Inclement Weather

Introduction: How to Use This Tool

Severe weather conditions can pose a significant hazard to public safety, and your employees. Having an inclement weather policy recognizes that in cases of extreme weather, the company may be forced to close the workplace, and outlines how employees will be notified. It also addresses your recognition of employee safety; typically employees are not penalized if they are unable to make it in to work on time, if at all.

This policy offers a framework for defining an Inclement Weather policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Title</th>
<th>Inclement Weather</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Owner</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Approver(s)</td>
<td>Insert title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related Policies</td>
<td>List related policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related Procedures</td>
<td>List related enterprise procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage Location</td>
<td>Describe physical or digital location of copies of this policy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Effective Date | List the date that this policy went into effect.
Next Review Date | List the date that this policy must undergo review and update.

**Purpose**

When severe weather conditions pose a hazard to our employees’ personal safety, it can be a significant barrier to our operations, and on such occasions [company name]’s offices may be required to close. This policy outlines the procedures for notification and employee responsibilities.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of [company name] including physically present and virtual employees.

**General Policy**

Inclement weather is any severe or harsh weather condition, such as blizzards, flooding, violent storms, etc. The safety our employees is of utmost importance, and, in instances of extreme weather conditions posing any serious danger, [company name] will consider closing our offices and take steps to notify employees immediately.

**Business Closure**

If inclement weather is predicted to begin before the start of our regular working hours, we will determine if it is in everyone’s best interests if the company closes its offices until the severe conditions have passed (see the notification section for details). If the inclement weather is predicted to occur during or after work hours, we...
may decide to let employees go home early, or find some other arrangement (e.g. work from home that day).

If the [town/city] our operations are located in has declared a weather emergency, [company name] will follow suit and close the workplace.

**Notification Procedure**

**Notification of Employee lateness or absence due to incremental weather**

Employees are requested to use good judgment in monitoring weather and travel conditions. We do not encourage employees to attempt driving when their safety would be endangered. This includes travel to and from work, as well as during the workday.

If our business is open and you are going to be late, or you are unable to make it to work due to inclement weather, you must notify your [supervisor/manager] as soon as possible by phone and by email and/or text message. If there is an assistant to your supervisor or administrative/office manager you must also notify this person if you have not directly spoken to your [supervisor/manager] who has indicated he/she will take appropriate steps to notify others.

When you contract your [supervisor/manager] state your company’s policy on lateness/absence due to inclement weather. Employees will not be penalized for any lateness due to inclement weather, and will not be penalized for absences if they made a genuine effort to make it into work. Once an employee notifies their [manager/HR department] of their intended absence, they will be given the following options:

- Using a day of their annual vacation entitlement (if absence is half to a whole day)
- Making up the time
- Using lieu time
- Working from home if appropriate for the role and if feasible (at the discretion of the manager)
- List any other options your company may provide (e.g. personal days, inclement weather days, etc.)
If our business is open and you are unable to attend work as a result of family responsibilities including caring for children as a result of a school closure, you will not be penalized for this absence and you will be offered the same options as noted above.

Management of Work Tasks During Incremental Weather

If you are unable to attend work due to your inability to travel safely or other reason and the business remains open, if your role includes direct and pre-arranged contact with customers and clients you should work with your manager to contact any customers/clients who will be directly impacted by your absence (for example if you had a scheduled meeting with a customer/client). If the business has been closed you may be asked to help notify customers/clients with whom you have an existing relationship. In particular note that if you have a client/customer with a disability you may be requested to make additional efforts when possible to notify that client/customer who may have prearranged meetings of a business closure or your absences.

If your organization provides direct services to customers/clients you may need a policy for notification of customers/clients and a way to identify if those customers/clients have a disability so additional efforts can be made to notify these clients/customers if they have pre-arranged meetings.

Company Notification of Closure to Employees

If your company has a process for notifying employees of closing, state the procedure here. For example: when a business is going to be closed due to severe weather, you will receive immediate notice from [specify communication channel, e.g. call from a manager, email, etc.], informing you of our closure, when we will open, and any other steps necessary.
If your employees are already at work and the business closes based on safety concerns inform employees as soon as possible and indicate your policy for paying employees for their time. For example, if the business was open at the start of the day and you are closing due to weather within the first 2 hours of the day you may have a policy to pay the employee for half of their shift. If they have already worked at least half their shift and your business is closing ‘early’ due to weather concerns you may have a policy to pay the employee for their time and then an additional hour after the closure announcement.

Company Notification of Closure to the Public and Customers/ Clients

A public notification process that informs the general public and specific customers/ clients should be part of your operational processes. Publically post (including on a website and physically in your business) information regarding your business closer process. If your employees have direct contact meetings with customers or clients your policy should include mechanisms for informing these customers/ clients of the process for notification of a business closure or employee absence. (Note in Ontario the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disability Act, Customer Services, does require you have a clearly posted notice and corresponding guidelines and policies to address closures and related unavailability of a services provider).

Management Responsibilities For Business Closure after Opening

If your business is open and sever weather is predicted to happen prior or around the time of business closure the managers are responsible for determining if office will close and how the employees will be compensated for the closure.

- If employees are already at work, employee managers will check with their direct report to confirm the employee can safely return home.

- If clients or customers are in the building when an office closes it is the managers responsibility to ensure the situation is explained to the customer and to inquire if the customer has or is able to arrange transportation to another location.
• If employees are travelling for work and as a result become stranded the employees can submit expenses for meals and lodging that conforms to the policy related to travel and travel expenses.

Workplace Closure Status Updates

Depending on the size of your company, you may have an emergency line or some way that employees can verify/check if the building is open. Clearly post your policy for notifications: For example

If a severe weather warning is in effect or you are unsure about whether we are open or not, call [insert emergency line/contact/information line], visit our website or social network channels and you will be advised about weather conditions and our workplace status.

Also, the following news outlets will provide up-to-the minute information on the weather status for our region:

• List local TV stations
• List local radio stations
• List internet sites