



Adverse Weather Conditions & Disruption to Public Transport Guidance Note

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Scope/Application
3. Managers Responsibility
4. Employee's Responsibility
5. Met Office Weather Warnings & Associated Guidelines for Staff
6. Procedures
7. Special Considerations
8. Health & Safety

1. Introduction

Culture NL recognises that employees may at times face difficulties attending their place of work and returning home during periods of severe weather or when there are disruptions to public transport. While Culture NL is committed to protecting the health and safety of all of its employees, it must ensure that disruption caused to its services remains minimal.

The purpose of this guidance is to define the responsibilities of employees for attendance at work during severe weather conditions or when there are disruptions to public transport and to outline the appropriate procedures for employees and managers

Severe weather is a term which describes weather events which are particularly severe and challenge normal service delivery. Severe 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). Severe weather is associated with RED or AMBER weather warnings from the Met. Office. Severe weather can disrupt public services such as nurseries, schools, colleges and public transport systems.

When police advice is not to make any unnecessary journeys, this generally refers to journeys **not** involving workers who help maintain essential public services and generally refers to journeys for leisure purposes or those which could be done when conditions improve e.g. shopping. Culture NL will determine, based on relevant advice, in what circumstances this guidance will apply and inform managers and employees accordingly.

The guidance has been written to reflect a standard full time Monday to Friday working pattern. The same *principles* should be applied to employees working different working patterns.

2. Scope/Application

This guidance applies to all employees and affords managers a degree of discretion to operate within the parameters set out below

Culture NL will determine, taking advice and information from relevant authorities into account, in what circumstances this guidance will apply. This guidance fully reflects the guidelines set out in the Fair Work Charter for Severe Weather.

3. Managers Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Managers to ensure all employees know and understand the procedure related to attendance at work during severe weather conditions and/or disruptions to public transport.

It is also the responsibility of managers to ensure the appropriate Health & Safety measures as detailed at Section 8 are in place.

4. Employees Responsibilities

Reasonable efforts to attend work

It is the employee's responsibility to make every effort to attend work in all circumstances. If an employee is unable to reach their normal work location, efforts should be made to attend the nearest Culture NL premises. Culture NL accepts, however, that there are circumstances that may arise which make it difficult for an employee to comply with that condition of their employment - severe weather conditions and disruptions to public transport being those types of circumstances.

It is also the employee's responsibility to comply with the procedures to be followed in the event severe weather conditions as deemed applicable by Culture NL and/or disruptions to public transport.

5. Met Office Weather Warnings & Associated Guidelines for Staff

As the UK's official weather service, the Met Office is responsible for issuing weather warnings, which warn of impacts caused by severe weather. Weather warnings are designed to let people, businesses, emergency responders and governments know what weather is in store and what the impacts of that weather may be.

The Met Office issues weather warnings, through the National Severe Weather Warning Service, when severe weather has the potential to bring impacts to the UK. These warnings are given a colour (yellow, amber or red) depending on a combination of both the impact the weather may have and the likelihood of those impacts occurring.

What does the coloured warning mean?	Culture NL response and employee responsibility
<p>Yellow warnings can be issued for a range of weather situations. Many are issued when it is likely that the weather will cause some low level impacts, including some disruption to travel in a few places. Many people may be able to continue with their daily routine, but there will be some that will be directly impacted and so it is important to assess if you could be affected. It is important to read the content of yellow warnings to determine which weather situation is being covered by the yellow warning.</p>	<p>It is expected that disruption to travel and impact on ability to attend work will be minimal. Should an employee be unable to attend work during a yellow warning, procedures at section 6.1 will apply.</p>
<p>Amber Warning: There is an increased likelihood of impacts from severe weather, which could potentially disrupt your plans. This means there is the possibility of travel delays, road and rail closures, power cuts and the potential risk to life and property. You may want to consider the impact of the weather on your family and your community and whether there is anything you need to do ahead of the severe weather to minimise the impact.</p>	<p>Should an employee be unable to attend work during an amber warning, procedures at section 6.1 will apply.</p>

Red Warning: Dangerous weather is expected and, if you haven't already done so, you should take action now to keep yourself and others safe from the impact of the severe weather. 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. You should avoid travelling, where possible, and follow the advice of the emergency services and local authorities.

During red weather warnings, all employees will be paid, in full, for periods where they are unable to attend work.

6. Procedures to be followed

6.1 Non Attendance

It is not Culture NL's intention that employees put themselves at unnecessary risk when trying to attend work. Employees should ultimately use their own judgment and, if unable to attend work, contact their manager as early as possible should they consider that severe weather conditions or disruptions to public transport prevent them from working.

Where it has been agreed that the employee has been prevented from reporting for work the following may apply:

- (i) the day may be designated as annual leave (if this is the preferred choice of the employee);

or

- (ii) Where (i) cannot be applied, the day may be designated as Flexi-leave where the post is part of Culture NL's Flexible Working Hours Scheme;

or

- (iii) Where (ii) is not applicable, the employee can agree with his/her line manager to work additional hours to make up the hours lost in a reasonable time period.

Exceptionally, where none of the above arrangements are appropriate, and there are extenuating circumstances, the time lost may be granted as special leave, with pay, subject to consultation with the HR Team.

If the employee is on holiday and unable to return home due to travel disruption e.g. the closure of rail links or airports and/or flight cancellations, the employee must take either annual or flexi leave as appropriate, or agree with their Service other arrangements for making up the lost time.

