

Human Resources Policy No. HR41

Travelling Difficulties

Additionally refer to:

HR13 Travel Expenses

Sponsor: Head of Human Resources in conjunction with Director of Corporate Affairs

Date agreed by TNCC: August 2006

Date agreed by Board: September 2006

Date of next review: April 2016

Date of review extended until: 30th September 2021

Contents

Section		Page Number
1	Introduction	3
2	Scope	3
3	Responsibilities	3
4	Extreme Weather Conditions	3
5	Disruption to Public Transport Services	4
6	Non-Attendance at work	4
7	Policy Principles	4

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the procedures that will apply when dealing with staff who face difficulties in getting to and from work due to disruption in transport services, for example through bad weather or other reasons such as a public transport strike or private transport breakdown. It is designed to promote fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff throughout the Trust.

2. Scope

2.1 The provisions and obligations of this policy apply to all Trust employees.

2.2 In implementing this policy, managers must ensure that all staff are treated fairly and within the provisions and spirit of the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy. Special attention should be paid to ensuring the policy is understood when using it for staff new to the NHS or Trust, by staff whose literacy or use of English is weak or for persons with little experience of working life.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they make adequate arrangements to report to their place of work by their normal start time, regardless of travelling difficulties. However it is recognised that this may be difficult to achieve during severe weather conditions, particularly severe snow fall, or disruption to public or private transport services.

3.2 In recognising this, these guidelines have been developed to ensure that there is a consistent and fair approach in respect of all staff, whilst at the same time allowing sufficient flexibility to deal with any problems that may arise.

4. Extreme Weather Conditions

This paragraph refers only to situations where the employee's normal form of transport is unable to operate because of extreme weather conditions.

4.1 Alternative Transport

In some situations, alternative forms of transport may be available, and where this is the case, staff should take advantage of these where appropriate, e.g. lifts from other members of staff or walking to a public transport route.

4.2 Walking to Work

Staff will be expected to attend for duty wherever it is possible for them to walk safely to their place of work. Whether or not it is possible for them to do so will be a matter for local judgement by the Manager, considering **all** the following: -

- the distance involved (up to 3 miles is considered to be reasonable);
- the prevailing weather conditions;
- the time of day;
- the age and health of the member of staff, and
- the degree of effort which the individual exercised.

Where it is considered reasonable for staff to walk to work having taken these factors into account, they will be expected to do so.

5. Disruption to Public or Personal Transport

In the absence of their normal form of transport, staff will be expected to use alternative forms if they are available, to share cars if this is possible or to walk to work (see paragraph 4.2 above). Managers may wish to assist in coordinating car drivers to provide lifts for other staff where this is appropriate.

6. Attendance at an Alternative Site

If it is not possible for staff to attend for duty at their normal place of work, but they are able to reach another Trust site which is nearer their home, they should contact their Manager to discuss whether to report for duty at the local site. Where approved, the individual will be expected to work flexibly within their competence at the local site.

7. Non-attendance at work

If, after genuine effort to reach the place of work, a member of staff is not able to attend, then a telephone call should be made to the line Manager as soon as possible. The non-attendance should be dealt with by discussion between the Manager and the member of staff as:-

- a days annual leave, or
- time owing already accrued or appropriate hours to be worked at a future date, or
- unpaid leave at the request of the employee.

8. Policy Principles

8.1 It is acknowledged that although the onus is on the individual member of staff to report for work, in exceptional circumstances it may not be possible for them to report for duty.

8.2 It is expected that all staff will make a genuine effort to attend, in which case it would not be reasonable for the Manager to withhold payment arbitrarily - the matter should be discussed between the parties when normal work has been resumed.

8.3 Under no circumstances can payment be made for non-attendance (i.e. one of the options in paragraph 7 must be chosen).

8.4 Taking into consideration factors such as distance of home from work, transport available, starting and finishing time, staff that are late into work due to inclement weather or travelling difficulties may at the Manager's discretion be paid from their normal starting time where it can be shown that they have made every reasonable effort to arrive on time.

8.5 Entirely at the Manager's discretion, and subject to the needs of the Service and the completion of essential work, staff who have travel difficulties may be sent home early from work and paid to their normal finish time where the problem persists or deteriorates during the working day.

8.6 In exceptional circumstances the Manager may request a member of staff to stay overnight to maintain an essential service. In such circumstances any additional accommodation and meal charges will be met by the department. Where staff will be unable to stay because of domestic responsibility, they should raise this with their manager at the earliest opportunity. The manager will then seek to redeploy staff, who will be required to work flexibly in such situations.

8.7 Managers should apply the normal procedure for dealing with staff who are absent on sick leave, i.e. staff will be expected to comply with the normal certification requirements.