



Shetland Islands Council

Adverse Weather Policy **All staff except school based teaching staff**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who decides whether it is safe to travel to work?
2. What should I do if it is unsafe to travel?
3. Is it ok to arrive late at work?
4. Is it ok to leave work early?
5. If public transport does not run to timetable what should I do if I arrive at work late or I cannot attend work at all?
6. What should I do if I have to wait for a plough before I leave the house and I am late to arrive at work?
7. As the schools are closed I must stay home with my children - what are my rights?
8. Am I required to make up hours if I get stranded on the Scottish mainland due to adverse weather and can't get to Shetland to work?

School Based Staff

9. If schools are closed to pupils, do I still have to attend work?
10. I work in a school, why do I not have the option to take annual leave like other staff?

1. **Who decides whether it is safe to travel to work?**

It is your responsibility to decide whether your journey to work will be safe. You should listen to Police and Council warnings, you should also check the weather forecasts and actual weather conditions before making your decision.

2. **What should I do if it is unsafe to travel?**

You must contact your line manager to let them know you cannot attend work and agree with them to –

- Take annual leave (Except term time staff)
- Work from home*
- Report to an alternative work location if possible; or
- Make up hours of work

* If adverse weather can be anticipated, it is reasonable that you take work home in case you cannot get into work the next day. You should ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information.

3. **Is it ok to arrive late at work?**

If you are late to arrive in work you should let your manager know the reason for your late arrival. If you know in advance that you will be late, you should let your manager know and when you are expected to arrive at work. This is particularly important so your manager does not worry unnecessarily about your safety.

You will be required to make up any lost hours within a reasonable timescale.

4. **Is it ok to leave work early?**

Again, you should seek permission from your manager and you will be required to make up lost hours within a reasonable timescale.

5. **If public transport does not run to timetable what should I do if I arrive at work late or I cannot attend work at all?**

If transport difficulties can reasonably be anticipated or not, then it is your responsibility to agree with your manager whether you work from home, attend an alternative work location, use annual leave or make up the hours.

You are required to make up any lost hours within a reasonable timescale and you should agree this with your manager.

6. **What should I do if I have to wait for a plough before I leave the house and I am late to arrive at work?**

If you are late to arrive at work you should let your manager know the reason for your late arrival. If you know in advance that you will be late, you should let your manager know and when you are expected to attend work, taking into consideration Police and weather warnings. You are required to make up any lost hours within a reasonable timescale and you should agree this with your manager.

7. **As the schools are closed I must stay home with my children. What are my rights?**

The Parental Leave and Time Off for Dependants Policy states that all staff, providing they have advised the Council of the reason for absence, have an entitlement to time off for dependants because a dependant's care arrangement have unexpectedly changed. Leave of this nature is unpaid.

Compassionate leave is not appropriate in this circumstance.

8. **Am I required to make up hours lost if I can't get to work because I am stranded on the Scottish mainland?**

If you are on the mainland because you have been on Council business then you are not required to make up lost hours.

If you are stranded on the mainland because of a personal trip you have made then you will be required to make up the hours.

School Based Staff

9. **If schools are closed to pupils, do I still have to attend work?**

Yes. All staff are expected to make every effort to reach their usual place of work and continue with work as normal.

10. **I work in a school, why do I not have the option to take annual leave like other staff?**

Most school-based staff work term-time only, which is 39 weeks per year and their annual leave and public holiday entitlement is built into their salary. Because of this, school-based staff cannot choose when they take annual leave, they must take it during the school holidays, so this is why taking annual leave due to adverse weather is not possible.

However, if you agree it with your manager, you could make up hours lost during the school holidays