



Snow day disruption – effect on employers

With Met Office warnings of ice and snow issued for much of the UK, business owners will be bracing themselves for widespread disruption. Employees may not be able to make the journey to work or may face childcare issues with the closure of schools and other childcare settings.

Do I need to pay employees who don't make it into work?

There are two types of an employee when faced with adverse weather, those who will go to the ends of the earth to attempt to make the journey and those that won't! Workers are not automatically entitled to be paid if they are unable to make the journey to work, but this will be down to your discretion.

You may wish to allow workers to make the time up at a later date or take the time off as annual leave. You cannot force employees to take annual leave.

The other issue is, of course, parents and carers who have no option because of school and other childcare setting closures. Employees are entitled to take time off to care for dependants when an emergency arises which is usually unpaid. Again, you may wish to use your discretion with regard to this situation and be flexible with working arrangements.

If you are left with no alternative but to close the workplace owing to adverse weather, your employees will be entitled to be paid. In this situation, you could ask employees to work from an alternative location if that is reasonable or to work from home.

How can I protect my company in future?

It is always advisable to have effective policies in place covering reporting requirements, adverse weather and employee travel disruption. Policies of this nature will cover situations such as industrial strike action as well as adverse weather. It will clearly set out your expectations in terms of reporting non-attendance and whether employees can expect to be paid or alternative ways of being paid for non-attendance at work, including taking the time off as annual leave.

Flexible working arrangements would enable employees to work from home if they were unable to make it to the workplace, meaning less impact on your business.

Need further advice?

If you feel some of your policies and procedures may need to be reviewed, please contact the [Lester Aldridge Employment Team](#) who will be happy to assist.