to a nearer office, granting of annual leave, flexi leave, working from home (if appropriate), or some other suitable arrangement for lost time to be made up.
- Managers should not give advice on whether a journey is safe or not this is the responsibility of the individual.