



Policy

POL.COR.19.05 Inclement Weather Policy

Policy Type: Corporate Policy
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Department: Administration
Staff Report: FAF.19.197
By-Law No.: not applicable

Policy Statement

As a public employer, the Corporation of the Town of The Blue Mountains has an obligation to continue providing services for the public even when many other offices and enterprises have decided to close their doors due to Inclement Weather and other Emergency situations.

Accordingly, it is our policy to continue operations and to keep our offices and facilities open to the public every working day, unless it is impossible to do so due to a Disaster, severe Inclement Weather or state of Emergency.

Unless otherwise directed by the Corporation by way of the media, telephone and/or e-mail, all employees are expected to work at their assigned times and schedules regardless of weather conditions.

Town of The Blue Mountains offices and facilities may not be closed due to extreme weather conditions unless approved by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

It is recognized that severe weather conditions may prevent employees from reporting to work, cause employees to report late, or require employees at work to depart earlier than scheduled.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish processes for employees to follow including a uniform procedure for the treatment of employee's absences from work during periods of inclement weather.

The Blue Mountains values the safety of its employees and recognizes that some employees have greater distances to travel than others.

Application

This policy applies to all regular Full time, Part time and Contract employees and Volunteers of the Town of The Blue Mountains.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Inclement Weather- means the existence of abnormal climatic conditions (i.e. blizzard, hail, snow, high winds or any combination thereof) by virtue of which it is not reasonable or safe to travel to or from work.

Emergency – A situation, or an impending situation caused by the forces of nature, an accident, an intentional act or otherwise that constitutes a danger of major proportions to life or property.

Disaster – A type of Emergency that could include an occurrence such as a tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, earthquake, drought, blizzard, epidemic, famine, fire, explosion, building collapse, transportation wreck, or other situation that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.

Full-Time, Contract and Permanent Part Time Employees – Employees receiving remuneration, whether full-time, contract or permanent part-time, who occupy positions that are part of the ongoing staff complement of the municipality.

Volunteer – A person who performs or offers a service of his or her own free will, without monetary reimbursement, this includes co-op positions and unpaid internships.

Procedures

1. During an Inclement Weather event, unless otherwise directed, employees shall make every reasonable effort to attend work at the regularly scheduled time and location to ensure that Town facilities and services are open and general operations are functioning. Given the variability of severe weather, staff are expected to take steps to be prepared in advance. This may mean allowing extra time in the morning to clear snow and in anticipation of traffic delays.
2. If an employee chooses not to travel to work, or expects to be late or wishes to leave work early during Inclement Weather they shall:
 1. Observe standard protocols for reporting absences for the department;
 2. Staff who miss work for Inclement Weather may make-up for the lost-time missed from work by using allotted personal Emergency leave,

vacation, lieu, work additional time within the same pay period to make up the lost working hours (overtime does not apply to working extended hours to make-up lost time) or choose to take the time as unpaid.

3. During an Inclement Weather event, management may schedule staff in a manner that has regard to safety, travel distance, operational need and employee concerns. This may include alternative work locations, working from home (if applicable), modified start and end times etc. Managers will communicate directly with staff to arrange work modifications.
4. The decision to close any facility will be made by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designate, taking into consideration storm severity, available forecasts, transportation warnings, accessibility of facilities, and the overall safety of staff, customers and the public.
5. If a facility is closed as described above, employees will be paid for the normal working hours of the day following the closure of the facility, at their regular rate of pay. Facility closures will be posted to the Town website. All staff are expected to check the Town website on Inclement Weather days. Managers are responsible for ensuring their direct reporting staff are notified of closures via phone or text.
6. Absences due to Inclement Weather of less than one (1) hour are forgiven and the lost time is not required to be made up.
7. In the event a closure extends beyond the first day, the Emergency Management Plan and policies will prevail.
8. Under exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the *Employment Standards Act, S.O. 2000 (the Act)* an employer may require an employee to work more than the maximum number of hours permitted under *the Act*, or to work during a period that is required to be free from performing work only as follows, but only so far as is necessary to avoid serious interference with the ordinary working of the employer's establishments or operations:
 1. To deal with an Emergency.
 2. If something unforeseen occurs, to ensure the continued delivery of essential public services, regardless of who delivers those services.

3. If something unforeseen occurs, to ensure that continuous processes or seasonal operations are not interrupted.
4. To carry out urgent repair work to the employer's plant or equipment.

Exclusions

Essential services like Roads & Drainage, Water & Wastewater and Fire Services will attempt to provide service levels as warranted by the situation. This policy does not apply to employees on approved leaves, previously scheduled vacation and/or sick leave.

References and Related Policies

POL.COR.13.25 Personal Emergency and Sick Leave Policy

POL.COR.13.24 Progressive Discipline Policy

Emergency Response Plan for the Town of The Blue Mountains

Employment Standards Act 2000, S.O. 2000

Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to adhere to the requirements outlined in this Policy may lead to progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed once per term of council or as required due to legislative change.