*\*\*BLUE TEXT SHOULD BE REMOVED BEFORE ISSUE\*\**

***Severe disruption policy***

The severe disruption policy will help you set out your position when an employee is unable to attend work, or is late, as a result of genuinely extreme weather conditions or disruptions to public transport or road networks, such as train strikes, road traffic accidents, road closures, etc.

Policy statement

The Company acknowledges that employees may occasionally have problems travelling to and from work due to either severe adverse weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport (for example, industrial action) and/or road networks (for example, serious incidents affecting travel or public safety on roads or motorways). Whilst the Company is committed to protecting the health and safety of its employees as a priority, it must also ensure that its business is not unduly or unnecessarily disrupted by external factors. This policy therefore sets out your duty to attend for work during severe adverse weather conditions or where there are major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks and the relevant procedures you must follow. On these occasions, the Company recognises that a flexible approach to working arrangements may be necessary.

Duty to report for work

It is your obligation to report for work regardless of the situation. You should therefore make every effort to attend work in all circumstances, but at the same time you should not put yourself at risk by attending or attempting to attend your workplace if it is dangerous to do so. When severe adverse weather conditions occur or where there are major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks, you should take steps to obtain advice on the position from the appropriate external agencies and allow extra time for your journey, making alternative travel arrangements or taking an alternative route where appropriate. Travel on foot or by bicycle should be considered where appropriate and safe. You can obtain weather forecasts, including alerts about severe weather warnings, from the Met Office website (<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/guides/warnings>) or app and you can find key travel information at Highways England (<https://www.trafficengland.com/>), Traffic Wales (<https://traffic.wales/>) or Traffic Scotland (<https://trafficscotland.org/>). Information may also be available from local radio stations, the police, transport providers or the internet.

If a Met Office severe weather warning is issued that affects your journey to work, please contact your line manager as soon as possible for further advice.

You will generally still be expected to attend work at your normal start time, unless there are exceptional circumstances which provide a justified or acceptable reason for absence or lateness. Unjustified or unacceptable absence or lateness, or a failure to contact your line manager without good reason (see below), may give rise to disciplinary action under the Company’s disciplinary procedure.

The Company accepts that appropriate allowances may need to be made for those employees who may face increased risk in severe adverse weather conditions, for example, those who have a disability or are pregnant.

Accepted absence or lateness

If you are unable to attend work or are going to be delayed by the severe adverse weather conditions or due to major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks, you should contact your line manager as soon as possible and before your normal start time on each affected day to discuss the position. If your line manager is unavailable, you should speak to an alternative manager. Where the Company accepts that you have used your best endeavours to attend work but you have been unable to do so, or you are late because of the severe adverse weather conditions or the major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks, your line manager will discuss the options with you. At the Company’s discretion, you may be required or permitted to:

• make up the lost time at a later date, and within a reasonable timeframe, if you arrive at work late

• take any absence from work as part of your paid annual leave entitlement [- if you have insufficient annual leave remaining in the current holiday year, in this case you may borrow up to two days from the next holiday year]

• take any absence from work as special unpaid leave – in this case, your pay will reduce accordingly to take account of the hours/days you have not worked as you are not entitled to be paid for the time lost

• work from home, where possible, or otherwise work remotely, for example, in a safe and appropriate alternative workplace - in this case, you will receive your normal pay

• be paid your normal pay as if you had attended work on the day of absence – this will only apply in very exceptional circumstances at the Company’s absolute discretion.

The Company may base its decision on your individual circumstances, for example, the distance from your home to your place of work, your mode of transport, whether you are disabled or pregnant, whether you have caring responsibilities (e.g. children who are unable to attend school due to the severe weather) and how viable it is for you to work from home, and on the needs of the Company.

If you are able to work during severe adverse weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks, you may sometimes be expected to carry out additional or varied duties during such periods to cover for absent work colleagues who have been unable to attend work. However, you will not be required to do anything that you cannot do safely or competently.

[If, in exceptional circumstances, the Company decides to temporarily close your workplace due to severe adverse weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks, you will be paid as if you had worked your normal hours, unless the Company invokes the contractual right to lay you off under the terms of your [written statement of employment particulars/contract of employment].]

**Leaving work early**

If severe adverse weather conditions or major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks occur during the working day which will cause problems for you in travelling home, your line manager will decide whether to allow you to leave work early, and to make up the lost time at a later date, and within a reasonable timeframe, if necessary. The Company will again base its decision on your individual circumstances and on the needs of the Company.

Health and safety

The Company is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its employees and this includes during severe adverse weather conditions and where there are major disruptions to public transport and/or road networks and therefore the Company will aim to adopt a responsible, fair and reasonable approach to the situation. You also have a duty to take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions. This includes taking extra care when travelling to and from work in severe adverse weather conditions, allowing more time for your journey and following the advice of your line manager and the appropriate external agencies, including making alternative travel arrangements or taking an alternative route where appropriate.

School closures and childcare issues

Severe adverse weather can sometimes lead to school or nursery closures or the unavailability of a childminder. Where your childcare arrangements have been disrupted, you may have a statutory right to reasonable unpaid time off for dependants – see the Company’s time off for dependants policy for further information.