

Papworth Hospital NHS Trust

Guidance on Employee Absence due to Extreme Weather Conditions and Public Transport Breakdowns

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure consistent treatment of staff throughout the Trust if they experience difficulties getting to work due to:

- ✧ extreme bad weather
- ✧ public transport breakdowns

Managers are advised to remind staff that it is their duty to notify their employer as soon as possible that they are unable to attend for work.

2. Extreme Weather Conditions

- 2.1. This guidance applies only to extreme weather conditions such as heavy snow, which affects road and public transport systems.
- 2.2. Staff will be expected to attend for duty wherever it is possible for them to walk to their place of work. Whether or not it is possible for them to do so will be a matter for judgement by their manager in consultation with the Human Resources Department to ensure consistency across the site.

The following considerations will apply, where staff are able to walk to work:

- ✧ the distance involved and the routes to the workplace, ensuring due consideration of any hazards/risks, eg no footpaths
 - ✧ the prevailing weather conditions
 - ✧ the time of day
 - ✧ the age/health of the member of staff
 - ✧ the degree of effort which the employee exercised
- 2.3. If it is not possible for employees to attend for duty at the normal place of work, but they could work at home, they should discuss and agree this with their manager.
 - 2.4. If it physically impossible for a member of staff to attend for duty in these circumstances, they will not forfeit pay for a period of one day.
 - 2.5. If an employee fails to attend for duty in circumstances where the manager feels that they should, the following provisions will apply and in order of priority:
 1. Lieu days may be taken
 2. Annual leave may be taken
 3. The period of absence will be without pay

- 2.6 Carers' leave should be considered if the non attendance is due to closure of schools or other childcare arrangements, if the normal back up arrangements have also broken down under the Special Leave Policy.
- 2.7 Carers' leave should be considered if the non attendance is due to closure of schools or other childcare arrangements, if the normal back up arrangements have also broken down under the Special Leave Policy.
- 2.8 There are also health and safety considerations to bear in mind for employees who are expected to drive as part of their work if police and AA recommendations are not to drive unless absolutely necessary.
- 2.9 Similarly, if a member of staff is able to return home due to adverse weather conditions, this should be discussed with the manager and, where applicable, time off in lieu given.

3 Absence of normal forms of transport for reasons other than bad weather

- 3.1 It is the employee's responsibility to present him/her self for work at the contracted times. The employer is under no obligation to assist the employee (unless there is some existing contractual agreement to do so). However, it is occasionally in the interests of the service and good employee relations that management gives some assistance to staff.
- 3.2 The following provisions apply where staff customarily travel by public transport.
- 3.3 In the absence of their normal form of public transport, staff will be expected to use alternative forms if they are available.
- 3.4 Whenever necessary, the manager will vary the hours of duty/shift to accommodate the employees if this can be done without undue disruption to the service.
- 3.5 Staff will be expected to share cars where this is possible.
- 3.6 In the last resort, a taxi may be ordered by the line manager to transport a group of people to a central point in a town or village (i.e. not door to door unless the distance is shorter). Staff will be required to reimburse the Trust to the amount of their normal public transport fare.
- 3.7 There will be no reimbursement of taxi fares to members of staff in any circumstances within the terms of this guidance.
- 3.8 In the absence of other normal forms of transport, staff will be expected to walk to work, having regard to the consideration of paragraph 2.2 above.
- 3.9 If staff fail to attend for duty, the following provisions will apply and in order of priority listed:
 - 1. Lieu days may be taken
 - 2. Annual leave may be taken
 - 3. the period of absence will be without pay

No "ex-gratia" time off will be allowed for absence under this paragraph.

Agreed by JSC:

HR Sub-Committee:

Date of Review: January 2005