Where such conditions continue beyond one day, similar arrangements will apply.

6.2 Alternative ways of working

Where adverse weather is forecast, staff issued with laptops with Freja self-service token access and mobile phones should make contingency plans to be able to work from home or another Culture NL location using that equipment in the event that they are prevented from attending their normal workplace due to adverse weather.

Where it has been agreed that the employee has been prevented from attending their normal place of work, the following may apply:

- (i) Employees may be able to undertake work at home under the direction of their Line Manager. Where it is agreed this can be achieved, the employee should be credited with the hours he/she worked at home. If participating in the Flexible Working Hours Scheme, the employee will be credited with the appropriate time. If the time worked falls short of the normal daily hours, the balance should be dealt with as appropriate.
- (ii) Employees may be able to undertake work from another Culture NL location. Where an employee can attend an alternative location the new location should be informed to ensure any security requirements are met. Employees should carry work as directed by their own manager if available, or allocated work appropriate to their skill set and grade by another manager. All hours worked should be recorded as normal.

6.3 Employees Attending Late or Leaving Early

Where it has been agreed that the employee has been prevented from attending work at their normal time or require leaving early as a consequence of severe weather conditions and/ or disruptions to public transport, the following may apply:

For employees who participate in Culture NL's Flexible Working Hours Scheme, the flexibility of flexi-time and coreless flexi may be sufficient to accommodate any impact on either attending late or leaving early, in particular where there is a disruption to public transport. During periods of severe weather conditions Culture NL may consider waiving the application of stipulated core times for employee's attendance.

- (i) Employees who attend work late will receive their normal pay for the day and should be credited with their standard daily hours. However, if an employee does not report for work until after 2pm the provisions in relation to absence set out at 6.1 above will apply.
- (ii) Employees whom it is agreed may leave early will also receive their normal pay for the day and should be credited with their standard daily hours. However, if the employee leaves before 2pm the provisions in relation to absence set out at 6.1 above will apply.

6.4 Employees prevented from returning home

Employees who attend work and are prevented from going home due to severe weather will be credited with their standard daily hours. If they are required to spend the night sheltering at their work location, this will not be counted as part of the working day in line with the Working Time Regulations. Employees in this category will receive subsistence allowances in accordance with Culture NL's agreed rates (Evening meal allowance and/or Breakfast allowance, as appropriate). Consideration should be given to adjustment of rotas for those employees who have sheltered overnight in their work location, to avoid where possible an employee going straight into a long working shift but taking service delivery into account.

6.5 Impact of Schools or Nursery Closure

Where schools, nurseries and day centres are closed due to severe weather and an employee has no other alternative than to stay at home to care for their dependents, special leave, annual leave, flexi leave (if the employee participates in the Flexible Working Hours Scheme), or unpaid leave will usually be granted in the first instance. Consideration can also be given to use of parental leave.

7. Special Considerations

Special consideration will be given to any member of staff who is:

- (i) Disabled as defined under the Equality Act 2010 and that disability makes it unreasonable for them to attempt to attend work during severe weather conditions;
- (ii) Pregnant and has made their manager aware of this;
- (iii) Has a health condition, which is known to Culture NL, which makes it unreasonable for them to attempt to attend work during severe weather conditions. i.e mobility condition

Managers should give consideration to the position of disabled employees for whom undertaking journeys to and from work in severe weather conditions may present particular risks. Examples of such risks are:

- those with mobility problems who may have particular difficulties travelling;
- disabled employees who may not have access to medication or the means of managing their condition;
- disabled employees who may have difficulty attending an alternative workplace as they may be unable to access it and/or function within it.

In the case of pregnant employees particular consideration should be given to those whose duties involve them working outdoors and/or walking long distances.

Managers will be able to exercise discretion and make their own decisions in relation to employees that fall into to any of the categories listed above without relying on the procedures laid out in Section 6.1. Managers should discuss the employee's particular circumstances with them before making any decisions and ensure a fair and consistent approach is taken.

8. Health & Safety

While Culture NL will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees, employees are reminded of their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from work in severe weather conditions.

Impact of Severe Weather Conditions on Duties

Culture NL recognises that severe weather conditions particularly affects employees whose job involves driving or working outdoors. Managers should ensure that risk assessments are reviewed to take account of the weather, and monitor the employee's location and wellbeing during the working day. In these circumstances employees should be properly instructed, provided with the appropriate clothing and equipment and given sufficient rest breaks.

Employees must ensure they understand any temporary arrangements put in place to protect their safety. Any concerns an employee has about continuing to work in severe weather conditions should be raised with their manager in the first instance.

Impact of Severe Weather Conditions on Culture NL Establishments

In the event of severe weather conditions every effort will be made to open all Culture NL offices and other establishments as normal. Services will co-ordinate their own operational services including decisions on establishment closures, after consultation with the appropriate senior officers, who in turn must liaise with the Chief Executive.

Managers of establishments should consider the risks specific to their property and implement appropriate control measures to ensure access and egress is maintained so far as is reasonably practicable. A common sense approach should be adopted with regards to ice and snow clearance, it is not always practical to grit an entire site but as part of the gritting procedure safe routes should be identified and communicated to all persons affected.

First Aiders and Fire Wardens may be absent due to these circumstances, therefore managers must ensure that in each workplace location, a safe working environment is maintained and that alternative and interim fire safety and building evacuation procedures are in place, should they be required.