



Team Name: Human Resources Team Lead: Regional Manager – Occupational Safety & Health Approved by: VP-Human Resources	Reference Number: ORG.1513.PL.006 Program Area: Human Resources Policy Section: Occupational Safety & Health
Issue Date: April 30, 2019 Review Date: Revision Date:	Subject: Inclement Weather and Work

POLICY SUBJECT:

Inclement Weather and Work

PURPOSE:

Southern Health-Santé Sud acknowledges that workers must sometimes travel during working hours as part of their work responsibility. While committed to providing excellent service to its clients both at Southern Health-Santé Sud facilities and within the community, Southern Health-Santé Sud also acknowledges responsibility for ensuring that the safety and health of its employees are not put at risk due to travelling during severe weather events. However, employees must make every reasonable effort to attend work despite severe weather conditions.

BOARD POLICY REFERENCE:

Executive Limitation (EL-03) Treatment of Staff

POLICY:

To provide guidance to supervisors and workers on the appropriate steps to take to ensure that all employees are provided with the information that they need in order to make safe decisions about travelling during severe weather events.

DEFINITIONS:

Inclement weather: Severe weather conditions such as whiteout or blizzard as declared by Environment Canada or the Employer, or due to road closures as declared by police agencies or the Department of Highways (Infrastructure and Transportation).

Working Hours: For the purpose of this policy working hours are defined as the employees scheduled working hours.

Weather Warning (Environment Canada): Severe weather is occurring or is highly probable. Weather warnings may be issued from six to twelve hours in advance. Severe thunderstorm or tornado warnings are sometimes issued as little as one hour or less in advance. Weather warnings may be issued for thunderstorms, tornados, freezing rain, frost, wind, blizzards, heavy snowfall, winter storms, wind chill or cold.

Weather Watch (Environment Canada): Conditions which are favorable for the development of severe weather.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER:

Severe weather events can develop rapidly sometimes providing little warning. When there is a severe weather event occurring or predicted to occur, Environment Canada will issue a weather watch and warning. Weather watches are issued when there is the potential for severe weather. Weather warnings are issues when severe weather is occurring or will occur soon.

Environment Canada guidelines states that the main risks associated with severe weather are resulting from high winds, heavy snowfall, tornados, and icy, blocked, or flooded roads.

PROCEDURE:

Reporting for Work during Severe Weather Conditions

- Employees who cannot reach their work location(s) or arrive at work on time due to severe weather conditions must contact their supervisor or workplace prior to commencing their shift or as soon as practicable after the employee feels it is unsafe to perform their job due to severe weather conditions.
- Staff who are unable to get to their work location may choose to use accrued vacation leave or other banked time. If this option is not available, the absence is considered leave without pay.
- A Request for Leave form must be completed and submitted for any absence due to inclement weather.
- Staff who are absent from work and who do not contact their manager or workplace are considered absent without leave and may be subject to discipline.
- An employee cannot use sick leave for an absence because of severe weather conditions except for a previously established illness or injury. An employee who claims sick leave as the reason for absence must produce a medical certificate acceptable to their manager.

Public Announcement Stating Workplaces are Closed Due to Severe Weather Conditions

- A public announcement stating that some workplaces are closed because of severe weather conditions does not apply to Southern Health-Santé Sud employees. Employees are expected to report for work unless otherwise instructed.
- Employees unsure about reporting for work should contact their manager or workplace for direction.

Severe Weather Conditions Arising During Regular Working Hours

- The Supervisor/Manager should refer to the Environment Canada website to check for Weather Watch or Warning or refer to the Road and Traveller Information website to check road closures and conditions as well check with the Government of Manitoba Road or Travel Information website or by calling 945-3704 or 1-877-627-6237. (See Section 7. Resource Documents)
- The Supervisor/Manager shall advise staff of any changes in schedules resulting from severe weather conditions, as necessary. Any decision about work cancellations should be communicated to employees immediately and effectively.
- If severe weather condition arises during regular working hours, employees must contact their manager/supervisor.
- It is the employee's responsibility to check the weather conditions before driving to their scheduled appointments.
- Staff shall re-schedule their appointments whenever possible and advise their Supervisor/Manager of the rescheduling.
- If the employee notifies his/ her supervisor that he/she is **refusing** or feels unsafe to do work because the severe weather condition presents a hazard, then the employee must immediately notify their coordinator in person. If the supervisor/coordinator does not agree then the procedure for Right to Refuse Dangerous Work should then be followed by the employee and the supervisor/coordinator.

REFERENCES:

The Weather Network	www.theweathernetwork.com/mobile/warningsdirect
Winter Hazards	www.ec.gc.ca/meteo-weather/
Driving in Winter	www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/icesnow.html
Summer Hazards	www.ec.gc.ca/meteo-weather/
Extreme Weather	www.ccohs.ca/products/webinars/Extreme Weather.pdf
Road and Traveller Information – Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation Department	http://www.gov.mb.ca/mit/roadinfo